

WINNING
The
BATTLE

FOR YOUR
MIND,
WILL *and*
EMOTIONS

ROBERT
HOTCHKIN



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Dedicated to:

The King of Glory, the Lord Almighty, the Lord Invincible who has won every battle—including the battle for our mind, will and emotions—so that we can live in the fullness of victory and operate in the fullness of His presence, power and personality all the days of our lives.

And to every believer who has persevered in faith, choosing to believe the eternal truth of God’s Word over the report of his or her temporary circumstances. I honor you as the champion of faith, dominion steward and agent of impact that you are.

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Foreword

In a world filled with spiritual confusion, moral decline and intentional corruption, we desperately need to know how to win the battle for the mind, will and emotions!

The devil is a liar. In fact, Jesus called him the father of lies and disclosed that he “does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature” (John 8:44).

Oh yes, the devil is a big liar! He cannot speak the truth. Most of the time, the exact opposite of anything he would speak into your thoughts is true. For example, he may attempt to fill your mind with thoughts like these: *You’re a loser. You’re a failure. You’re rejected by God and man. You’re sick and dying. You’re destined for lack and poverty.* The exact opposite is true! The Word has the final and eternal say on the matter, and it declares that you are an overcomer, a champion, an object of God’s love and affection, favored by God and man, alive, well, full of strength and vitality and living in divine abundance. How do I know this is true? Because the Word reveals the truth.

Jesus *is* truth. Truth is His nature, and the word He speaks is truth, spirit and life (see John 6:63; 10:10; 17:17).

Here is the issue plain and simple: If you believe a lie, you will manifest the fruit of that lie, but if you believe the truth, you will manifest the fruit of that truth. It seems so simple, and it is: Believe the devil's lies and you will experience death, loss and destruction, but if you believe the truth of Jesus, you will experience life in its abundance. It is such a simple decision, yet so many people struggle internally and end up making decisions in favor of the devil's lie. Why? It is usually because we do not understand how to discern the battlefield.

This battle needs to be fought and won, but you will not find this battle on land, sea or air. This battle is in your mind, will and emotions—your soul. Every battle you face can be won every time, and the more you practice winning, the more you win.

I remember that as a young woman, I was defeated constantly in certain areas of life due to giving in to lies. I did not know they were lies, and neither did I understand the reality of the devil or that he was behind them. I simply concluded that the lies were my own thoughts, beliefs and feelings. They all seemed so legitimate, making total sense according to the circumstances I was in. As a result, I believed that I was rejected, oppressed, depressed, weak and broken, because it all seemed so real. Something can appear real, yet be so far from the truth.

I needed *truth* as a plumb line not only to expose the lie, but also to use the truth as a powerful weapon in the battle for the mind, will and emotions. Everything in life flows from the soul. Scripture alerts us to watch over our heart with all diligence, because from it flow the issues of life (see Proverbs 4:23).

If all the issues of life flow from your soul (mind, will and emotions), then it makes sense that this part of you is what the enemy will choose to target. If he can control your thoughts, feelings and decisions, he can control your life.

I slowly, over time, learned to fight this war for the soul with the weapon of truth, and as I persevered in the battle, I experienced more and more victories. Robert Hotchkin's invitation to encounter victory in the battle for the soul is for every believer to embrace.

Robert is a man I have known for many years. I have witnessed him battle through intense warfare in his soul, and I have watched him prevail over and over again. He learned to turn what appeared to be stumbling blocks into stepping-stones that brought him to a place of greater glory and testimony. He can help you do the same as he discloses valuable nuggets of "manna" from heaven that he learned from the presence of God in the midst of battle.

Robert does not write merely from a place of understanding spiritual principles on this subject, but rather from a place of experience in warring with the truth and for the truth. As a result, he is well qualified as a seasoned veteran to give you valuable input on this subject and to impart fortifying revelation that will greatly empower and establish you.

You were created to win, to be the head and not the tail, above and not beneath. It is time to arise and shine. Your light has come. Stand in this truth, which is your strength, for *you* are a champion in Christ!

Patricia King, founder, Patricia King Ministries

Acknowledgments

My name may be on the cover of *Winning the Battle for Your Mind, Will and Emotions*, but by no means was this a solo effort. There are many people who, in many ways, have helped make this book all that it is. There have also been several key people in my life who have helped make me the writer, and the man, that I am. They all deserve acknowledgment and my heartfelt thanks.

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My sister, Carol, who has always been my friend and champion. And who is also one of the greatest examples I know of someone who has grabbed hold of Jesus and won the battle for her mind, will and emotions. Thank you for being the best big sister ever.

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me. Over and over again. “Thank you” does not cover it, but you sure deserve to hear it.

And most of all, I want to acknowledge the Holy Spirit. My God, my Teacher, my Comforter, my Wisdom, my Helper and my Friend. Thank You for filling me, surrounding me, overflowing me and being with me every step of the way on this book and in my life. I honor You, adore You and appreciate You more than words can communicate.

Introduction

The Eternal Truth of I AM

For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie.

Romans 1:25

Heaven is only a decision away. This is one of the most important truths that any Christian will ever realize. The reason it is so key to know—to grab hold of, to live inside of, to believe as a deep and immovable truth—is because it seems at times that heaven and the fullness of God’s Kingdom are not available to us. The enemy and his minions work overtime to lie and lure us into believing the report of our temporary circumstances, as opposed to the eternal truth that God is good, He loves us very much and He has made available to us all we need through the gift of His Son and the finished work of the cross. His Kingdom is ours, all the time, no matter

what. All we have to do is to agree. Simple. Not always easy, but simple.

God is present tense. He is the Great I AM (Exodus 3:14). Not the Great I Was, or the Great I Will Be. He and His Kingdom are always present and always great, always there and always victorious (see Joshua 1:5, 9; Psalm 24:8). That means anything we have ever had or experienced of Him or with Him is still ours. It also means that there is nothing we are looking forward to from Him or in Him that is not ours already—not just one day in the sweet by-and-by, but right now, in Christ. When we as Christians get this—really grab hold of it as *truth* so that we never surrender this triumph in Christ—it will change how we think, how we pray, how we respond, how we live and how we contend for greater manifestations of what we know is already ours. When we understand who He is and what He has accomplished, we will shift from waiting for God to do something to knowing that He already has. We will go from crying out for change to realizing we have been empowered by the finished work of our victorious Risen Lord to be His change agents in the earth. We will no longer be overwhelmed by our feelings, but instead, we will be triumphant in our faith. We will be transformed from pitiful to powerful, from worriers to warriors, from ordinary to extraordinary, from natural to supernatural.

This is the battle—your battle. When grief from your past, the challenges of your present or fear for your future try to tell you that God is not there or that He does not care, the eternal truth of “I AM” can arise in you and trump everything—past, present, future, fear, feelings, frustration, all of it. If, in those moments, you will choose to believe Him above all else, you will be victorious.

Yes, this is the battle, but even more important than recognizing the battle is realizing where it takes place. It is in your soul—your mind, will and emotions. Your soul is where you feel and think and believe and decide. It is the place of volition. It is where you exercise the profoundly powerful gift of your free will.

The battle is real, and at times it is intense. But we are not in the battle alone. We have a champion. His name is Jesus, the Great I AM (see John 8:58; Revelation 1:8). And the truth is that He has already won this battle for us (see John 19:30; 1 John 3:8). His Holy Spirit works constantly to remind us of this, so we may choose to live inside Christ's victory all the days of our lives, and in every situation we encounter (see John 14:26; 2 Corinthians 2:14).

The battle has always been in the soul. Not just for you and me, but for everyone who has ever walked with the Lord. Look at Moses. He had to win this battle of the soul and make the choice of whether or not to believe his past and current circumstances, or to trust in what the Great I AM had for him. For many years, Moses had been tending someone else's sheep on the back side of nowhere (see Exodus 2–3). The report of his past was that he was an unwanted failure. When he had stepped out to be a deliverer of his people, the Israelites, it had not gone well. They had rejected him, and he had been forced to flee for his life (see Exodus 2:11–15). Then year after year, out wandering around the wilderness, he must have felt as though he was getting further and further from the promise over his life, and even from God Himself. His current circumstances declared that his best years were behind him and he was, more than likely, an also-ran who would never do anything of any real impact or merit. This is when God showed up and declared Himself "I AM,"

reminding Moses that the gifts, callings and promises of the Great I AM do not expire, because He is always present and always present tense.

God let Moses know that He had seen and heard all that he and Israel had been through, and that Moses was the deliverer of the Israelite people. Nothing had changed. No past failures or current difficulties were greater than the truth, reality and power of who God was, what He had planned and His ability to bring it forth in the now—no matter what. But Moses had to choose to believe this. He had questions about himself, and questions about Israel. The Lord's answer to all of it was "I AM." In other words, despite how things must have looked or felt, and regardless of how long they had looked or felt that way, Moses' destiny was as present tense as ever because I AM was as present tense as ever.

The enemy works overtime to remind us of our failures and disappointments, hoping to convince us that nothing will ever work out the way we want. He pokes at us with present challenges so that we will choose to believe that things will always be challenging. The enemy wants us to feel defeated so that we give up, give in and quit believing. Getting us to do that is the only victory he has available to him. He is defeated, so he wants us to feel that way, too.

The enemy's strategy in the battle for the mind, will and emotions is to get us to confuse the temporary "now" with the eternal I AM. He works constantly to trick us into believing the lie that past failures and present difficulties are our portion. No. God—all that He is, all He has done and all He has given us—is our portion. We have been fully restored to relationship with the Great I AM. We are grafted into the present-tense certainty of the fullness of His victory and Kingdom.

The enemy is defeated. He knows it, just as he knows that his only real opportunity is to try to manipulate the gift of our free will—to make us believe the lie that we, not he, are cast down. The way he does this is to highlight temporary circumstances and challenges, poking at our feelings and stirring up fear, frustration, doubt, offense and self-pity so that we will choose to exchange the eternal truth of I AM for a lie of Satan. The enemy wants us to come into agreement with how things look and feel right now. He wants to get us mired in murmuring, complaining and cursing. But we can win the battle for our mind, will and emotions by choosing to trust in the always-truth of I AM and coming into agreement with His Word, His victory and His no-matter-what faithfulness. Then instead of murmuring, complaining and cursing, we will find ourselves praising, worshiping, interceding and decreeing. And in that, we will know victory, and we will break through into greater manifestations of what has been ours all along—His fullness!

I learned the power of this type of soul shift firsthand years ago, while in the midst of a decade-plus battle to overcome serious and mysterious health challenges. At one of my lowest points—after working with numerous doctors in multiple cities and countries, spending all kinds of money and enduring just about every test and procedure—I was feeling sicker and weaker than ever. In that moment I was frustrated, discouraged and afraid. One morning I cried out to God, complaining about how unfair my sorry state was. I told Him that I had prayed every prayer I could think of, decreed the Word again and again, stood in faith and had nothing left. There was nothing else I could think of to do.

Very quietly He spoke to my heart, saying, *I want you to thank Me for the health and strength you have right now.*

My immediate response was to shoot back out loud, “What health? What strength?” I was angry, even offended. I wanted to shout back how unfair it was that I was barely able to get out of bed and make it to my prayer chair. I was caught up in self-pity. And I was misunderstanding what He was leading me to do. I was making the mistake of thinking that praising Him for what I had was the same thing as accepting my current set of circumstances. I was allowing how things looked and felt in the “now” to mire me in the muck of fear, frustration, self-pity and offense. I was feeling sorry for myself, and in that, choosing to be pitiful instead of powerful. In other words, I was losing the battle for my mind, will and emotions.

But the Lord! Again He nudged me to praise Him for the strength I had. Almost begrudgingly, I decided to do it: “Fine. Praise You, Lord, for the strength I have in my body right now.”

Much to my surprise I felt a faint stirring, the beginning of a shift. Not in my body so much as in my soul. I said it again: “Praise You, Lord, for the strength I have in my body right now.” As soon as I did, more bubbled up: “Thank You, Lord, that I had the strength to get out of bed. Thank You that I had the strength to walk to my prayer chair. And thank You that I have breath in my lungs and strength in my body to praise You and give You thanks this morning.” And I meant it.

The more I chose to give thanks and the more I chose to praise Him—the more I chose to take command of my soul and bring it into alignment with the truth that radiated from my born-again spirit—the more I chose to do this, the easier and easier it was to lift myself out of the muck and mire of the temporary “now” and rejoice in the truth of

the eternal I AM. A knowing arose in me. A certainty came back into my soul. I would not be offended and downcast by my current circumstances. Instead, I would declare that the offense was the illegal attack of sickness against my body, and I would cast down those symptoms again and again in faith and certainty, until I saw the full manifestation of the truth of I AM, in whom I was strong, healed and filled with the fullness of life (see John 10:10). That was my portion! That was my truth! I chose to believe it. I chose to rejoice in it. And I chose to praise Him for it. All through the power of my will.

The will is how we take command of the soul. We choose to do it. If it seems odd that we use a part of our soul—the will—to keep our soul under control, think of it like this: You use a part of your car—the steering wheel—to keep your car under control. When you get in and buckle up, you choose to take control of your car via the steering wheel. You don't have to do it that way. You could just as well punch the gas and see what happens. But that would not be wise. In wisdom, you put your hands on the steering wheel so that you can take control of where your car goes. It is the same thing with your will and your soul. Think of the steering wheel as your will, and the car as your soul. We choose in our soul, via our will, to take command of our soul and to steer it. By choosing to praise and give thanks instead of complaining or murmuring, I was taking control of my soul. I was steering it. Instead of allowing the “car” of my soul to go careening wildly about from feeling to feeling or thought to thought, I used my will to steer my soul into giving thanks and praise.

This was not just a onetime thing. Taking control of my soul was a weapon I discovered I could wield again and again. Almost every morning, I would begin my day by choosing

to praise God at least ten times in a row. Some days I even counted them off: “Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me . . . one! Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me . . . two! Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me . . . three!” And so on. The more I took command of my soul and caused it to come into agreement with the eternal truth of the Spirit of I AM within me, the more I could feel increase—not only of faith, but also of power and authority. I would be stirred not only to take command of my soul, but also of my body: “Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is *within* me. Praise the Lord, my *liver*! Praise the Lord, my *heart*! Praise the Lord, my *lungs*! Praise the Lord, my *thyroid*! Praise the Lord, my *blood*! Praise the Lord, my *immune system*!”

I would name every system, every organ and every gland in my body that was struggling or failing, and I would command it to praise the Lord. By faith, I could feel the shift moving from my soul into my body. I knew that all of heaven and the fullness of life, health and strength were mine *right now* because of His love for me and because of the amazing gift of the finished work of the cross. And I would praise the Great I AM yet again.

The morning in my prayer chair that I began with feeling sorry for myself ended with discovering the power of taking command of my soul. It was a marker in time for me, much like the burning bush encounter with the Great I AM was for Moses. That morning was when the Lord began to teach me how to win the battle for my mind, will and emotions. I can look back and see that from that day forward, there was an increase of breakthroughs and improvements. It was not always steady. It was not always fast. But there had been a shift for sure in my soul. And in time, also a shift in my body,

to the point where I now enjoy a noticeable and dramatic improvement in my health and strength. I am able, once again, to travel the world and preach. And I operate in a greater level of authority in those meetings, I believe, because of the greater levels of authority the Lord taught me to operate in over my *self*. When we co-labor with God to take the inner territory of our mind, will and emotions, there is no outer territory that will be able to stand against His truth and our faith in it (see Joshua 1:3–5; Mark 11:22–24).

I believe the reason you have this book in your hands right now is because you have come to your marker in time—just like that morning in my prayer chair for me and that day at the burning bush for Moses. As you read these pages, you will be enlightened, equipped and empowered. You will not only come to see the battle for what it is; you will also discover how to walk in victory. The enemy will no longer be able to steal from you. Feelings and fears will no longer control you. You will go from being overwhelmed by circumstances to being an overcomer who knows truth and operates in faith. All of heaven is yours, right now. *Winning the Battle for Your Mind, Will and Emotions* will help you see and agree with that reality, so that you can tear down every lie of the enemy and live in the fullness of blessing that is yours in Christ.

1

In the Beginning

Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion.”

Genesis 1:26 *ESV*

From the very beginning, we can clearly see the heart and plan of the Father—to have a people in the earth who are fully His and fully operating in His authority, on His behalf. We were created from relationship, for relationship, and in that relationship we are to be His expression into all of creation. Because of who made us, and because of how we are made, we are able to inhabit the earth as His dominion stewards—His agents of impact—expressing the reality of Him and His Kingdom throughout all of creation, all the time, wherever we are and in whatever situations we find ourselves.

At the very beginning of the Bible, God reveals who He is, what He does and how He does it. The first three verses of Genesis 1 say this:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.

In this amazing opening salvo of revelation, God puts on display that He is the Creator. He shows us that He is well able to create something from nothing, and that He also brings order and light to chaos and darkness, immediately and easily.

Looking a bit further into the passage, not only do we see who God is and what He does, but we also get key insights into how He does it, starting with the very first mention of “God” in verse 1. The Hebrew word used for God here is *Elohiym*. It carries the meaning “supreme God” or “God above all gods.” What is so interesting (and revealing) about this word is that it is plural. The very first mention of God in the Bible shows that He is a plurality, a relationship. Our God is One, but He shows us at the very beginning of the Bible that He is One made up of three distinct Persons. He then goes on throughout Scripture to reveal these Persons as Father, Son (the Word) and Holy Spirit. I realize that the topic of the Godhead is huge, and I am not trying to open a massive theological can of worms here, but it is important for us to see that our God, in whose image we are made, is One, and in that One is a Three-in-One relationship in perfect order, union, harmony and communion. In seeing this, we then begin to get insight into how it is God does what He does.

In verses 2 and 3 of Genesis 1, the power and impact of this united plurality co-laboring as One is made evident. We see in verse 2 that the earth was formless and void, and that there was darkness everywhere. But the Spirit of God begins

to hover and move. Then in verse 3 God sends forth the Word. As God the Father, the Spirit and the Word (the Son) all worked together as a perfectly united relationship within the One, light broke forth and divine order was established. This is how the world was brought forth.

Our God is Three-in-One—Father, Son (Word) and Spirit—always in perfect relationship, harmony, order and unity. This is how the Creator creates—as a unified cooperation of agreement. This constant and continual divinely ordered harmony, in a united expression of the will and ways of the One, is what brings forth His plans and purposes from the unseen realm into the seen realm. This is how the supernatural becomes quite literally natural. This is why, at a word, darkness is totally and utterly shattered. This is how chaos is quickly and easily turned into divine order.

This agreement of the Three-in-One may strike you as a “duh.” After all, of course the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are all in agreement. They are One. But the reason this is so important for you to see is because you are made in His image and made to be His expression in the earth. An important key to being effective in this mandate is to see and understand the way He does it—as a harmonious co-laboring of the Three-in-One. In that harmony, He displays for us, the ones made in His image, how we can be successful in carrying out what we are called to do in His dominion authority in the earth, on behalf of Him and His Kingdom.

Made in His Image

After bringing forth all of creation (see Genesis 1:1–25), God crowned His works by creating man and giving us dominion authority over all the earth and everything in it:

Then God said, “*Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.*” *God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.* God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and *fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule.*”

Genesis 1:26–28 (emphasis added)

We see from these verses that the “Us” of God—Father, Son and Spirit—created us male and female in Their image, to be Their representation in the earth. That our Three-in-One God made us in His image is key. Just as God is Three-in-One, so also are you three-in-one. He made you body, soul and spirit and declared the totality of you (in proper relationship with Him) as “very good” (Genesis 1:31). I am not saying, of course, that our three “parts” are the same as the Three-in-One Persons of the Trinity. Rather, I am saying that our “parts” need to operate in harmony, too—a unified harmony of right relationship with God. This is the key to operating effectively in dominion authority as His representative in the earth. To be “in His image.” To be three-in-one, as He designed and intended—a right relationship of body and soul with born-again spirit—all working together according to His will, ways, character and nature.

God begins the Bible in Genesis 1 by showing us His Three-in-One self cooperating in divine unity to shatter darkness, establish divine order and bring forth creation. He then creates us to be His creative expression. This is not just a history lesson. In those initial 25 verses of the Bible’s first chapter, God is not only bringing forth all of creation; He is also modeling to us, as His made-in-His-image dominion

stewards of that creation, how to do the job He appoints us to in verses 26–28. We are three-in-one, made in the image of the Three-in-One and made to operate in a similar unified harmony of cooperation. When our three “parts”—body, soul and spirit—are in right relationship with God (under His authority) and in right relationship with each other, then we are true “re-presentations” of Him in the earth. And it is very good!

What is not very good is when our body, soul and spirit are not cooperating in unity and agreement with God’s will, ways, character and nature. We best represent and reflect God’s image when we are a unified three-in-one, not when we are three parts going their own ways. An obvious example of this disunity would be a Christian whose born-again spirit is connected deep-unto-deep with God, but his body is engaging in sexual sin and his soul is filled with anger and negativity. That Christian is still, of course, three-in-one in the sense that he is one person with a body, soul and spirit. But he is not operating as a true, harmonious three-in-one reflection of the Three-in-One God in whose image he is made. The born-again spirit of that errant Christian is connected with God, but his body and his soul are not in right relationship with God, nor are they in right relationship with each other. The actions of his body and the thoughts, emotions and choices of his soul are not in harmony with the truth of God that is known and always adhered to by his born-again spirit. This errant Christian, though still one person with three parts, is not a harmonious three-in-one agreement expressing the fullness of God into the earth. This is not the place of true victory and power. This is not how God originally created us to be, and it is not what we as born-again Christians are re-created for through Jesus.

Free to Choose

We are made in God’s image. We are divinely designed to be three-in-one—a flowing harmony of our body, soul and spirit united in relationship and agreement with Him. From that relationship, we then express Him into the earth in powerful ways that shatter darkness and bring divine order in the midst of confusion and chaos. This is who we truly are. This is what we truly are made for. What determines whether or not we fully walk in this place of harmony, victory, authority, influence and divine power? Our soul.

Our soul is the “place” of our mind, will and emotions. It is where we think our thoughts, feel our feelings and make our choices. It is the seat of the great gift of free will that the Lord has blessed us with, where we are free to choose whether we will trust in God and follow Him and His ways as the new creations we are in Christ, or follow the desires of our old carnal nature and come out of agreement with God. It is all about the choices we make. And just to be clear, I am not talking about choosing to enter into a works-based religion that would try to convince us that pious performance or self-righteousness gives us favor with God and thus earns us an ability to move in His authority. I am talking about embracing and valuing above all else the relationship we have through Christ, which plugs us into all that God is and all that we were originally created for. And then within that relationship, *choosing* to agree with who we truly are in God by *choosing* to trust in His goodness, and believing in Him and His eternal truth over any report of temporary circumstances, fearful thoughts or runaway feelings.

When we receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, we are born again and His Holy Spirit gives us “new life.” The *Father* does for each of us who receive the gift of His *Son*

through His *Holy Spirit* what He did for all of creation in Genesis 1:2–5. Our Three-in-One God overcomes our darkness with His light, establishes His Kingdom order in the midst of what was our chaos and brings forth glorious new life (see 2 Corinthians 5:17). We fully receive this new life into our born-again spirit, which is made brand-new and complete in Christ (see John 1:1–13; 3:3–6). Our born-again spirit is perfect. It does not sin. It does not rebel. It is always in harmony with God and His Kingdom, submitted to the leading of His Holy Spirit (see Romans 8:9–10; 1 John 3:9). When our body and soul are aligned with our born-again spirit, we are agreeing with and flowing in the truth and reality that we are made in God’s image—a three-in-one reflection and representation of the Three-in-One. We choose whether or not to be in agreement with this truth. We choose whether or not to bring our body and soul into alignment with our perfect born-again spirit through the actions we choose to take, the thoughts we choose to focus on and the feelings we choose to be filled with. We make all of these choices in our soul.

In Deuteronomy 30:19 God says, “I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So *choose* life in order that you may live” (emphasis added). We often think of this in terms of our salvation, and certainly when we choose Jesus as Lord and Savior, we choose life. But this is not only about coming to know Christ. We have the choice of life and death, blessing and curse, before us in every decision we make. Will we choose to trust in and follow the will and ways of our good God so that we continue to inhabit the fullness of life, blessing, victory and empowerment? Or will we choose to give in to the lusts of the flesh and the lures and lies of the enemy, which appeal to our old selfish, prideful,

I-me-mine fallen nature? We make that decision in our soul. In any given moment, and in every situation we face, it is our soul that chooses whether we will trust, believe and abide in God. The arena for the battle of life versus death and blessing versus curse is our soul. This is why the soul realm, the realm of our mind, will and emotions, is the main target of the enemy, and it has been since the beginning.

A Snake in the Garden

The enemy often understands the impact and importance of our mind, will and emotions better than we do. From the very beginning, Satan has grasped the power that those of us in relationship with God have through the decisions we make: power for life or death, blessing or curse, for us and for all of creation. We see this clearly in Genesis 3:1–7, when Satan comes to Eve in the Garden. Depending on the translation you use, Scripture points out that this snake of an enemy is more shrewd, crafty, clever or cunning than any other creature (see Genesis 3:1). The Hebrew word for it is *aruwm*, from the root *aram*. In all of its various English translations, the word implies an ability and desire to manipulate. This is exactly what the enemy does to Eve, first by questioning God’s word so that she gets up in her head about what God “really” said, and then by appealing to her pride and appetites to make disobeying God seem like an appealing choice (see Genesis 3:1, 5). When we read this passage, we see the deceitfulness of the enemy and how he lures Eve in, but it is important to grasp that she made the decision. She had the power to obey or disobey, to believe and trust in God’s goodness and wisdom or not. It was her choice, a choice she made in her soul. Look at Genesis 3:6:

The woman was *convinced*. She saw that the tree was beautiful and *its fruit looked delicious*, and *she wanted the wisdom it would give her*. So she took some of the fruit and ate it.

Genesis 3:6 NLT, emphasis added

The temptation to disobey appealed to her appetites (the fruit looked delicious) and to her pride (she wanted forbidden wisdom), but the decision whether or not to let those temptations be more appealing than the truth of God’s word and the reality of His character and nature was made in her soul. The battle is ultimately always in the soul realm—the place of decision and volition.

Adam had the same decision to make. It was his choice whether he would value dwelling in the fullness of relationship, provision, protection, fellowship and communion with God in the Garden by trusting in the truth and wisdom of His word, or choose to deny and disobey the Lord’s clear instructions. Just like Eve, he chose to disobey. The result was a curse coming upon them and all of creation. As we saw earlier, we are God’s dominion stewards in the earth. The decisions we make not only affect us; they affect all of creation.

Nothing Is Missing

Adam and Eve made a bad decision in the Garden. That is clear. But what may not be as immediately evident is *why* they made that bad decision. What was the temptation of the enemy that was powerful enough to get them to value a bite of that one forbidden fruit above all else God had given them and blessed them with? We see it in Genesis 3:5: “Your

eyes will be opened when you eat it. *You will become just like God*” (NLT, emphasis added).

The temptation was to be “like” God. The irony of this is that they already were made in His image! Genesis 1:26–27 makes it clear that Adam and Eve, just like you and me, were made in the very image of God. In relationship with Him, they enjoyed all the fullness of who He is and all He had given them. There was not one thing they lacked. The Garden was where heaven overlapped earth. In that place there was total provision, perfection and protection. It was the place of union and communion with God and His Kingdom. The lie behind the enemy’s temptation was that there was something “missing”—that something else, something external was needed to be fully who and what God created them to be. The lie was that God was keeping “something” from them. No!

God made us in His very likeness. He has given us everything. His Word and instructions are not to control, limit or keep things from us. Just the opposite! They are to keep us from harm so that we can fully enjoy the fullness of who He is, how He made us and all that we are created for and blessed with. That is what He wanted for Adam and Eve, and what He wants for all of us today—to know that in Him, we have been given everything. In the greatness of I AM, we have all the fullness of who He is, all He has done and all He has given us. Right now. Nothing is missing. Nothing else is needed. If it ever looks or feels that way, it is a temporary lie that we must stand against by choosing to stand on the eternal truth of I AM.

Adam and Eve were made in the image of the Creator. They were divinely designed to be His creative expression, stewarding all of creation. But because they did not first and

foremost steward the realm of their soul, instead of helping create godly order in the earth—filling it with limitless light and life—they created separation, division, fear, shame and pain (see Genesis 3:11–24). Because they did not watch over and steward the interior realm of their mind, will and emotions and choose to operate as a three-in-one representation of God in whose image they were made, the exterior realm they were entrusted with was cursed instead of blessed. Our decisions matter; they have impact.

Same Old Enemy, Same Old Tactics

From the beginning, we were created to steward creation on behalf of God, in the place He created for us. Literally in the place He made for us to dwell with Him, where heaven overlapped earth (Eden), and figuratively in the place of being His representatives to all of creation. When Adam and Eve rebelled against God, they were banished from the place of God, where heaven overlapped earth. They were cast out of Eden and were no longer His dominion stewards in the earth, working in His deputized authority. Instead, they were toiling in their own strength to meet their own needs. This was not God being “mean.” He was not punishing them or withholding from them. He did not remove them from Eden. They removed themselves. By their decisions. By not stewarding the realm of their soul. By choosing no longer to be three-in-one in the image of the Three-in-One.

Our original place of communion with God was in the Garden of Eden. Now, as New Testament believers, our place of communion with Him is in Christ. Because of Jesus, we have been re-created by the Creator (see 2 Corinthians 5:17). We are once again in the fullness of relationship with our

heavenly Father, and once again His dominion stewards in the earth. In Christ, we once again dwell in the God-place, so that through us heaven can once again overlap earth, to the glory of the Lord.

The enemy still wants to sidle in with lies, half-truths and obfuscations that tempt us to choose to doubt and ultimately disobey God, so that we decide in our own free will to come out of the place of alignment, agreement, life, blessing and power. He knows God will never turn from us, so he works at getting us to turn from God. This shrewd, crafty and cunning enemy of ours has not changed. His tactics are the same. He still comes against our body and assaults our mind to get us to question whether God “really said” (see Genesis 3:1). He still wants us to believe something is missing or being denied to us, so that we will choose to decide for ourselves what is good or bad, as opposed to trusting in the goodness of God, the truth of His Word and the wisdom of His ways in all things at all times—especially when we do not understand or like our temporary circumstances. He will point to situations where we have experienced challenges in the past, have struggles in the present or have fear about our future. He wants us to choose to believe that God is keeping something from us, so that instead of operating from faith, choosing alignment and releasing light, life and blessings, we give in to fear, choose selfish rebellion and release darkness, death and curses.

All the enemy’s efforts are ultimately focused on our soul—our place of decision. This is why it is critical for us to realize that as God’s dominion stewards in the earth, the first realm we must steward and take authority over is ourselves. The more effective we are in stewarding the internal realm of our soul—watching over our mind, will and emotions so that we keep wholly in alignment with God’s truth,

will and ways—the more effective we will be in stewarding the external realms we are entrusted with.

Adam and Eve failed to steward their souls and themselves, which is why they came up short in stewarding the realm of the Garden. They chose to doubt God’s word in their minds. They chose to eat of the apple with their bodies. They chose to desire forbidden fruit that would make them lords of their own lives—deciding for themselves what was good and what was evil—as opposed to trusting in the goodness and wisdom of God and what He said. The battle was in the soul then, and the battle is in the soul now.

What Will You Create?

The soul is the place where we make decisions and determine the course of our existence in the earth, and our impact on creation—alignment or rebellion, harmony or discord, life or death, blessing or curse, light and order, or darkness and chaos. The soul is where we choose. This can make it seem like the soul is “in charge,” but it is not. Like all things of the Kingdom, the greatest among us is the servant to all (see Mark 9:34–35). The soul may have a great role in God’s three-in-one divine design of us, but that role is to serve the fullness of who the Lord created us to be. The soul does this by being submitted to the leading of God through our born-again spirit and making faith-filled (and faith-fueled) decisions that keep our mind, heart and body (thoughts, feelings, words, actions and choices) in alignment and agreement with the truth of God’s Word. It is the decisions you make in your soul that determine whether at any given moment you are communing with God or not—whether you are operating in dominion authority or selfish ambition.

As God's dominion steward in the earth, you are His answer to dealing with the darkness and chaos in the world today. You are made in His image and empowered to be His divine representative (His "re-presentation") throughout all of creation. In Genesis 1:1–25 God models to us how we can do this on His behalf and to His glory. He puts on display, for those of us who are made in His image, how we can operate in His divine authority in the earth.

When your body, soul and spirit flow in three-in-one agreement in the image of His Three-in-One unity, you can expect darkness to be shattered and chaos to be brought into divine order. When you choose to allow the true wisdom and revelation of your heavenly Father to lead you, body, soul and spirit, you become His gate through which heaven invades the earth. Jesus taught His disciples this, and that includes you (see Matthew 16:17–19).

The enemy knows this and is terrified of it. He is not your biggest problem; you are his. If you are willing to arise and shine—to stand with God and believe, no matter what—then there is no darkness, chaos, minion or manifestation of the enemy that will be able to stand before you (see Joshua 1:3–9).

That is why Satan wants to lure you into believing the lie that "something is missing" and that God is withholding something from you. Maybe it is a health situation. Maybe it is a financial one. Maybe it is a relationship challenge. Or maybe it is certain doors that just do not seem to be opening for you. But the bottom line is that the slithering snake will find something to hiss lies to you about in an attempt to get you up in your head, thinking, *Did God really say? Is that promise really true? Is it really for me?* He wants to get you to rebel against God by choosing fear instead of

faith, doubt instead of determination or frustration instead of peace and rest.

The assault is on your soul, because that is the place where you will choose to believe or not, trust God or not. Your soul is where you will decide whether you will partake of all that God has declared is yours, or choose to take a bite out of something that looks good and makes sense, but goes against His truth. The enemy knows you are made in the image of the Creator and that because of that, you have the ability to make an impact on creation. That lying serpent does not want you bringing forth life, light, order and the Kingdom on earth through your bold and expectant faith in God and the truth of His Word. Instead, the enemy wants to lure you into choosing to be discouraged, depressed, disappointed and defeated, so that you release darkness, chaos and disorder. He knows you can bring forth blessings, so he wants to trick you into bringing forth curses instead.

The enemy always assaults the soul. His goal is to lure you into making the decision to believe something that is not in agreement with God's truth, so that your three-in-one is no longer in divine alignment. When your soul rises up and chooses to be out of agreement with the truth of God, it is like taking a bite out of the apple—you are deciding for yourself what is true, as opposed to choosing to trust in the truth of God. Your soul is taking charge and choosing to be “lord.” In that moment, you are no longer in perfect union and communion with the Creator, and you have removed yourself from the “God-place” where heaven overlaps earth.

When you are out of divine order like this, it is not that you can no longer create; it is that what you create will no longer be in the image of God. It will no longer be of Him, for Him and like Him. Instead, it will be of fear, rebellion,

doubt, pride, anger or some other *self*-ish agenda. In that moment, you are no longer choosing to be God's dominion steward in the earth, bringing forth light to all creation. You are choosing instead to be a pawn of Satan and a partner with darkness. The good news is that if you ever do choose to go to that out-of-alignment place, you can just as easily choose to come back into alignment. It is that simple.

The Power in a Change of Heart

Let me show you how powerful it is when you win the battle for your mind, will and emotions and choose to bring your body and your soul into alignment with the eternal truth of the Kingdom of God that fills and flows through your born-again spirit. A few years ago, I was at one of the most challenging points in my ten-year-plus battle of overcoming a mysterious and relentless attack of infirmity against my body. I often was too weak to stand or even sit up. Most of my days were spent lying on the couch. When I was able to get up and around to do some work or a few chores around the house, I was left weak and shaky for hours or even days afterward. My health and strength were at an all-time low. So was my attitude. But, as usual, God was willing to meet me exactly where I was and show me the divine power that is always available to us, no matter how we feel in our bodies or our souls, when we are willing to choose the eternal truth of His Kingdom over the report of our temporary circumstances.

So there I was, lying on the couch in the living room, not even able to keep my eyes open because of how my head burned and ached with yet another of my frequent fevers. All of a sudden I heard an odd sound. It was a sharp, solid, but also slightly muffled *thwump* just behind me. I opened

my eyes and lifted myself up enough to turn and look. I saw an odd blurry mark on the plate-glass window of the sliding door that opened onto the patio outside. I pulled myself off the couch, took the few steps over to the door and sat down on the floor in front of it. As soon as I did, I could see what had made that sound and left the mark on the glass—a bird. A good-sized sparrow had flown at full speed into the door. It had splatted into the glass and fallen to the ground. I could see that its head was twisted around backward on its broken neck. It lay there on its back, still and lifeless, feet pointing straight up—almost like a caricature of a very dead bird.

I sat and stared at it for a minute or two, wondering what one does with a dead bird. There are a bunch of cats in our neighborhood, so I did not want to leave it there to be scavenged by one of them. But I also did not want to touch it, because I thought I remembered hearing somewhere in my past that wild birds can carry bugs, parasites or even diseases. The last thing I needed was to add some kind of “bird flu” to the long list of mysterious ailments I was already dealing with. I figured the best thing to do was to try to find a shovel in the garage to scoop up the bird and toss it into one of our big garbage cans.

That is when God spoke to my heart. In a still, small voice He invited me to pray for the bird. When He did, I immediately remembered the many times I had told Him how much I wanted to see and experience all the works Jesus did in the gospels—including the raising of the dead—just as He promises us in John 14:12. But that had been when I was traveling and preaching and ministering. That was when I had been stronger.

Again came His invitation to pray for the bird. So I did. Sitting there on the floor, from my side of the sliding glass

door, I reached my hand out toward the bird and feebly prayed for that dead sparrow, which might well be infested with bird cooties that I did not want anything to do with. Nothing happened.

Then He spoke to my heart again and invited me to open the door and go outside. I reminded the Lord that with Him all things are possible, and that He was well able to reach out and do whatever it was He wanted to do for that bird as easily through a closed glass door as He could through an open glass door.

Looooooooong silence.

In that moment, I had a decision to make. Would I follow His leading, or would I follow my fear? It is a little embarrassing how long I sat there and wrestled with myself.

Eventually, I made my choice. I stood up, pulled back the sliding glass door and stepped out onto the patio. I knelt down near the bird and held my hand over it—probably a good eight to ten inches away. I began to pray in the name of Jesus for life to come back into the bird. It was still a somewhat halfhearted prayer, as what was really on my mind was to watch vigilantly and make sure no bugs or anything started jumping off the dead bird, looking for a new “host.”

Again the Lord spoke to my heart. He invited me to pick up the bird. At that point I figured I had already come this far, having now entered the “hot zone” if there was one, so why not? I picked up the bird in my left hand. It was still. Lifeless. And its head was twisted back at that awful, broken-neck angle. It was on its back in my left palm, so I reached out and just barely touched it with my right index finger.

I do not remember exactly what I was praying. What I do remember is that shortly after touching that bird with my finger, the heart of the Father exploded in me. Compassion

flooded into me, and all of a sudden I loved that bird. I loved that perfect little aspect of God's creation as fully and completely as the Creator Himself did. And I was brokenhearted that it was dead. I let go of all my fear and concerns and cradled that bird in my left hand while gently stroking it, almost petting it, with two of my right-hand fingers. I was no longer praying for the bird, but simply telling it how loved it was. All that I seemed to be able to speak over that wonderful little broken bird was how much God loved it. Again and again. I was lost in His massive and overwhelming heart for something that was incredibly dear to Him.

My heart was no longer closed off in fear, but wide open with love. My mind was no longer worrying about cooties or parasites; it was totally focused on releasing the fullness of God's passion. That was the moment when the sparrow's head snapped around, light came back into its eyes and it popped up and flew right out of my hand.

Stunned, I sat back on the patio. All I could think was **WOW!**

This vividly displays the divine power that is available to us in the earth to steward creation on God's behalf. When we choose to bring our souls and bodies into alignment and agreement with the reality of His Kingdom that our born-again spirits are always connected with, then we can fulfill our role as His agents of impact in the earth. It also reveals the ability, willingness and desire of God to lead us back into that place of alignment. The Lord met me exactly where I was. He did not disqualify me for the posture of my heart. He did not dismiss me for allowing myself to be mired temporarily in self-pity and fear. Just the opposite. He reached out with the right words and reminders all along the way. He helped me remember who I truly was. He encouraged

me step by step, past every hesitation and resistance, back into that place of divine alignment and dominion power.

I had to choose to respond. I had to choose to follow His leading. I could have refused and just continued to lie there on the couch. I could have blamed God for not making it easier, especially after all I had been through and was already dealing with. I could have decided the bird was not important. After all, it was just one of dozens of sparrows that come to my backyard feeders every day. I could have made excuses and decided to dismiss His whispers as merely my imagination. I could have decided it was not worth the time and energy since I had never seen a dead bird raised before.

All those thoughts came into my head. All those feelings stirred in me. I had to decide to heed Him more than them. I had to be a dominion steward of the internal realm of my mind, will and emotions so that I could step into the place of being His dominion steward in the earth. For sure, I did not do it on my own. He led me step by step beyond my *self* every time there was a thought, feeling or decision that was about to stop me.

God will never force us to do anything, but He is willing to help us in everything. He leads—often in very subtle and almost missable ways. We choose whether or not to seek, look, listen and follow Him—whether or not to align our three-in-one with the Three-in-One. I choose, and you choose. Every moment of every day. When we choose to align with God, it opens the doors of heaven into the earth, and amazing things can happen.

We see a prophetic picture of this very thing with King David in 2 Samuel 6:1–19. At the beginning of this passage, King David desires to bring the Ark of the Lord—the living presence of the living God—back into his life, back into his

city, back into his sphere of influence. He was excited and expectant. But then something happened that King David did not understand and did not like. It left him angry, afraid and confused. In that moment, he decided not to bring the Ark back into his sphere of influence, but instead to leave it behind. He chose to walk with confusion, fear and anger instead of continuing to walk with the presence and reality of God.

The Lord did not hold this against King David and give up on him. Just the opposite. The Lord found a way to stir the king's heart and reawaken his desire to walk with God and usher the glorious reality of the Lord's living presence back into all that he stewarded. King David decided to "change his mind." Now, despite what had happened, King David chose to let go of the past and grab hold of God.

Additionally, as he moved with the presence, he chose to stop every six steps to sacrifice an ox and a fatted calf unto the Lord, while also praising Him and dancing before Him with all his might. Six is the number that represents man (God made us on the sixth day). I believe that David making a sacrifice every six steps was a prophetic picture of how, whenever something in our *self*-ish nature tries to rise up and interfere with our walking with God, we must "kill the flesh" by choosing to rejoice in God. In other words, we choose to trust in the truth of God more than in the report of our circumstances, thoughts or feelings in any given moment.

There were still those things that King David did not understand or like, but he took dominion over his soul by choosing to praise God instead of being angry and afraid of Him. He took dominion over his body by choosing to dance before the Lord, as opposed to turning away from Him. He took dominion over his mind, will and emotions by choosing

to align his thoughts, feelings and decisions with the truth of God. The result was that the living presence of the living God was ushered back into King David's sphere of influence, and the nation and its people were richly blessed.

Like He did with King David, the Lord has made you to rule and reign in the earth (see Genesis 1:26–28; Revelation 5:10). You are God's dominion steward over His creation. You are designed to walk with the Lord and release the reality of Him and His Kingdom into your sphere of influence, making the world a better place. When you choose to agree with this by deciding to align your three-in-one with the truth of the Three-in-One, you inhabit the glorious place where heaven overlaps earth through you as you manifest the presence and power of the One in whose image you are made. Maybe it is a bird being raised from the dead. Maybe it is a smile for someone who does not really deserve it. Maybe it is a kind word to your spouse when he or she has hurt or disappointed you. Maybe it is seeing your family, church, city or even your entire nation revived, reformed and radical for God. Whatever it is, you have the power in God to shift things in the earth by shifting them in yourself.

The first realm you steward is yourself. Others can do things or say things that are unkind, untrue or even unfair. Difficult, confusing and challenging times will come. These are all real things that have real impact. But what has even more impact than what happens to us is how we respond to those things. If we will maintain our place of authority by watching over the thoughts, emotions, decisions and actions we author and allow in response to what happens to us, we will stay in the place of alignment with God and be able to more effectively usher His presence, power and personality into our circumstances and our spheres of influence.

If you are willing to watch over the realm of your soul—taking responsibility for your mind, will and emotions—you will find that your thoughts, feelings and actions begin to align more and more with the divine nature of your heavenly Father, in whose image you have been remade by the gift of His Son and the leading of His Holy Spirit. The result will be an almost effortless manifestation of Him and His Kingdom into the earth.

Romans 8:19–21 says that all of creation is anxiously longing for and earnestly awaiting the manifestation of the sons of God. That word *sons* in the Greek is *huios*, and it means a mature one in relationship with God. These “sons” (men and women) are the ones who know they are made in His image. These are the ones who know who they are in Christ. They know who their Father is. And they choose to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, as opposed to their old fallen nature. These are the ones who choose to deny fear and embrace faith, who refuse offense and choose love, who say no to despair and choose to rejoice, who maintain an eternal perspective in the midst of temporary circumstances, who face challenges by choosing to delight in the Lord, no matter what. These are the ones creation is eagerly anticipating. These “mature” ones know they have been set free from the curse, and they choose to live in that righteous freedom. From that place, they are able to be a powerful expression of the victory and goodness of God to all His creation.

Does that sound exciting? Does it stir something deep inside you as you read this? Of course it does. Because this is *you*. This is who you really are. You can do this! It is as simple as the choices you decide to make.

Choose to be who you truly are in Christ. Choose to bring your body and soul into alignment with the truth and freedom

known deep-unto-deep in your born-again spirit. Choose to think and feel and act and decide in alignment with the heart of the Father and the mind of Christ, by the leading of the Holy Spirit. Choose to “arise and shine” as a harmonious three-in-one expression of our Three-in-One God, in whose image you were lovingly and powerfully made. And if you ever see that you have gotten out of unified three-in-one agreement with our Three-in-One God, choose to step back into it. Take dominion authority over the inner realm of your soul by stewarding your mind, will and emotions. As you do this more and more, you will see the Kingdom of God arise in you more and more. Creation will be affected as you shine His light, love and life out into the darkness (see Isaiah 60:1–3). Choose to be a mature “son of God,” because when you make that choice, you bring heaven to earth. And in that, anything is possible.

Yes, the enemy will resist you, and at times so will your old carnal nature that still likes to try to be in charge. At times it is a battle. In truth, it is *the* battle. But here is the good news: It is not a battle you ever have to be afraid of. Because One came before you and won the battle for you. One who loves you. One who gave everything for you, so that you might enjoy the fullness of who He is and all that you were created for. All you need to do is agree with His truth and choose to live in His victory. He is so good that He will even help you with that.

Your Victory Is Certain

Let’s go back to Adam and Eve for a moment. They did not win the battle for the mind, will and emotions in the Garden of Eden. You and I have also lost this battle at times. But

the good news is that neither their mistakes nor ours took God by surprise or deterred Him from His plans. Before any of this ever happened, His perfect and victorious plan was already in place—the Lamb was slain before the foundation of the world was laid (see Ephesians 1:4–5; Revelation 13:8). Jesus Christ came to set us all free from our sins and bring us back into the fullness of relationship with Him. Through Christ and His finished work, we are once again fully His and fully empowered to be His beloved people—His dominion stewards in the earth.

You have been given more than just a “second chance.” His mercies are new every single morning (see Lamentations 3:22–23). His forgiveness is total. His love is boundless. And His grace is unending. Every moment of every day, His great desire is to reach out with His great love and help you be a brilliant, shining “re-presentation” of Him to all creation. If you are in Christ, this is who you are! For He has won every battle for you, including the battle for the soul.

Satan tried the same thing with Jesus in the desert that he did with Adam and Eve in the Garden (see Matthew 4:1–11). Jesus, the Son of God, came as the Son of man to show the whole world the Father. He was the Father’s perfect representative and representation in the earth (see John 14:7–9; Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3). The first thing that Jesus did as He stepped out into His earthly ministry for the Father on our behalf was to allow the Holy Spirit to lead Him into the desert to win the battle for the soul that Adam and Eve lost in the Garden. After Jesus went forty days without food and water, the devil came and tempted Him to doubt the goodness of God based on His current circumstances. The devil tried to tempt Jesus to doubt His Sonship—His certain and secure relationship with His heavenly Father. The devil

tried to tempt Him to choose to believe that something was missing, that something was lacking, that the Father was keeping something from Him.

“If You are the Son of God,” that slithering snake hissed, “command that these stones become bread” (Matthew 4:3). The temptation was to let the volume of His circumstances (forty days without food or water) speak louder to Him than the truth of the certainty of the Father’s love, wisdom and provision. If He gave in to that, He would allow His soul to rise up into a false position of lordship and choose to do what He was capable of (turn stones to bread, to provide for Himself in His earthy hunger), but it would be a rebellion against His Father.

Jesus’ temptation was to use His authority in the earth to serve a selfish agenda instead of a divine one. It was the same temptation Adam and Eve gave in to. But not Jesus! His response was, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God’” (Matthew 4:4). What especially interests me about this declaration is that the last words that had proceeded from the mouth of God to Jesus were, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased” (Matthew 3:17). Jesus chose to trust in the fullness of that eternal truth—that declaration of certain love, acceptance and relationship—more than any temporary circumstance. Jesus, the Son of man, manifested in the earth on behalf of all men and women as a perfect three-in-one representation of our Three-in-One God (see John 14:9; Hebrews 1:3; Colossians 1:15). In doing this, He is not only our victorious Son-of-God Messiah, but also our glorious Son-of-man model for how to walk in the earth in the fullness of relationship

with our heavenly Father (see John 14:12; 17:20–23; Romans 8:15–17, 29).

As the Son of man, on our behalf Jesus resisted the temptation to let an assault on His body tempt His soul to choose to rebel. He remained, as always, in divine alignment with the Father within His earthly body, soul and spirit. Jesus won the battle for the soul. Not for Himself. (After all, His soul is perfect.) But for each and every one of us, including you. This is why if we ever do allow ourselves to get “out of alignment” in our thoughts, feelings and decisions, we can just as easily choose to step back into the place of divine alignment and dominion authority. Jesus has made the way.

In Genesis 1, we see God as Three-in-One, acting in perfect harmony to bring forth all of creation, including us. He then placed us in the earth as His dominion stewards—created in His image to be His representatives. In the Garden of Eden, we lost this place and position through a battle of the soul when Adam and Eve made a bad choice based on wrong thoughts and selfish feelings. But Jesus came and won it all back for us. He won the battle of the soul on our behalf, just as He has won back our position and authority in God. The way we step into this victory is by choosing Jesus as Savior and also as Lord. We reenter the place of communion and empowerment by choosing, once again, to allow Christ to be the “head” (see Colossians 1:18–20) and by choosing for our body, soul and spirit to be fully His. We remain in this place of victory by choosing to trust in God and the eternal truth of His Word, no matter what. The battle takes place in our mind, will and emotions. As we choose to remain in Christ, we are certain to remain in victory.

BATTLE KEYS

Practical ways to apply the truths of this chapter in your life:

1. Read and meditate on Genesis 1:1–3. As you do, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you the immediate and transformative impact God the Creator has on darkness, disorder, chaos and areas of lack.
2. Remember that you are created in the image of God the Creator. You are empowered to be His dominion steward in the earth, and you are able, in His strength, to influence and affect creation with His light, life and love (see Genesis 1:26–27; John 14:12). Allow that truth to fill your mind and stir your faith.
3. Speak to any area of darkness, chaos, confusion or lack in your life, family, city or nation. Command that the light of God and the divine order of the Kingdom be established to usher in the reality of His goodness and the fullness of His blessing in every one of those areas.
4. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you any time when you made wrong choices and decided to come out of agreement with the character and nature of God and the truth of His Word. Also ask what it was about that situation that seemed to speak louder to you than the truth of God. As the Holy Spirit reveals the root issue, ask Him to then go into that place and bring healing to it. By faith, receive His perfect love that casts out all fear (see 1 John 4:18).
5. Is there a place in your life right now that looks or feels as if there is lack or something missing? Ask the Lord to reveal His eternal truth to you in that situation. Receive a Scripture promise from Him. Stand on the eternal

truth of the Word by declaring it over and over again in faith every time you are tempted to believe your temporary circumstances, as opposed to the eternal truth.

6. Daily decrees for three-in-one unity:

- “I am made in the image of God.”
- “My three parts—body, soul and spirit—are all in agreement with, and submitted to, the truth of God and the leading of His Holy Spirit.”
- “I am a three-in-one expression of the fullness of God’s goodness.”
- “By the grace of God, the gift of His Son and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, my body, soul and spirit cooperate in divine harmony to reveal the power and personality of God.”
- “My born-again spirit is submitted to the truth of God in all things at all times.”
- “I choose for my body to be submitted to the truth of God in all things at all times.”
- “I choose for my soul to be submitted to the truth of God in all things at all times.”
- “I am made in the image of God, and I make Him known everywhere I go, in every situation I find myself in.”