

Christ's Strength Under the Control of Christ's Love....

Calvary Chapel of Bangor, Maine

Muscular men, hardened by physical labor, entered the sanctuary. Chairs had been pushed back and mats were scattered on the floor of the auditorium, which soon had the aroma of a locker room.

Newcomers glanced around suspiciously. Full of pride and self-importance, most would not usually enter a church. However, an unusual challenge from a man that called himself a preacher was an opportunity not to be passed up. This grappling event, a type of no-holds barred wrestling match, would test the limit of their strength and endurance. It was oddly called Calvary Chapel Grapple.

First-timers were greeted with a hearty handshake and an eye-popping slap on the back by Ken Graves, pastor of CC Bangor, Maine. His bass voice, deep and rough, resonated with authority.

"The glory and strength of Jesus is shown in His self-control," boomed Ken. "No other person in history had as much power as Christ. He could have brought down angels or removed Himself at any time from the cross. Instead, Jesus exhibited incredible meekness by choosing to hang on the cross because He loved us that much. But never confuse that meekness with weakness." Ken scanned the room. He knew he had their attention.

Baptism by pastor Ken Graves of Calvary Chapel in Bangor, Maine, and Nathan Orr during a church picnic at Lamoine State Park on the coast of Maine. Photo by Caleb Raynor Reprinted here with permission. This is a copyrighted photo that was published in the Bangor Daily news on Jan. 1, 2001.



*Glen Veevaert and Ken baptizing a couple together.
Inset photos by Tessa Geren*



Blessed and cold, a sister comes out of the cold Atlantic Ocean a new creation.



Ken uses his image to reach out to tough guys in the Bangor, Maine, community and demonstrates Jesus' strength under control.

“Meekness is strength controlled by love. Jesus said, ‘No one takes My life from Me, I lay it down.’ In this grappling, we want to demonstrate Jesus’ strength in meekness.” The instructor demonstrated several techniques using Ken as the practice dummy. Participants paired up and tried the moves. Wheezing from near-exhaustion, contestants attempted to maneuver their opponents into submission by applying holds which took bones and joints to the breaking point. Ken emphasized that he would force the wrestlers to sit out if they failed to ‘tap out’ when they have been out-manuevered to avoid serious injury.

study of grappling techniques enabled a smaller man to defeat a stronger enemy. You learn means for escape.

“Fellows, this is the way Christians study the Bible in order to be in a position,



The Chapel Store is made portable to be wheeled over to the High School on Sundays.

After an hour on the mat, the men’s pride was replaced by fatigue. They began to encourage each other and watched the grapplers with the best techniques. They evaluated the moves that might be needed to overcome an opponent’s superior strength or size. They offered no resistance when Ken began a 15-minute Bible study. He emphasized how a proper

with God’s help, to defeat our enemy, Satan,” said Ken. Men of the church stayed afterwards to talk and share with the men. The grappling ministry has reached those who would not usually come to a church.

A Mighty Man Of God

Story by Romy Godding

Photos by Tom Price unless noted

Mention Ken Graves to pastors who know him well, and you will most likely hear a tale of some crazy antic he’s done or some wrestling match in which they were soundly beaten. Ken is a ‘man’s man’ and has a reputation for taking on against-all-odds challenges. The place God has chosen him to minister is no exception. In looking at Ken’s life today, one would never imagine the kind of life he had growing up in Bangor, Maine.

Ken’s childhood was grim by anyone’s standards. His mother, who had experienced a relationship with God at a youth camp, married young to escape a dire situation. The marriage took her from bad to worse, and when Ken was 6-years-old, his father left to start a new family.

Ken’s father seemed to be an atheist, but when Ken was 8-years-old, one of his step-brothers died. Ken recalls, “It was the first time I’d ever seen my father like this. He



The Body comes together for a time of worship.



Ken is not only the Pastor but also a worship leader.

picked me up from school, dressed in a suit, very serious, and very sober. As he was driving me to the cemetery, it was as if he was relating the message of Ecclesiastes without knowing the exact words. His advice was, ‘Don’t follow me. There’s no happiness in the direction I’ve taken.’ I was just a kid, so I listened without responding. That was the last time I saw him. He died three months later in a construction accident.”

teacher who was a Christian. This man affected him for eternity. “I will never forget Larry Esancy. It wasn’t so much what he did but who he was and how he lived. He had a peace and confidence about him, and when he talked about life, he spoke with authority. He knew the answers, and they were found in the Bible that rested on his desk every day.”

far as to try to remove Larry’s Bible from his desk even though it was for his personal reading. This resulted in a major conflict, which intrigued Ken. He thought, “What is it about this Book that makes everybody so afraid?”

His father’s death and other factors cast Ken’s family into poverty. They were living on welfare, sharing a shack with rats, and struggling to survive. Ken’s mom began a search for love in the bars and clubs of Bangor. She would stay in the big city for days looking for love. Ken says, “Life as a boy was spent keeping mom’s boyfriends away from my four sisters and figuring out what we were going to eat. Circumstances were so bad that I began to think very early on about my purpose in life. Why was I here? My thoughts, at times, were suicidal, but my mother had shared the Gospel with me, so I knew about heaven and hell. That knowledge, along with what God had written on my conscience, kept me from going in that direction.”



Assistant Pastor Dennis Harvey waits to take the people who have come forward to the prayer room while Ken explains the commitment they have just made to Christ.

The Bible had always fascinated Ken. He had the innate sense that if he would just read it, he would find answers. When Ken was 13, he had a middle school science

Ken’s class was learning about evolution, and Larry made it clear that it was just a theory. This caused the students to ask the question, “How did we get here?” Larry couldn’t tell them because the law forbade him to do so. The school administration had gone so

This situation and circumstances at home pushed Ken over the edge. He began to read the Bible. It was at that point that he met Jesus. He started in Matthew, and by the time he reached Luke 17:33, “Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and who-

Right: Ken tries to say good-bye to everyone who attends after each service.

Below: Ken gives a hug to Reuben Kigame from Word of Truth Ministries in Kenya.

Center: Offering praise to the Lord, by up lifted hands and voices.

Bottom: Ken prays for this couple as they prepare to move to Florida.



ever loses his life will preserve it,” Ken knew that God had not only called him to be saved, He called him to serve. “I knew He was commanding me to preach the Word; so getting saved and being called into the ministry was a one-time event.”

Becoming a Christian didn't change Ken's circumstances—life was still rough. He had a desire to learn the Word, but there was no one to teach him. It was the height of the charismatic movement, so Ken would watch Jim Bakker on PTL. One evening, Mr. Bakker introduced a guest and described him as one of the 10 best preachers in America. Robert Gass was a fiery Irishman whose church was in Bangor. Ken lived about 20 miles from downtown Bangor. He began attending, either walking or hitchhiking to get there. Ken recalls, “It was very pentecostal. The preacher could preach passionately, but he never taught the Word. He, like the others from that group, lacked stability. There was always some scandal going on. What I did gain from that time was knowledge of the Holy Spirit. I was baptized in the Spirit at 15, and this increased my desire to be discipled.”

Most of Ken's peers were into dances and ballgames, but he wasn't into the social scene. He had no interest in school and believed that Jesus could come back at any time, so, at age 16, Ken quit school, deciding instead to go out and preach. The results were less than spectacular, “I couldn't get a job, and nobody would listen. I quickly realized that I lacked wisdom and knowledge, two qualities which I desperately needed.”

Ken led one man to the Lord during this time. The man was in trouble with the law and needed a place to go. Ken did some research and found an Assembly of God discipleship ministry. The program included four hours of Bible classes, four hours of hard labor, and church every night. His friend ended up stealing what little money Ken had and taking off. After that, Ken headed for the Deep South. He spent four years there teaching and being taught.

“The ministry in the South was very pentecostal. There was a lot about the Assemblies of God that I liked, but I never really fit. After a while, however, I planned to marry the director's daughter, and her dad had

plans for me. The church wanted me to be groomed to become the next Jimmy Swagart. They looked at outward things and figured I was a great young preacher. I had a big mouth and what they perceived as a dynamic personality.”

“I couldn't get a job, and nobody would listen. I quickly realized that I lacked wisdom and knowledge, two qualities which I desperately needed.”

In attempting to “groom” Ken, the leadership sent him to a Bible college in St. Louis where they hoped he would learn how to walk, talk, and act like a regular preacher.

Ken lasted about three months. Then there was an explosive and mutual departure. “At 20, I thought I had life figured out,” Ken said, “I knew who I was going to marry and where I would work. When I decided to leave, it embarrassed those in authority over me. The engagement was off, and the man who had been like my father wrote me off.”

Ken stayed with friends nearby, and for about ten days, he fasted and prayed for direction. “Although I really wanted to serve Jesus, I thought the call was to earthly greatness and fame,” Ken admitted. The Lord told Ken to go back to Maine and get a job—not exactly what he wanted to hear. Ken thought, “Go back to Bangor? You have to be kidding. That's not the way to fame and notoriety! What are You trying to do, God, kill me?” That's exactly what God wanted to do. Ken had a lot of pride, a lot of ambition, and those things needed to die.

Ken reluctantly submitted and returned to Bangor. That obedience resulted in a burden for Bangor. Ken went to work behind a chainsaw, cutting trees. He would teach and play music on the streets and in the jails. Through that, Ken met a like-minded young pastor from a nearby Four Square church. Ken formed a rock band with some local guys and began to lead worship at church.

As Ken was tuning his guitar one Sunday morning, a woman walked in who caught his attention. Ken said, “I had an immediate peace in my heart.” Jeanette Pruhdome was a tourist visiting the East Coast from Thousand Oaks, California. She had planned to stay in Bangor for one day—that is until Ken could convince her otherwise. He was successful, and four days later, she agreed to marry him.

Ken left for California, the wedding took place on December 4, 1984, and the new couple remained on the West Coast. It was during that time that Ken went to Calvary Chapel. “Up to this point, I never fit anywhere,” Ken said. “I looked for spiritual leaders to follow, but found none. My wife introduced me to Chuck Smith, whom I had never heard of. The only information available to me about the Jesus Movement was from critics, but what I saw in Calvary Chapel was biblical Christianity. I remember thinking, ‘I always knew this existed! This is the Christianity that I've read about in the Book of Acts.’”



Assistant Pastor Bryon Burke talks with Ken as Ken's grandson rides his shoulders.

Ken describes Maine and the difficulties of starting a Calvary Chapel on the East Coast, "New England is a lot like old England. There were movements of God, but they were a long time ago. There are many steeples that stand as reminders of those movements, but they are just reminders. The oppression can be so intense. When I came back from California, there were times the sun would go down and I could sense the darkness coming. There was an overwhelming oppression, which was intimidating, and it made me feel like running. The oppression lessened with the addition of each new brother and sister."

Ken and Jeanette attended CC Thousands Oaks for a year and then felt led to return to Bangor. For years, Ken topped trees, and the young couple struggled to get by. God was faithful, and they were able to start a coffee house ministry where they held concerts and Bible studies.

In 1991, Bryon Burke, originally from CC Grass Valley, started a church in Portland, Maine, two hours south of Bangor. Bryon introduced himself to Ken and exposed him to the teaching ministries of Steve Mays and

Jon Courson. Bryon also encouraged Ken to attend the pastors' conference though neither of them could afford to go (both were working hard to pay bills and survive the annual poverty of the Maine winter). Pat Schorr, also from CC Grass Valley, heard about their predicament, shared it with Steve Mays, and CC South Bay paid for their plane tickets. At the conference, Ken got to know Pastor Chuck and come under the teachings of many of the different CC pastors. Thus began Calvary Chapel Bangor.

the addition of each new brother and sister."

"Another difficulty was that, at the time, no one had ever heard of Calvary Chapel in this area. The main churches were very formal and conservative. And I, being in my late 20s starting a ministry, was a longhaired, bearded, wild man in a leather jacket playing rock-n-roll. The church folk thought that Calvary was definitely a cult, and it took a long time to overcome that."

The Lord has done a great work in Bangor, and the fruit of the ministry has overcome the doubts of many within the community. Calvary Chapel Bangor's congregation currently has over 1,000 people and is the fastest growing church in the area.

What began in Ken and Jeanette's apartment, a core of about 12 people over 10 years ago, is now a thriving ministry with many facets. One of the first outreaches to the community was through a low budget TV program called GodSword. Ken said, "There were so many misrepresentations of Christianity on TV that it became a priority for us. The show's format was simple: I sat in front of the camera, read the

Bible, and explained the verses in straightforward terms. The program was fruitful in that it led people to come to the fellowship, and more importantly, to come to the Lord. It also gave the people of Bangor a glimpse of who we were. We never asked for money, and that made the people stand up and take notice." GodSword is still on the air and is seen twice a week on two TV stations. The program is a wonderful witnessing tool for the congregation. "It's a lot harder to get someone in church than it is to get them to turn on the TV for a half hour," Ken stated.



"But once people see the program, they see that Christians aren't weird and are more open to coming."

In 1996, working together with CC Costa Mesa, CC Bangor was able

to start WJCX, 99.5FM, which broadcasts CSN to the majority of Central Maine. The impact, Ken stated, has been amazing. "This area was introduced to biblical, expositional teaching from men like Chuck Smith, Greg Laurie, and Jon Courson. The spiritual lives of the people in our fellowship have accelerated because they're not just attending Bible studies three times a week. Any time they have a chance to be taught, they can turn on the radio and get a study, seven days a week, 24-hours a day. Other churches are being affected as well. People from other fellowships will come up to tell me how much they love the radio station."

One of the unique events during the week is the "grappling" ministry. "It is a means for me, as a pastor, to meet some of the local guys who probably wouldn't come to church unless they were in a real crisis," Ken stated. He is the main wrestling "dummy." "I get on the mat with these guys who are seeking significance through being a good fighter. It's an opportunity to meet them and demonstrate humility and meekness."



Right: Asst. Pastor Jim Lord and Ken during a time of prayer after evening service.

Center: Youth Group Fun

Bottom: Head Deacon Dan Monroe holds his recently adopted newborn from the House of Ruth as Elder David Norsworthy gives little Cameron a kiss on the head.

Although Ken is a 'man's man,' his wife is a strong influence on him. About a year ago, the Lord transformed his view of Jeanette through reading *Genesis 2:18*, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him." Ken said, "Every time I read that verse, I would translate the word 'helper' into mate or partner, but something is lost when you do that. God said 'I will make him a helper.'"

"Adam, a perfect man who lived in a perfect environment, a man who was without sin, needed help. For what? What was his purpose for existence? To know, enjoy, and worship God. Man needs a helper for that! That was a revelation to me. God has given me a helper. My relationship with Jeanette provides the reference points by which I can know the relationship that Christ wants to have with His church and with me!"

Ken's staff has been affected by this transformation. The pastors are unified because their wives are such a vital part of the ministry. "The women spend much time on their knees," said Jim Lord, one of Ken's assistant pastors.

Another blessing is Bryon Burke; the man who was instrumental in bringing about CC Bangor is now on Ken's staff as his assistant

pastor. Ken says, "Bryon is my 'Ahiathophel.' He's a wonderful counselor." The church sent a man from their fellowship to take over CC Portland, Maine, and it has come under the leadership of Bangor. Two other churches have started in Maine, one in Trenton, and the other in Searsport. Both are in the process of becoming Calvary Chapels.

"My relationship with Jeanette provides the reference points by which I can know the relationship that Christ wants to have with His church and with me!"



Children listen as teacher Tessa Geren (right) talks about Jesus.



The vision of Calvary Chapel Bangor is worldwide. The church currently sponsors a number of missionaries through Gospel for Asia. They also recently adopted Word of Truth Ministries, which is based in Nairobi, Kenya. Word of Truth is a new ministry with the primary purpose of teaching the sound doctrine of the Word of God. Ken explained, "Kenya, in particular, has been exposed to every form of Christianity. As the warm, tropical climate has fostered the reproduction of every type of disease and bacteria, so the spiritual climate has fostered the growth of every kind of false doctrine."

Locally, there are plans to start a School of Ministry to better equip those in the fellowship. The people already love serving, and ministry is going on all over town-in the hospitals, jails, and nursing homes. Ken describes the people of CC Bangor as passionate worshipers. "They not only worship in song, they worship with their lives."

Ken sees Luke 17, the chapter that prompted him to surrender his life to Jesus, as the church's theme. In reference to the end times and the suddenness of destruction, Ken says, "Our fellowship is to be about our Father's business. We are only here for a short time before judgment. When it comes, we will be gone. So our mission is not about making this world a better place to live in and to go to Hell from, our mission is preparing people for mass evacuation to live in a better World."

The Lord said to Gideon, "**The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valor!**" Yet, the Bible records Gideon's response as, "I think you have the wrong guy." Gideon is portrayed as a coward, a "cake of barley bread," and that is how Ken sees himself-as a cupcake. However, as the Lord spoke to Joshua, so He has spoken to Ken, "**Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest**" (Joshua 1:9). To those who would seek to serve the Lord in those not-so-pleasant places, Ken says, "Be strong. Don't be afraid. Stand and speak the truth! There is a spiritual war going on-a war between Truth and deception. Only one thing cuts through all the lies and opinions of man; it is the truth of an ancient book-the Bible. It is God's Word." ☞



Ken and Jeanette coming out of The Small Chapel that is used for children's ministry, offices, bookstore, cafe, as well as weekday services.

Contact Information

Calvary Chapel Bangor, Maine
 Service times & locations can be found on their website @:
<http://calvarychapel.com/bangor>.
 You can also contact the church office @ 207-990-5179
 or e-mail: Bangor@CalvaryChapel.org.

FRANK AND GARRETT - Enemies in the World, Brothers in the Lord

Story by Romy Godding

Testimony

Frank Domeier has been a police officer for 22 years. In the past, his reputation was that of a hard-nosed cop. In all of his time on the force, he has never stood up and testified on behalf of a convicted criminal - until now.

Garrett Crowl grew up in an abusive environment. In 19 years, he only had contact with his real father five times, three of which were on the phone. By the time Garrett was 11, he was so out of control that his family moved to Foresthill, California, population 5,500, to get him away from bad influences. But by age 12, Garrett's reputation in the tiny community was that of the local troublemaker. He was stealing, doing drugs, and getting drunk all the time, which brought him to the attention of Deputy Frank Domeier. Whenever there was trouble, the veteran deputy would go looking for Garrett.

By their own admission, Garrett and Frank hated each other. Any contact between them would result in yelling and screaming. Frank remembers a day when he found Garrett drunk. In his disgust, he said, "When are you going to get your life together?"

By the time Garrett was 18, he had received his third D.U.I. and even stolen the offering money from his mother's church! It was at that point that she asked Calvary Chapel Foresthill (formerly known as Maranatha Mountain Chapel) to step in. Rick Hardesty, the pastor of the church, had his assistant pastor, Tom Shively, request Garrett's release to their drug and alcohol ministry after he had served his initial jail time. The request was granted, and Garrett began the program.

Garrett remembers his first meeting, "I found what I had been looking for all my life - the love that God offered through Jesus Christ. I heard about His forgiveness and received Christ that day. I prayed to receive Christ as a child and had gone to church since the time I was 3-years old. But I never accepted Jesus in my heart; it was just words."

When asked what drew him to Christ, Garrett answered, "The love of Christ. The substance abuse was just a way to cover up the pain from my childhood. One of my stepdads was a Marine, and I had to earn his love; it was never given freely. But I knew that I couldn't do anything to earn God's love. I had nothing to offer Him except my sin, and yet He gave me His love so freely."

His road to sobriety wasn't an easy one. Garrett attended the recovery program classes regularly for about 8 weeks before finally gaining victory over his besetting sins. With each session, his desire to change his life-



Frank Domeier and Garrett Crowl

style and follow the Lord increased. He dates January 9, 2000, as his first week of complete victory. "Since that day, things have been absolutely amazing. I'm involved at the church as an usher, my pastor is having me attend classes to learn about children's ministry, and I've even gone to people I've wronged and apologized for my behavior. Because of my reputation, God has opened up so many doors for me to talk about Jesus. I am just blessed and privileged to be able to share His love with others. He has made so many changes in my life!"

One of the major changes has been in his relationship with officer Frank. Frank had been reading his Bible every spare moment, and he was praying as never before. One day, while sitting in his police car reading the Bible, he gave his life to Christ. "I didn't go forward at a Billy Graham crusade or anything like that. I just realized that Jesus loved me!"

Rick Hardesty had been serving as an associate chaplain for the police department, so he and Frank already knew each other. Frank began attending Calvary Chapel Foresthill, and during his first visit, Garrett was one of the people to greet him. Garrett said, "I was a bit shaky inside when I saw Frank, but I knew that God had called me to go talk

to him. I put my old feelings aside, stuck out my hand, and said to him, 'It's good to see you here, I hope you keep coming.'" Frank also remembers that first meeting, "As you can imagine, I was a bit cautious and reserved. I didn't immediately embrace him as a brother." Little did they know the relationship that would ensue.

In April of this year, Garrett was standing before a judge in the Placer County Court awaiting to hear the conditions of his probation. Much to everyone's shock, Frank got up to address the judge. He told him of the changes in Garrett's life and that he was completely freed from the bondage of drugs and alcohol. Frank recommended that Garrett's fines be erased and transferred into community service, and he personally offered to oversee Garrett's service hours. This was unheard of, especially in reference to Frank. In his 22 years of service, he had only testified to convict, not to discharge. The judge agreed to the terms, waived \$2,600 worth of fines, and released Garrett into Frank's supervision. Now they do ride-alongs together, and Garrett is no longer in the backseat with cuffs on - he's in the front seat praying!

Frank and Garrett have even started collecting and counting the church offerings together. Garrett made sure to tell Pastor Rick about his past before accepting this responsibility. Rick's response was, "If the Lord trusts you, then so do I!"

When asked how this restoration has affected his relationship with God, Frank declared that it just showed him the amazing work that God can do in anyone's life. No one is beyond His reach. "When I told Garrett that he needed to get his life together, I should have been talking to myself. I was no different; my sin was just manifest differently than his."

Garrett will be the first to tell you that he can't live this new life on his own. But he knows that God's grace is sufficient. He is seeing God work in and through his life and the lives of others, and he is excited about the future. Garrett's life is now characterized by the words of Jesus, "**Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven**" (Matthew 5:3).

Spiritual Warfare

by Brian Brodersen

Over the next several issues, Brian Brodersen of Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa will be addressing the topic of spiritual warfare.

Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. -Ephesians 6:11-12

The Christian life is not simply believing in Jesus and living happily ever after. It would be nice if that were the case. However, anyone who has sought to seriously follow the Lord has found it to be otherwise. Jesus said to His followers that life in this world would be marked by tribulation and opposition. That opposition comes to us in a large degree from the devil and a multitude of wicked spirits who form a united front against the kingdom of God. Now I am certain that every Christian has experienced this opposition—some more acutely than others. I am also certain that many have not known that the source of the opposition was spiritual.

One of Satan's most effective strategies is to keep us ignorant of the existence of this warfare. To paraphrase C. S. Lewis in his preface to *The Screwtape Letters*, "The demons hail with delight the materialist who disbelieves their existence." Although Lewis' statement might not apply to any of us directly because we are Christians, not materialists, it does apply inasmuch as quite often we live in oblivion to the spiritual realm that surrounds us. Our purpose in this study is to be introduced to the reality of spiritual warfare, and in doing so, to be helped on our way to victory in this battle.

We begin with a consideration of the inspiration behind the conflict: the devil and his angels. Who is the devil? Is he a real entity or just a mythological figure? The Bible teaches that the devil is a real person, a spirit being who was originally God's most glorious creature, but by an act of rebellion, has become God's arch enemy (see Isaiah 14). The Bible tells us that he is incredibly powerful, exceedingly intelligent, and immeasurably evil. Scripture also teaches that he is perpetually at war with God and His people. He is the commander and chief of a multitude of creatures similar to himself. These creatures are referred to by Paul as "principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, spiritual hosts of wickedness in high places." All of these indicate organized opposition.

By way of analogy, consider the Roman Empire. Caesar sat in Rome and made policy based upon his counsel with the senate. The senators would pass the decisions of the Counsel down to the governors and rulers who would then implement their decisions. Likewise, within the kingdom of Satan there are those high-ranking officials making policy and those lower ranks that implement policy.

The tenth chapter of Daniel's prophecy gives us insight into the kingdom of Satan.

Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia" (Daniel 10:12-13 NIV).

Notice what the angel said: "the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days." Cyrus was the king of Persia at that time, yet he most certainly was not the one resisting this angelic messenger. The reference is to the spiritual power behind the Persian Empire.

Let me cite another example of this invisible kingdom from the New Testament. When the Lord was being tempted in the wilderness, Satan showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and said, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish" (Luke 4:6). Jesus did not dispute Satan's claim of authority over the kingdoms of the world nor his ability to give them to whomever he wished. Jesus affirmed Satan's claim when He later referred to him as "the ruler of this world" (John 14:30). These are biblical facts, which we need to understand. I believe many Christians have been seduced into thinking the way that the secular person thinks, looking at everything as merely related to man and natural processes. However, Paul says, "we wrestle not against flesh and blood." The conflict is ultimately with these spirit forces, and unless we understand this, we are defeated from the very onset.

We also need to consider the intimate nature of the conflict indicated by the term "wrestle." There are two aspects to spiritual warfare: the general aspect in which the collective forces of God are battling the collective forces of Satan; and the personal aspect where you and I are engaged in hand-to-hand combat with demonic spirits. It's a wrestling match, which is intimate, personal, and deadly. As a Christian, you are being studied, stalked, and assaulted regularly. Failure to realize this can result in your becoming a casualty in this conflict.

You might think I am being fanatical, but I can assure you, this teaching is scriptural. I am simply stating what the Bible teaches generally and referring specifically to what is recorded in the case of Job, "The LORD said to Satan, 'Where have you come from?' Satan answered the LORD, 'From roaming through the earth and going back and forth in it.' Then the LORD said to Satan, 'Have you considered my servant Job?' 'Does Job fear God for nothing?' Satan replied.

'Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has?'" (Job 1:7-10 NIV.)

Satan had studied and stalked Job. Very soon, he would assault him. Satan's tactics have not changed over the centuries. Today we are subject to the same kind of attacks Job experienced. My intention in saying this is to help you understand the world and your own personal experiences through a biblical lens—not to create paranoia. Christians today need a biblical worldview, which includes a belief in and understanding of the spiritual realm.

How do we survive in this spiritual battle? First, remember that "the battle is the Lord's." Therefore, it is essential that we be "strong in the Lord and in the power of His might" (Ephesians 6:10). We have no natural power with which to contend with the forces of darkness. To be victorious, we must draw our strength from the Lord.

David showed his understanding of this truth when facing Goliath, "You come to me with a sword...But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel...This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand...Then all this assembly shall know that the LORD does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the LORD's, and He will give you into our hands" (1 Samuel 17:45-47).

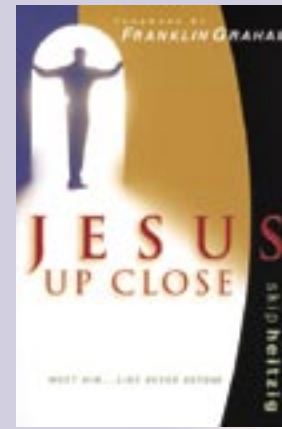
Another important point is to remember, "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God" (2 Corinthians 10:4). The word carnal is the antithesis of spiritual and refers to that which is merely human. Apart from the power of God, all our energies combined are to no avail against the powers of darkness. Since we are in a spiritual battle, we have need of spiritual weapons. That is exactly what God has supplied us with— "weapons mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God..." Weapons mighty in God! The word "mighty" could be translated "dynamically powerful." God has supplied us with more than we need for victory. Our need is to tap into what is already available to us.

What are the "weapons" God has given to us? They are simple: prayer, the Word of God, and worship. We must be thoroughly immersed in these if we are going to successfully fight the "good fight of faith." Later, we will take an in-depth look at these "weapons that are mighty in God," but in the next issue, we will move on to a further study of our enemy.



CCM Recommends Book Reviews

Whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy - meditate on these things. *Philippians 4:8*



Jesus Up Close

Skip Heitzig
ISBN: 0842336354

"This book will lead you to the all-sufficiency of Jesus, as was shown in the way His life touched a full spectrum of people with a variety of needs."
Chuck Smith, senior pastor of Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa

"The destiny of every human being depends upon his relationship to Jesus Christ," Oswald Chambers once said. Jesus only taught for three years on earth. Yet during that brief ministry, when a few people met Jesus up close, He left an eternal impact. Skip Heitzig invites you to meet Jesus, the living Word, like never before—and let Him surprise you.

Pharisees and prostitutes, tax collectors and lepers, were introduced to God in human flesh. Each person was unique, but their common ground was the fact that Jesus changed them. He mended broken hearts, shattered religious illusions, and cleansed the vilest sinners. Jesus took them as they were but loved them too much to leave them that way. The insights drawn from the stories of transformed men and women will change your life as well.

See Jesus' magnificent person: the expected Messiah who became the Lamb of God to take away the sins of the world and manifested Himself as the Lord of life and death. Observe Jesus' amazing power, coupled with compassion, as He restored a paralytic, a tax collector, and a cripple. Finally, glimpse God's unspeakable glory, which will be fully revealed in eternity through ages to come.

Jesus Up Close asks the question, "Are you prepared to have Him astound you, restore you, forgive you, heal you, give you purpose? Jesus wants to meet with you. I hope you will never be fully satisfied until you see Him face-to-face!"



Choice Stories for Children

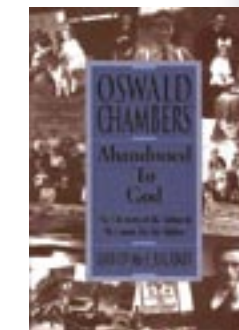
Selected by Ernest Lloyd
ISBN: 1881545997

Oswald Chambers: Abandoned to God

David McCasland
ISBN: 1572930500

Officers crowded around the chaplain's simple casket. Under the hot Egyptian sun, they mourned his sudden death at the age of 43 from a ruptured appendix. Although this man was one of hundreds of thousands who died during World War I, he was not forgotten like so many others. Why has the life of Oswald Chambers continued to touch people around the world nearly one hundred years after his death?

Discover the answer to this question as you are introduced to Oswald and his message in this book. God used him as a teacher in secular colleges, to begin a Bible training school in London, and as a chaplain to British troops in Egypt. Woven inseparably into Oswald's story is the life of his wife, Biddy. After his death, she spent much of her life giving her husband's words to the world. *Abandoned to God* is the story of their utmost for God's highest.



My Utmost for His Highest

Oswald Chambers
ISBN: 0916441822

"I am determined to be absolutely and entirely for Him and for Him alone." Oswald Chambers, in the most popular book of daily devotions ever published, inspires each reader to live to the utmost for God. Through selections that constantly point to living wholly for Jesus Christ, *My Utmost for His Highest* has remained as relevant today as it was when printed nearly 75 years ago.

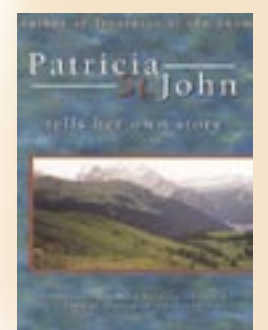
Tremendous sacrifice was made to bring this devotional into existence years ago. Oswald's widow, bereaved by the early death of her husband, dedicated much of her life to transcribing his messages given in the United States, Japan, England, Scotland, and Egypt, compiling the book we read today. Millions of people worldwide now reap the blessings of her faithfulness and abandonment to God.

Patricia St. John Tells Her Own Story

Patricia St. John
ISBN: 1850782792

In her autobiography, Patricia St. John traces her life story, from a godly upbringing in England to nursing experiences during World War I, which led to her work among the poor in Arabic villages tucked away in the mountains of North Africa. God's miraculous provision and revelation of Himself to those who believed in Jesus with simplicity challenged Patricia to see His power and grace in new and fresh ways each day.

The experiences of this ordinary woman through whom God did extraordinary things became the material for her masterful storytelling in many children's books, including *Treasures of the Snow*. This is the life-changing testimony of a woman who touched lives in England, Tangier, Rwanda, Lebanon, Romania, and Morocco. Her ever-open door led many to Christ's peace and love because they saw in her life and love for Jesus the hope of eternal life.



You should be able to obtain copies of the above materials through your local Calvary Chapel bookstore. If there is not a bookstore in your area, please contact The Word for Today at the address or phone numbers below:

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