Monday
Spiritual Warfare

"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood...." - Ephesians 6:12

Many individuals including Christians are faced with all manner of challenges and issues. Family and marital issue. Business issues. Financial issues. Environmental issues. We can go on and on, there is no end to these challenges really. What do we do most of the time? We fail to identify the true source of these challenges. The bottom line is that Satan is the enemy of our souls. He is always warring against our interests and desires.

Satan's ploy in the life of Christian workplace believers is to do several things to make them ineffective as soldiers in the workplace. First, he wants to discredit them by allowing them to fail other people in their professional services. This often shows up in failing to perform what they committed to do or performing in an unsatisfactory way. Sometimes, this is a result of a downright failure of the workplace believer to perform with excellence. In other cases, it may be a misunderstanding in the midst of the service that causes strife and division instigated by the enemy. The result in both cases is the same: a division among Christians and even non-Christians, further resulting in a damaged witness for Christ. You got to make a difference and battle on your knees.

Tuesday
Going Against Popular Opinion

"On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him after his father Zechariah, but his mother spoke up and said, 'No! He is to be called John.' They said to her, 'There is no one among your relatives who has that name.'" Luke 1:59-61.

Have you ever had to go against popular opinion or advice from family members or peers before? Elizabeth gave birth to John the Baptist. It was time to name the child. Tradition said the name would be in honour of a family member. The family members were insistent. When Elizabeth did not agree with them, they appealed to Zechariah who supported Elizabeth.

Zechariah was told by the angel Gabriel the name was to be "John." They were being obedient to the Lord's command which went against tradition and popular opinion. We live in a day when leaders are often driven more by popular opinion than what is right. We are each called to live a life based on obedience-based decisions, not popular opinion. Living a life of obedience will often go against the tide of popular opinion.

Wednesday
Knowing God's Voice

'...His sheep follow him because they know his voice.' John 10:4
Here are seven occasions when knowing God's voice is all-important:

1) Hearing from God before you entertain the ideas of others. Why? Because their ideas are not His commands. Don't make commitments and end up bound by promises you can't keep. You must be led only by God's Spirit.

2) Hearing from God before you listen to the complaints of others. Why? Because you are not responsible for their happiness. Your need to 'fix' others in order to feel good about yourself is called 'co-dependency'.

3) Hearing from God before you consider the needs of others. Why? Because their needs are driving them; only the plan of God should be leading you.

4) Hearing from God before you respond to the requests of others. Why? Because you must discern what's behind their requests. Check the soil before you sow your seed.

5) Hearing from God before you share your dream with others. Why? Because it's not enough to have a dream, you must have a team. You need people to help you, cheer you on and lift you to a higher level.

6) Hearing from God before you seek the approval of others. Why? Because people with an agenda will flatter and manipulate you. Hearing God's voice will keep you from falling into their trap.

7) Hearing from God before you make significant changes. Why? Because it's not your job to decide what God wants you to do, but to discover it and do it.

**Thursday**

But Master.....

Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets" Luke 5:5.

Have you ever argued with God? One of the first sermons Jesus gave was from a boat on a sea. It was Simon Peter's boat. Jesus used a businessman's business to preach the Gospel. However, Peter had to first make his business available to the Master. When he did, something wonderful happened to his business. You see, Peter's fishing business was in a slump. They had just fished all night and caught nothing. Nevertheless, Peter made his boat available to Jesus to use as He wished.

Jesus used it to preach to the multitudes. After Jesus used Peter's boat for His purposes, He did something interesting for Peter. He blessed his business. However, Peter almost missed the blessing because he began to argue with Jesus. Peter was professionally looking at the market conditions instead of the instruction of Jesus. Something inside of him made him reconsider Jesus' instruction. Jesus rewarded his obedience with the largest and biggest catch ever. Are you obedient to the Master?

**Friday**

Who Is Your Mentor & Who Are You Mentor To?

'...The works that I do [you] will do also...' John 14:12

Jesus is the perfect mentor. He told His disciples, 'The works that I do [you] will do also.' If you want to reach the fullness of your God-given potential, ask God for the right mentors. You will al-
ways go further with a good mentor coaching and pushing you. Some mentors are given for a short season, others for a lifetime, so you must know the difference.

How do you recognise a mentor? In eight ways. The credo of the true mentor is this:

1) I am willing to spend the time it takes to build a close relationship with the learner
2) I commit myself to believing in the potential of the learner, to telling them the exciting future I see ahead for him.
3) I am willing to be vulnerable and transparent before the learner,
4) I am willing to be honest yet affirming in confronting the learner's errors, faults, and areas of immaturity.
5) I am committed to standing by the learner through trials - even trials that are self-inflicted as a result of ignorance or error.
6) I am committed to helping the learner set goals for his or her spiritual life, career, or ministry, and to helping the learner dream his or her dream.
7) I am willing to objectively evaluate the learner's progress toward his or her goal.
8) Above all, I am committed to faithfully living out everything I teach.

Saturday
A Joseph Calling

"And he sent a man before them - Joseph, sold as a slave." - Psalm 105:17

God is doing a unique work around the world today. He is rising up Josephs throughout the world. Some are still in the "pit" stage of their pilgrimage, while others are heading toward fruitfulness. What does it take for a man to become a true Joseph? It takes years of preparation and testing to be a true Joseph. A true Joseph is one who is a provider both spiritually and materially for those in the Body of Christ. He is a person who understands that he is simply a manager of all that God has entrusted to him. It is a person who has humility and a broken and contrite heart before God.

But how does God prepare modern-day Josephs? Modern-day Josephs are prepared through their own versions of bruised feet, with shackles and necks put in irons. It is often through the adversity of failed finances, failed marriages, failed relationships, and broken dreams. These are the things that try men the most. These are the things God uses to allow the Josephs of our day to be proven by the Word of the Lord. Once proven, God brings them out of their prisons and uses them mightily for His purposes. Joseph went through his own trials - not because of any failure, but because of an incredible calling: to save and provide for an entire nation.

Sunday
Sowing In Tears

"Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy." Psalm 126:5

Psalm 126 describes an interesting process that goes against our natural tendencies when we are taken into a difficult period in our lives. Whenever we are hurled into a crisis that brings tears, our tendency is to retreat or recoil in fear and hurt. However, there is a better way that God tells us to handle such times of travail. Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy. "He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him" (Ps. 126:5-6). God is telling us that if
we will do what is unnatural for us in these circumstances, He will make sure that what we sow in tears will return in joy.

This is one of the most important lessons I have learned when faced with difficult circumstances. Rather than sit back and allow self-pity and discouragement to consume us, we should plant seed during this time. Reach out to a person who needs a friend. Invest in the life of another. See where you can be a blessing to someone. Give of yourself. We will receive joy and fruit from the seed that we plant during this time. Sheaves represent the fruit of a harvest. We will actually get a harvest from this seed.