

PARABLES

Bringing Hidden Things to Light



Psalms 78:2-4

I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark sayings of old... We will not conceal them.

Parables Bookshelf - Series 2.16.2

Series 2 of the Parables Bookshelf contains a variety of writings covering a wide range of topics related to the Kingdom of God. These writings originally appeared as posts on the Heart4God website, or the Parables Blog, both of which are the websites of Bible teacher Joseph Herrin.

The Hearing Ear



The Hearing Ear - Part 4

Joseph Herrin (08-09-2012)

Proverbs 20:12

The hearing ear and the seeing eye, Yahweh has made them both.

Suppose you have a very good friend that you wish to meet with to share some very intimate and important matters. What type of

tractions are everywhere about you?

Suppose you were at home watching a television program and your spouse came in with a very serious expression upon their face and said they needed to speak with you. Would you not turn off the television, give instructions to your children to not interrupt you, and give your undivided attention to your spouse?

If we truly want to HEAR someone, we must provide an environment that is conducive to listening.

environment would you choose to meet at? Would you arrange to meet at the food court at the largest shopping mall in town where people are constantly streaming by, where dozens of conversations are being held, and dis-

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The Hearing Ear

In the gospels we read accounts of Christ driving the merchants and moneychangers out of the Temple. Every event of Christ's life serves as a spiritual parable. When the Bible states of the Messiah that "zeal for My Father's house has consumed Me," we should not assume that it was a building of stone and wood that had arrested the interest of the Son of God. The Temple in Jerusalem built by Herod was merely a symbol of the true temple in which Yahweh dwells, a temple built of living stones. The people of God are that temple. You and I are the dwelling in which the Spirit of Yahweh abides.

I Corinthians 3:16-17

Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are.

Yahshua declared that the Temple was designed to be a house of prayer. It was to be a place where men and women could enter into quiet communion with the Spirit of God.

Matthew 21:13

And He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer'..."

It is not the physical building in Jerusalem of which Christ spoke. That building served only as a type and symbol of the true house of God.

II Corinthians 6:16

For **you** are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people."

You and I have been created to be houses of prayer. Our souls are to be quiet; places of solace in the midst of a hectic world that has gone mad in the pursuit of trade and commerce. Satan has made it his chief work to defile the sanctuaries of God through an overabundance of trade in the things of the world. The prophet Ezekiel wrote of the fall of Lucifer, the covering cherub, from his place in the heavens.

Ezekiel 28:18

"By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade, you profaned your sanctuaries."

NAS

Ezekiel 28:18

Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick...

KJV

Satan continues this defiling work to this very day. He is very effective at causing the people of God to focus an inordinate amount of their time, thought, and energy on trafficking and trading in this world. Day after day the saints' minds are focused upon their next acquisition, on how to generate enough income to pay for all of the material things their souls lust after. Satan floods the world with advertisements, commercials, and promotions of the next great thing, seeking to persuade men and women that they must have some trinket or treasure of this fallen world.

Consider the daily life of the typical Christian. Many get out of bed in the morning with just enough time to shower, get dressed, grab a quick breakfast, and then head out the door to

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work. Neglected is time spent in the presence of the Father. The best, most productive hours of their day is given to this world system. They spend themselves in labor for an earthly employer that provides them a paycheck so they can purchase those things that their neighbors have.

At the end of the work day the Christian will return home to take care of family responsibilities, or to meet with friends, or to engage in the endless activities that their church sets before them. Some may remain home, and turn on the television as soon as they get off work, leaving the television playing until it is time to go to bed.

Day after day Christians fill their lives with idle pursuits and vain activities. They have embraced the rat race of mankind, deceived by Satan and preachers of prosperity to believe that this is what life is all about. In the process they have failed to safeguard the temple of their body as a quiet sanctuary and a house of prayer. They have fallen from their chief calling in life to commune daily with the Father.

It is with purposeful illustration that Yahshua manifested great zeal in driving the merchants and moneychangers out of the Temple. As individuals, the saints of God have invited the spirit of merchandising into their lives. They have embraced the love of money and all it can buy. Multitudes are trying to serve both God and mammon. Consequently, the still, small voice of the Spirit of God has been drowned out by the incessant noise that arises from trafficking in the things of the world.

Few Christians have discerned how radically different the life of Christ and those who would be His disciples are from the pattern of this

fallen world. The character of Christ is contentment. The disciple is content with whatever shelter, food, and life experiences the Father chooses for them. In contrast, the worldly man or woman approaches God with a shopping list of all the things they would like God to provide for them. The worldly man or woman has a great many desires and expectations. They want a certain type of home to live in. They desire nice furnishings to fill it with. They want various features in a car. They expect to have a nice set of appliances, and beyond this they want many of the entertainment products offered by this world; televisions, stereos, computers, game consoles, board games, sporting goods, smart phones, and all the must have gadgetry and conveniences that are continuously set before the public mind.

If a Christian were to take inventory of their home and the possessions in it, it would become quickly apparent that most have departed from the attitude described by Paul when he wrote, "having food and covering, with these we will be content." Christian's lives today are full of clutter. The noise of trafficking in the world, and the constant energy devoted to pay for everything, to maintain a comfortable life with many entertainments, has led to the profaning of their sanctuary. The still, small voice of God is drowned out by the constant drone of worldly pursuit.

In 1999 the Father led me to a radical departure from that life I had formerly known. My life prior to 1999 was similar to most American Christians. I was the fat, materially satisfied, possession driven Christian. Although I was very active in my church, even serving as a minister, my life was not one of quietness. I hit the ground running in the morning, and in the evening, if I was not engaged in some church event or social activity, I was on the computer,

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or watching television. I was employed as a computer professional. I made a good salary, and as my income increased so did my possessions, my level of debt, and the time I spent taking care of all that I owned.

No one in the church ever censured me for living such an encumbered and busy life. No one ever cautioned me that I was too much involved with the world and the pursuit of it. My life was no different from every other believer I knew. Yet, it was far from the pattern shown forth in the life of Christ and that of His disciples.

When the Spirit brought me to surrender the life I had chosen for myself, and to embrace whatever He would choose for me, the first thing He did was perform a major house cleaning. He stripped me of a lifetime of accumulated possessions. It was a difficult process not only for me, but for my wife and children. They too had grown accustomed to a worldly life, focused on material things.

Yahweh had us surrender, or sell, most of the possessions we had. House, furnishings, entertainment items, a second vehicle, appliances, games, knickknacks, and many vain acquisitions were stripped away. When the process was complete Yahweh had reduced the possessions of our family of four to a 20 year old 28 foot long motor home and what would comfortably fit in it, towing a small car behind.

An amazing thing happened along with this tremendous reduction in possessions. As a family we were brought closer together (literally). Being in closer proximity to one another encouraged more personal interaction. We also all discovered that we had more free time. There was no longer as much time re-

quired to clean rooms, mow the yard, perform upkeep to the house, etc.. I found that I had a lot more time to commune with the Father. I was enabled to spend hours a day speaking with God, reading His word, and listening to His voice. I became more contemplative, more meditative, for the trafficking in the things of the world had been brought to an end. Christ had come in with a whip made of cords and cleansed the temple once again.

That was 13 years ago. To this day I have continued to be content with whatever living arrangement the Father chooses for me. I have not gone back to a pursuit of the world or the things in it. I have been content with far fewer possessions than I used to have. My life is simpler, quieter, and the voice of God is much easier to hear.

I John 2:15-17

Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.

I ask you, does your life differ significantly from that of the members of the society around you? Or are you pursuing the same possessions, engaged in similar activities and entertainments? Did things radically change in your life when you became a Christian? The apostle Paul stated:

Romans 12:2

And do not be conformed to this world...

The church today is by and large conformed to

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the world. They are pursuing material possessions to the same extent. Entertainment is given just as much time in the life of the Christian as the non-Christian. The soul continues to be the source of direction. These things should not be. It is little wonder that the voice of God is heard so seldom among the Christians of this hour.

The following words of the apostle have never been more urgent:

I Corinthians 7:29-31

But this I say, brethren, the time has been shortened, so that from now on those who have wives should be as though they had none; and those who weep, as though they did not weep; and those who rejoice, as though they did not rejoice; and those who buy, as though they did not possess; and those who use the world, as though they did not make full use of it; for the form of this world is passing away.

What will become of those saints who remain conformed to this world system? When the Son of God appears they will not be ready. They will be pursuing the things of a fallen world.

Luke 17:26-30

“And just as it happened in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: they were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. It was the same as happened in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building; but on the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brim-

stone from heaven and destroyed them all. It will be just the same on the day that the Son of Man is revealed.”

Busyness, an engagement with this world system, and a pursuit of personal happiness and satisfaction, will render Christians deaf to the voice of God. The signs are around us indicating that the appearing of Christ draws nigh. The earth is about to pass through birthpangs and great tribulation. Hearing the voice of God will be absolutely essential in order to walk victoriously in this hour without suffering great spiritual loss.

If you would be ready for that hour, if you would hear the voice of God resonating clearly in your ears, then you must cleanse your temple of the spirit of merchandising. You must bring an end to trafficking in the things of this world.

I challenge you to read the following account from the gospels from the perspective of seeing the Temple as your own life. If Christ approached you today would He find a house of prayer, or a noisy center of worldly traffic?

John 2:14-16

And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. And He made a scourge of cords, and drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables; and to those who were selling the doves He said, "Take these things away; stop making My Father's house a place of business."

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Simplify your life. Surrender your possessions to Christ to be disposed of as He directs. Don't be conformed to this world. Put on the mind of Christ. Be content with whatever the Father chooses for you. I am confident that you will find that the life and path Yahweh will choose for you will afford you much more time to commune with Him. He will permit you to have a contemplative, meditative life.

Start your day with the Father. Give the best of your strength and energy to Him. Remember the lesson of the manna. The manna had to be gathered early before the Sun grew hot, or it would evaporate. So too must we seek God early.

Psalms 5:3

In the morning, O Yahweh, You will hear my voice; In the morning I will order my prayer to You and eagerly watch.

If you have over-committed yourself to labor for the things of this world, if you are engaged too much in entertainments, then you will surely find that you are staying up late, and rising in the morning with inadequate time and energy to seek the Father. As a disciple of Christ you are called to live a radically different life from that of the world around you. Let the worldly give their energy to a pursuit of the world and all that is in it. Let your pursuit be God. If you make Him your pursuit you will surely find Him.

Jeremiah 29:13-14

"You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the Yahweh.

The Hearing Ear - Part 5

Joseph Herrin (08-10-2012)

Proverbs 20:12

The hearing ear and the seeing eye, Yahweh has made them both.

This teaching on spiritual hearing would not be complete apart from an examination of the following words of Yahshua the Messiah. As He was speaking to His disciples, He stated:

Luke 8:18

"So take care **how you listen**; for whoever has, to him more shall be given; and whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has shall be taken away from him."

Yahshua is clearly speaking about the subject this series has been addressing. He enjoins the disciples to "*take care*," or "*be careful*" HOW they listen. He follows this admonition by saying "for whoever has, to him more shall be given." We should ask, "whoever has what?" The subject is the ability to hear, so one obvious meaning is that those who have the ability to hear can increase their hearing if they listen properly. Similarly, Yahshua states, "and whoever does not have (spiritual hearing), even what he thinks he has shall be taken away from him."

The verse above from Luke's gospel comes at the end of a parable explained by Yahshua to His disciples. It is a very important parable to pay heed to as one seeks to understand the subject of spiritual hearing. Let us therefore look at this passage in its entirety. I am going to insert some comments to draw your attention to certain points.

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Luke 8:4-18

When a large crowd was coming together, and those from the various cities were journeying to Him, He spoke by way of a parable: "The sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell beside the road, and it was trampled under foot and the birds of the air ate it up. Other seed fell on rocky soil, and as soon as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. Other seed fell among the thorns; and the thorns grew up with it and choked it out. Other seed fell into the good soil, and grew up, and produced a crop a hundred times as great." **As He said these things, He would call out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."** (Is this not a remarkable detail to be inserted here? This is a highly unusual manner of story telling. Can you picture Christ speaking to the multitudes and stopping periodically to cry out, "**He who has ears to hear, let him hear**"? Spiritual hearing is certainly on the Lord's mind.)

His disciples began questioning Him as to what this parable meant. And He said, "**To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God,** (When Yahshua states "To YOU it has been granted..." He is indicating that it is the disciples of Christ who are granted understanding. Disciples are given a hearing ear. Let us therefore remember that the qualifications of discipleship include surrendering all earthly possessions and relationships to Christ. The cost includes taking up YOUR cross and following Yahshua down an afflicted path that is specifically designed for your perfecting as a son or daughter. The few who have counted the cost of discipleship and accept it are the ones who are granted understanding of the mysteries of the kingdom of God.) but to the rest it is in parables, so that **SEEING THEY MAY NOT SEE, AND HEARING THEY MAY NOT UNDERSTAND.** (Is this not the condition of most people in the church

today? The majority of Christians are apostate [divorced from truth]. Their ears are opened, but they do not hear. Most Christians today observe parables all around them in their lives, in the news, in the Scriptures, but they fail to perceive the heavenly message contained therein. They do not hear the voice of God speaking to them .)

Now the parable is this: the seed is **the word** of God. (Note that a word is something spoken. It enters by the ear, hence Christ is repeatedly stopping to cry out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear.") Those beside the road are **those who have heard**; then **the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart**, (Christ's explanation reveals that the substance and understanding of His parable is about spiritual hearing and how it is lost.) so that they will not believe and be saved. Those on the rocky soil are those who, **when they hear**, receive the word with joy; and these have no firm root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away. The seed which fell among the thorns, these are the **ones who have heard**, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to maturity. But the seed in the good soil, these are the **ones who have heard the word** in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance.

(Yahshua has now described four categories of men and women. Only the last is set forward as a positive example. The vast majority of those hearing Christ's voice do not profit from having done so. Their spiritual hearing **is unfruitful**. This is made plain by the usage of agricultural terms and examples. Seeds are sown to bear fruit. Christ speaks to us that we might bear spiritual fruit. Most Christians are not careful to hear Christ's words in a manner that will result in spiritual fruit. They therefore are in danger of losing that sense of hearing

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they had been given.)

Now no one after lighting a lamp covers it over with a container, or puts it under a bed; but he puts it on a lampstand, so that those who come in may see the light. For nothing is hidden that will not become evident, nor anything secret that will not be known and come to light. **So take care how you listen; for whoever has, to him more shall be given; and whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has shall be taken away from him.**"

We can now define what Yahshua intended when He stated "take care HOW you listen."

Those Beside the Road

The seed (word of Christ) that falls upon those people pictured as soil beside the road doesn't even begin to make progress in bringing forth fruit. The devil comes and snatches the seed away before it germinates. Roads are highly trafficked areas. The ground beside a road is highly compacted from all the traffic. Due to trampling, there is also little ground cover. The grass has been killed, and other plants as well. This causes whatever seed that falls beside the road to lie exposed on top of the hard soil for an extended period of time where the birds can easily see it. The seed is plucked up before it can bear fruit.

There are many Christians today who dwell right beside the highways of commerce and pleasure in this world. They are constantly exposed to the traffic of this world. They are buffeted by worldly messages through television, magazines, books, radio, movies, the Internet, video games, music, and worldly conversation

on the job, at school, or at play. They are rendered insensitive to the voice of God. Their ears are attuned to the range of sounds and speech that emanate from lower, earthly realms. Being carnally minded, spiritual speech cannot penetrate the exterior of their lives.

The Rocky Soil

Christ says of this group of people, "Those on the rocky soil are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no firm root; they believe for a while, and **in time of temptation** fall away." Matthew's gospel brings out another characteristic of this group.

Matthew 13:20-21

"The one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no firm root in himself, but is only temporary, and **when affliction or persecution arises** because of the word, immediately he falls away."

These are what one might call "fair weather saints." Among them are multitudes who have embraced the prosperity gospel. These are joyous, and enthusiastic, for they are anticipating that being a Christian will result in material blessing, health, and favor. These ones have not counted the cost of discipleship. Bearing a cross and walking an afflicted path is not what they signed up for. When temptation, affliction, or persecution arise, these ones will fall away.

These ones have not benefitted by hearing the words of Christ. They were not open to hear ALL that Yahshua would speak to them. The

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preaching of the disciple's cross is foolishness to them. They want a gospel message that promises smooth sailing and an unobstructed passage. These do not bear the fruit the Father is seeking.

The Thorny Ground

Of this group the Savior declared:

“these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way **they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to maturity.**”

Do not these words describe multitudes of Christians today? Many seem to have begun with sincere gratitude for Christ's sacrifice. They express a desire to be found pleasing to Him. Yet they never seem to make progress in spiritual things. They are still wrestling with the same besetting sins ten, twenty, or thirty years after they believed. They have made little progress in ruling over sexual desires, in overcoming anger. They are allured by a desire for riches, and the daily grind of paying bills, going to work, raising a family, taking care of a home, etc., etc., have choked out that spiritual progress they could have made. These are like the Corinthian believers whom the apostle Paul chided.

I Corinthians 3:1-3

And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ. I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and

are you not walking like mere men?

They are like the Hebrew believers whom Paul also reprimanded.

Hebrews 5:12-14

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food is for the mature...

In these passages Paul is comparing spiritual words to food. There are many saints who cannot seem to get off the bottle (or the breast). They are able to tolerate only milk. They are not exercising themselves unto godliness. They are not taking up their cross, enduring hardship, overcoming temptations, and passing victoriously through trials whereby they might grow strong and increase in knowledge and conformity to Christ.

The Good Soil

“But the seed in the good soil, **these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance.**”

Note the characteristics of these men and women. They have honest and good hearts. They persevere, holding tightly to that which has been delivered to them. Much could be written about these traits, but suffice it to say that these are ones who are willing to receive

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ALL that Christ would speak to them. It is spiritually dishonest to pick out from the Bible just those verses that appeal to one's soul. Many prove that they do not have 'good' hearts as they approach the Scriptures with a bias, wanting to hear only that there is blessing, and ease and uninterrupted comfort ahead of them. These unfaithful ones reject, stop their ears and close their eyes, to any Scripture or word from God that would exhort them to lay aside their love of the world and embrace the cross of Christ.

There is a remnant, however, who will respond as Peter when the flesh is offended and the way is difficult. When Yahshua asked His core group of disciples if they wanted to leave like so many others were, Peter stated, "Where else shall we go? You alone have the words of eternal life." This is an honest heart. It is a heart that wants to be a partaker of the divine life of Yahweh, and will continue on even when the going is unpleasant.

When Christ said, "Take care HOW you listen," He was handing His disciples the key to increase their spiritual hearing. If you have been faithful with those things Christ has already spoken to you, He will give you more. The surest way in which to improve your spiritual hearing is to obey promptly that which Christ has spoken to you.

The opposite is also true. The sure road to spiritual deafness is to fail to obey that which Christ has spoken to you. If you have not obeyed His voice when He spoke to you about some matter, why should He continue to speak?

If your heart convicts you that there is something Christ revealed to be His will, but you

shrank back from doing it, or have delayed, letting His words slip away, repent. Repent quickly. Confess your failure to the Lord and set your heart to obedience. As you prove yourself a doer of the word of Christ, your spiritual sense of hearing will improve.

I believe that much of the difficulty among Christians in hearing the voice of God is traceable back to this issue. Suppose Yahweh told you to quit smoking, or to break off a relationship of which He did not approve, or to not go into debt to purchase some item that your soul coveted, but you disobeyed. Now you come to Him day after day asking Him to speak to you, but you have left undone that which He has commanded. Is it not just and right for the Lord to remain silent until you repent and perform that which He required?

We cannot say that we have taken care in how we have listened if Christ has spoken and we have not been moved to obedience by His words. We stand in danger of losing that which we do have. Our sense of hearing can grow dull, and continued disobedience can result in deafness.

Do you want a sharp and keen sense of hearing? Then obey the voice of God quickly when it comes to you. If anything is left undone, recommit yourself to fulfilling the word of God. Those who are faithful in the little given to them will receive more. This principle is true in regard to our spiritual senses.

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The Hearing Ear - Part 6

Joseph Herrin (08-11-2012)

Proverbs 20:12

The hearing ear and the seeing eye, Yahweh has made them both.

Let us suppose that a child of God has acknowledged the cost of Christian discipleship and they have accepted it. They have surrendered their life to be led of the Spirit wherever He would guide them, and to do whatever He would ask them to do. This same one has responded in obedience to the things Christ has commanded them to do. They have not shrank back from costly obedience, and have denied their own desires that they might do the will of Christ.

There will be times when such ones will find that Yahweh is silent in their lives. They may find themselves in some difficulty, or distress, they may be facing some decision that needs to be made quickly, yet despite all their prayers the heavens remain silent.

It is not uncommon for a Christian who is leading a surrendered life to find themselves in such a quandary. There are times when one will be pursuing fervently obedience to Christ and yet they find that everything seems to be falling apart around them. Their mind may be in perplexity, not understanding why things are occurring for they cannot identify any overt sin, their heart does not convict them of having gone astray in any matter of obedience.

Consider the plight of the disciples as they were crossing the Sea of Galilee at night in a boat and a tremendous storm arose. On this

particular occasion Yahshua was with them in the boat, but He was sleeping. As they labored to cross the sea a fierce storm arose so that they feared they would be swamped, yet still Christ slept.

Have you had occasions in your life when some storm was brewing in your home, at your place of employment, in your health, your finances, or some other area, and it seemed God was sleeping? No matter how hard you labored to stay afloat in the midst of the storm it seemed as if you were all alone. You knew God was present, but He was doing nothing to deliver you. At such times Yahweh is testing our faith.

I can remember many occasions, following my surrender in 1999 to follow the Lord wherever He directed, when I was faced with a great trial of faith. I had a wife, and two children, and we were often in some peril. If God did not come through we would surely suffer harm, or loss. Yet Yahweh delayed.

I was very much a man of prayer in those days. I clung desperately to the hem of Christ's garment. I would daily beseech Him to send forth deliverance, provision, or to give some added assurance of His direction for our lives. Yahshua was truly faithful, for He did not permit us to perish. However, He was not always timely according to my expectation. There were many times when He let our bills get behind.

I remember one day when an employee of the electric utility showed up to disconnect our power. I was three weeks late in paying the bill. Every day this matter weighed upon my mind and I sought the Father for His provision. I was working a part time job as a college in-

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structor and I received a paycheck once a month. As days turned into weeks, I had no money to pay the bill and the Spirit restrained me from seeking additional employment. I prayed for God to intervene, to manifest His provision, or to keep the lights on by some means. Finally, there was only one more day until I would be paid and I thought Yahweh had spared us by causing the power company to overlook the fact that we were behind in payment. Yet, that very day a man showed up to cut off the power.

Not knowing what else to do, I walked outside to speak to the man. I explained that I would be paid the next day and would go immediately and pay the bill. I was shown grace as the man said that since he had never been to my house before for non-payment he would not turn the power off that day. The next day the bill was paid. All through this trial the Lord was silent. He spoke nothing to me. He sent no additional provision. He provided me no assurances that all would be okay.

Yet, as I considered my situation I knew that I was walking the path Yahweh had appointed to me. I had not deviated from His will. I had been careful in my expenditures, and daily I was seeking to walk in obedience to Him. I also knew that it was NOT His will that I announce to others that I had a need, and it was His Spirit that forbid me to seek additional work to earn more money.

Why would Yahweh reward my obedience with such trials and difficulties, for they were frequent and unrelenting? Added to my burden was the criticism of family, friends and even Christians who viewed my life and condemned me. They would urge me to follow common sense and go find a better job and earn more money. Yet, Yahweh had only temporarily

granted me part-time employment. Soon He would require me to lay even this aside and to trust Him once more for all the needs of my family.

I often felt like I was hanging on a cross as those around me were hurling reproaches and insults. How I longed to come down off the cross. I knew I could choose to do so, but it would be an act of disobedience. It was a fear of God and a deep desire to not fall short of His will that kept me walking that path appointed to me. I also bore the burden of knowing that my actions and choices would affect my wife and children. I wanted to provide them an example of one who would endure suffering and not shrink back from the afflicted path. I feared lest my own disobedience in abandoning the afflicted path should lead to the same action in their lives. That was a burden of guilt I did not wish to bear.

Hebrews 10:36-39

For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: "For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone shrinks back, My soul has no pleasure in him." But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

Yes, we have need of endurance. "For yet a little while" Yahweh will test us and try us. He may be silent as we endure many trials and face numerous decisions. If we know we are following the path He has appointed to us, then there is no need for Him to tell us again that this is the way. We should not expect that obedience will result in calm winds and smooth seas. Yahweh must perfect our faith

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and test our hearts to see if we will remain faithful to do that which He has commanded.

I thought much on these matters when this walk was new to me. I wanted to understand my way, and also to encourage others who were facing similar trials. During one particular season of waiting on God when many threats and pressures were weighing hard on me I wrote the following article.

Waiting, the Ultimate Test!

Joseph Herrin (6-5-2000)

This test has been the most excruciating of all. I have been tempted repeatedly to throw in the towel. At times, only a tremendous fear of missing the will of God and being disqualified to be a partaker of the things reserved for overcomers has kept me to the course. As one of God's prophetesses has recently stated, "Only those who finish the course receive the prize. Don't quit half way through the race."

The test I am speaking of is waiting. I am now in the eighth month of waiting. The trial has been severe because God has selected a path for me that would bring me into opposition with all around me. Christian brothers and sisters have judged me to be in great disobedience. I have been characterized as arrogant and prideful and wicked. My own family has judged me to be deluded and some have even questioned whether or not I was ever truly saved.

Does this worry you? Do you wonder why so many would judge a Christian brother to be in such gross disobedience? Are you affected by the preponderance of negative opinion? Certainly so many could not be wrong, could they?

Consider Joshua and Caleb returning with 10 other spies to look over the land of their promised inheritance. The land was a veritable fortress. There were walled cities and warriors of great size in the land. Joshua and Caleb did not deny this. They believed, however, that their God was bigger than these obstacles and that the giants before them would simply become their prey.

Not so, the other 10 spies. They judged by appearance. They looked at themselves and were made weak. In their own strength they perceived that they would fail and their own strength was all they had. They had not learned how to exhibit confidence in an almighty God. The rest of Israel gave way to the same fears.

Some have estimated that Israel consisted of nearly 3 million people at this time. Joshua and Caleb stood against the opinion of 3 million of their brothers and sisters. What arrogance, what pride for these two to believe that they were right when so many said that they were dead wrong. In fact, those who said they were wrong wished them to be dead. It is recorded that they spoke of stoning them. I have been stoned with the rocks of accusation and insult. It hurts. Some of the bruises don't go away very quickly. Some are deep bruises.

Consider David when he was yet a youth. He is sent to the site of battle to carry food to his brothers and to bring back news of their welfare to his father. He finds all of the army of Israel hiding behind rocks as the champion of the Philistines comes out daily to challenge and taunt them. David hears that King Saul has offered a reward to any Israelite warrior who will challenge Goliath and slay him. He even has offered one of his daughters as part of

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the reward. David hears of this and is incredulous.

David is not intimidated. He hears the taunt of Goliath and is filled with indignation. "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine who defies the armies of the LIVING GOD?" David cannot believe that such a reward has been offered to kill him. This idolater has defied the true God. His protection has been removed. He will become a prey to a warrior of the true and living God.

David's oldest brother Eliab overhears David as he talks to the soldiers about the reward offered to kill Goliath. David's words are bold and Eliab becomes angry. Eliab felt justified to hide behind the rocks every day. Goliath is huge. David's fearless words sting and Eliab begins to accuse David of evil.

1 Samuel 17:28

Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab's anger burned against David and he said, "Why have you come down? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your insolence and the wickedness of your heart; for you have come down in order to see the battle."

After all, who did David think he was. The entire army of Israel was cowed before Goliath. David was surely just exhibiting arrogance and pride. He was deluded to think that he could slay Goliath. He was but a youth. The opinion of all Israel was against him. Why did he think he was right?

No, being in the minority doesn't mean you are in the right, but being in the majority doesn't either. One must look at the issues involved.

One must see what emotions and physical and spiritual forces are shaping opinion. Fear and a desire for self-preservation were very evident in the majority in both cases mentioned. Courage and confidence in God was present in the minority.

What do you suppose the percentages are today? Do the majority of Christians express confidence in God? Are they stepping courageously out in faith, entrusting themselves to an almighty and loving God? No, most are rather choosing to play it safe. They are given to pursuing the "prudent" path. What then do you suppose their response will be to a brother or sister who wants to face the giant?

It is hard, however, to face such opposition from brothers and sisters and family over a prolonged period of time. It wears at one. It is easy to give into despair when you have taken a stand that requires courage and confidence and then God delays in bringing about your vindication. Even Abraham had difficulty in waiting. At times it seems that desperation assails you. It is best not to make decisions in these moments. Stand firm. Wait. The answer is coming.

Isaiah 40:31

Yet those who wait for the LORD will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, give me the strength to endure the test. Give me the fortitude to finish the race. Though I stumble, give me the courage and resolve to get up again and return to the race. Consider my frame, that I am but

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dust. However, I desire to be courageous dust. I desire to be bold dust. I desire to be dust that brings glory to You. Breathe Your breath upon me and cause me to stand. Cause your resurrection life to renew me and bring forth fresh vitality. My eyes are upon You, Father. You are my shield and my buckler. You are my strong tower and my fortress. Cover me over with the pinions of your wings. Hide me from the power of the evil one. Do not let my enemies triumph over me. My eyes are on You. My eyes are on You. Lift up my head once more and set my feet upon the solid Rock.

Amen

A Little Birdie Told Me

Joseph Herrin (06-25-2013)



After I posted yesterday's blog that focused on the subject of government spying I was browsing some news sites and came across some excellent articles on the same subject. The first article I found was located on *The New York Times*, and was dated June 19, 2013. The information it reveals far exceeds the revelations disclosed by Edward Snowden. This really causes one to wonder what the government agenda is when it will pursue one individual for disclosing information that has been in the public domain for years, while raising no outcry about a *New York Times* article that shares

far more egregious information.

The mainstream media has been giving the Edward Snowden story so much coverage that one has to question what the agenda is of the powers that be. If they did not want the extent of the government's spying disclosed, they would surely shut down the presses that are reporting on this information.

The New York Times article I read yesterday is a case in point. *The New York Times* is perhaps the nation's leading Illuminati propaganda distributor. What is reported in *The Times* is picked up and repeated by hundreds of other newspapers, periodicals, and various media distributors across the nation and the world.

What I suspect is happening, is the powers of the New World Order are seeking to condition the populace to the idea that being spied upon by the government is normal, necessary, and will not go away. Readers are left with a sense of powerlessness. Protest and you will be branded a terrorist or spy. Accept the government's intrusive spying and you will be left alone.

Perhaps that is the distinction between Edward Snowden and James Risen and Nick Wingfield, the authors of the news article published by *The New York Times*. Risen and Wingfield, although disclosing far more damning information about the government's collusion with technology companies, are reporting the information without protest. Their attitude is one of impartiality, or perhaps indifference. They merely report on the current state of things, but they do not raise any alarm about loss of privacy, or the dramatic expansion of government intrusion into the lives of its citizens. The following excerpts from *The New York Times* article disclose the interconnectedness of government spying agencies and technology companies.

The Hearing Ear

To get their hands on the latest software technology to manipulate and take advantage of large volumes of data, United States intelligence agencies invest in Silicon Valley start-ups, award classified contracts and recruit technology experts...

Despite the companies' assertions that they cooperate with the agency only when legally compelled, current and former industry officials say the companies sometimes secretly put together teams of in-house experts to find ways to cooperate more completely with the N.S.A. and to make their customers' information more accessible to the agency... They are also under subtle but powerful pressure from the N.S.A. to make access easier.

Skype, the Internet-based calling service, began its own secret program, Project Chess, to explore the legal and technical issues in making Skype calls readily available to intelligence agencies and law enforcement officials, according to people briefed on the program who asked not to be named to avoid trouble with the intelligence agencies.

Project Chess, which has never been previously disclosed, was small, limited to fewer than a dozen people inside Skype, and was developed as the company had sometimes contentious talks with the government over legal issues, said one of the people briefed on the project. The project began about five years ago...

A Skype executive denied last year in a blog post that recent changes in the way Skype operated were made at the behest of Microsoft to make snooping easier for law enforcement...

Microsoft executives are no longer willing to affirm statements, made by Skype several years ago, that Skype calls could not be wiretapped...

Many software technology firms involved in data analytics are open about their connections to intelligence agencies. Gary King, a co-founder and chief

scientist at Crimson Hexagon, a start-up in Boston, said in an interview that he had given talks at C.I.A. headquarters in Langley, Va., about his company's social media analytics tools.

The future holds the prospect of ever greater cooperation between Silicon Valley and the N.S.A...

[S o u r c e :
<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/20/technology/silicon-valley-and-spy-agency-bound-by-strengthening-web.html>]

Visit the following link and you will get an idea about the scope of the attention *The New York Times* is giving to this subject. Day after day the populace is being bombarded with articles on government spying. All this attention seems intent on bringing the subject out in the open while controlling the conversation to make it seem reasonable for the government to gather vast amounts of data on its own citizens.

http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/organizations/n/national_security_agency/index.html

Mainstream media is downplaying any government overreach, and is emphasizing a message that spying on citizens, and gathering vast reams of data on them, is not a cause for concern. This bias is revealed in the heading of the following news article.

Why Surveillance Draws Little Outcry

June 11, 2013 By Ben Werschkul, Pedro Rafael Rosado, Alyssa Kim and Marcus Mabry

[S o u r c e :
<http://www.nytimes.com/video/2013/06/11/us/10000002275350/why-surveillance-draws-little-outcry.html>]

Is there truly no outcry over the government's surveillance programs, or is *The New York Times* at-

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tempting to make it appear so? I am convinced that it is the latter. Those raising an alarm are denied a voice in the mainstream media to express their concerns. This is how the powers that be shape public opinion. They marginalize the dissenters, criminalize the whistleblowers, and emphasize the fairy tale view that everything is business as usual, no cause for alarm.

Following are some excerpts from another news article that I came across yesterday after I posted the blog on Big Brother.

Is the Government Spying On You Through Your Own Computer's Webcam Or Microphone?

June 24, 2013

Source: Washington's Blog

Government – Or Private Individuals – May Be Watching and Listening

We documented earlier today that - if you are near your smart phone – the NSA or private parties could remotely activate your microphone and camera and spy on you.

This post shows that the same is true for our computer.

Initially, the NSA built backdoors into the world's most popular software program – Microsoft Windows – by 1999.

And a government expert told the Washington Post that the government “quite literally can watch your ideas form as you type” (confirmed).

Reuters documented last year that the U.S. and Israeli governments can remotely turn on a computer's microphone:

“Evidence suggest that the virus, dubbed Flame, may have been built on behalf of the same nation or nations that commissioned the Stuxnet worm that attacked Iran's nuclear program in 2010 [i.e. the U.S. and Israel], according to Kaspersky Lab, the Russian cyber security software maker that took credit for discovering the infections.

Kaspersky researchers said they have yet to determine whether Flame had a specific mission like Stuxnet, and declined to say who they think built it.

Cyber security experts said the discovery publicly demonstrates what experts privy to classified information have long known: that nations have been using pieces of malicious computer code as weapons to promote their security interests for several years..

Flame can gather data files, remotely change settings on computers, turn on PC microphones to record conversations, take screen shots and log instant messaging chats.

Kaspersky Lab said Flame and Stuxnet appear to infect machines by exploiting the same flaw in the Windows operating system and that both viruses employ a similar way of spreading...

PC Magazine tech columnist John Dvorak writes:

From what we know, the NSA has back door access into Apple, Microsoft , and Google...

Microsoft is the source of the operating system for Windows and Windows cell phones. Apple controls the OS for Macs, iPhones, and iPads. Google controls the Chrome OS, Chrome Browser, and Android cell phones. The companies regularly push operating system upgrades and security updates to users on a regular basis.

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Imagine however that the NSA has access to these updates at the source and has the ability to alter these updates in order to install some sort of spyware on your phone, tablet, or computer. The software could turn on your camera or microphone remotely, read all your private data, or erase everything and brick your phone or computer.

Moreover – as documented by Microsoft, Ars Technica, cnet, the Register, Sydney Morning Herald, and many other sources – private parties can turn on your computer’s microphone and camera as well.

Cracked noted in 2010:

All sorts of programs are available to let you remotely commandeer a webcam, and many of them are free. Simple versions will just take photos or videos when they detect movement, but more complex software will send you an e-mail when the computer you’ve installed the program on is in use, so you can immediately login and control the webcam without the hassle of having to stare at an empty room until the person you’re stalking shows up.

The bottom line is that – as with your phone, OnStar type system or other car microphone, Xbox, and other digital recording devices – you shouldn’t say or do anything near your computer that you don’t want shared with the world.

Postscript: You could obviously try to cover your webcam and microphone when you don’t want to use them.

[S o u r c e :
http://www.blacklistednews.com/Is_the_Government_Spying_On_You_Through_Your_Own_Computer%E2%80%99s_Webcam_Or_Microphone%3F/26892/0/0/0/Y/M.html]

My purpose in sharing this information is NOT to incite protest, nor to cause alarm. Rather, it is to inform the people of God of the true state of things that they might walk wisely in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

It is quite reasonable to conclude that the mega corporations that dominate all areas of communications technology have been working in collusion with government spy agencies for a long time. If any company proved unwilling to cooperate with the government, there were ways to apply pressure upon them. The same powers that run the government also control banking and the media. Simply cut off a company’s access to financing, or begin a media smear campaign to cause a company to lose favor with the public. If all else fails, a hostile corporate take-over can always be arranged whereby a company that is complicit with the government take ownership of some less compliant technology company, and bring it into line with the government’s wishes. This is evidently what occurred when Microsoft acquired Skype in 2011.

Shortly after Microsoft purchased Skype, fundamental changes were made in the way Skype routes its communications sessions. Following is an excerpt from an Internet source:

According to CNN, hackers and bloggers are saying the changes, which push some of the video calling process onto Skype’s own computers instead of onto random machines on the Internet, could help the app spy on users’ calls, presumably at the request of a court or government.

“Reportedly, Microsoft is re-engineering these supernodes to make it easier for law enforcement to monitor calls by allowing the supernodes to not only make the introduction but to actually route the voice data of the calls as well,” Tim Verry, from the website ExtremeTech, wrote last week. (Supernodes are third-party computers that act as a sort of directory service for routing calls.)

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“In this way, the actual voice data would pass through the monitored servers and the call is no longer secure. It is essentially a man-in-the-middle attack, and it is made all the easier because Microsoft — who owns Skype and knows the keys used for the service’s encryption — is helping.”

[S o u r c e :
<http://lissnup.wordpress.com/2012/07/27/skype-whos-listening/>]

It would be well that the saints today take the words of King Solomon to heart.

Ecclesiastes 10:20

Furthermore, in your bedchamber do not curse a king, and in your sleeping rooms do not curse a rich man, for a bird of the heavens will carry the sound, and the winged creature will make the matter known.

Did you ever wonder where the saying, “A little bird told me” originated? Solomon is to be credited with it.

Modern technology has breathed new life into this old proverb. Therefore, be careful what you tweet!

twitter



May you be blessed with peace and understanding in these days.

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