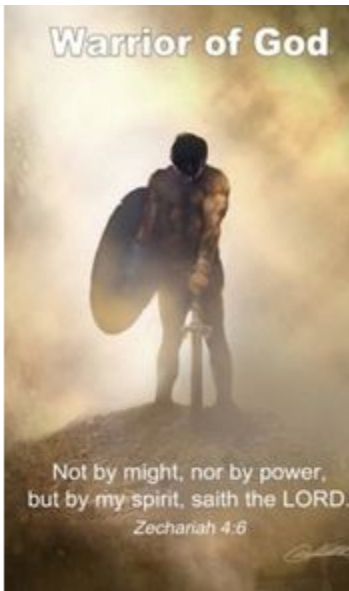


## Stewards of Grace Ministries Monthly Newsletter for April 2017



*Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*

*Eph 6:10-13*

**Walking in the spirit.** Using the Authority God has given us as believers. Before Jesus ascended back into heaven, he spoke to His followers and said: **Matt 28:18-20** ...*“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”* Here Jesus is passing on to His followers the Authority He received from His Father - the same Authority which Adam and Eve had in the Garden of Eden.

**Gen 1:26-28** Then God said, *“Let Us make*

*man in Our image, according to Our likeness...” So God created man in His own image; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, over the cattle, over all the earth, over every creeping thing and over every living thing on the earth that moves on the earth.”* We, who are “the Called” of Christ - totally committed, obedient believers have this authority of which He speaks. We have power - through the Holy Spirit in us - to command the animals, birds, winds and waves to obey us! And we can go one step further: we have the power to command the spirits of darkness to stop harassing us and leave us alone. We can call on our Father to send His angels to surround us and protect us from harm and danger. But Jesus also cautions His followers not to let this authority go to their heads, but rather learn to be humble under the mighty hand of God: **Mark 10:42-45** *But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve.* We do not have authority over another human being, but only over God’s non-human creation. We are all created equal in God’s eyes, not any better or worse than each other. We all have different gifts and talents, personalities and even handicaps, but these things in no way give us more or less value in the sight of our loving Father. Jesus was impressed with one foreign soldier because he understood exactly where he stood and he had respect for those beneath his command, as well as those over him: **Luke 7:7-9** *Therefore I did not even think myself worthy to come to You. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me.*

*And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, "I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!"* Jesus called this soldier's understand FAITH; he knew who he was, and he knew who Jesus was and what He could do. **Do you know who you are in Christ?** Greater knowledge brings greater understanding and greater faith. Greater knowledge comes from reading "The Manual" - your Bible - and getting to know the character of God, our Father. Asking the Holy Spirit to open your understanding is the way to understand what He is trying to get across to you. Faith comes by hearing (and reading) the Word; remember that the Bible is the Living Word of God and even though you can read the same passage over at different times, it will still speak to you in your immediate need. As we read God's Word, He shows us His Divine Will for our lives and also for those around us, and we can actually "pray the Bible" back to our Father who tells us in **Mal 3:16** *Then those who feared and loved the Lord spoke often of Him to each other. And he had a Book of Remembrance drawn up in which he recorded the names of those who feared him and loved to think about him.* Jesus, in **Luke 9:1-2** *...called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases. He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.* One of the ways we use our God-given authority is in prayer. We often cannot "fight" our spiritual enemies with physical means - this leaves us to war with spiritual battles. Again, knowledge brings understanding and understanding increases faith. One of the ways to "fight" is to ask the Father for more and better "equipment" to strengthen our spirits: **Eph 1:17-23** *My prayer: That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to ME the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of MY understanding being enlightened; that I may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.* When we pray we need to send the enemy running by our boldness in coming against him. Our Loving Father has given us all the "tools" we need to defeat the enemy - we should NOT be asking Him to do what He has given us the authority to do. This authority has been given to ALL believers, not just the leaders in the churches & schools. **We are ALL responsible to hear and obey the call of our Lord and Savior to put on our Spiritual Armor and take our place in the spiritual battleground He has placed us in.** **Eph 6:10-18** *..God is strong, and he wants you strong. So take everything the Master has set out for you, well-made weapons of the best materials. And put them to use so you will be able to stand up to everything the Devil throws your way. This is no afternoon athletic contest that we'll walk away from and forget about in a couple of hours. This is for keeps, a life-or-death fight to the finish against the Devil and all his angels. Be prepared. You're up against far more than you can handle on your own. Take all the help you can get, every weapon God has issued, so that when it's all over but the shouting*

*you'll still be on your feet. Truth, righteousness, peace, faith, and salvation are more than words. Learn how to apply them. You'll need them throughout your life. God's Word is an indispensable weapon. In the same way, prayer is essential in this ongoing warfare. Pray hard and long. Pray for your brothers and sisters. Keep your eyes open.* God expects us to participate in the spiritual part of our lives, just as He wants to be a part of your life...all the time, not just when trouble strikes. Lets not just keep our physical eyes open for danger, lets begin asking God to open our spiritual eyes so we will know how to fight the "invisible" enemy who is at work influencing the ungodly people around us, and affecting our own lives with trouble. We have all the authority we need... all we have to do is begin to walk in it: **James 4:7-8..submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.** and **James 4:4-5** *You should know that loving the world is the same as hating God. So if a person wants to be a friend of the world, he makes himself God's enemy. Do you think the Scripture means nothing? It says, "The Spirit that God made to live in us wants us for himself alone."* God is giving us a new chance to go to Him every morning: **Heb 12:25 See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven...**