

**“PICK UP THE RECEIVER:” RECAPTURING THE MISSION-CRITICAL
ROLE OF SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE IN KINGDOM WARFARE**

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This paper is written for those who, like me, have devoted their lives to the King of Kings and to the growth of His empire yet know in their heart of hearts that there must be more than what they are now experiencing in the field. This is written for those who still believe Luke 10:2: that the harvest IS plentiful; and that there is nothing wrong with the harvest or the Lord of the harvest. And this is also written for those who are starting to doubt that the God of the gospels and Acts is still the same today. May the Lord show you how much he loves you and how important you are to his Kingdom.

Before going any further in staking my claims, I would like to start by providing some preliminary key assumptions: assumptions that I do not have the space or time to fully back up in the course of this short piece that I will, nonetheless, hold out openly for the sake of clarity. They are as follows:

- 1.) The missiological big picture: what we are doing now is not working in the global picture. Statistics abound for how many people are leaving the church, how many churches are closing down, and how many pastors are leaving formal ministry. But, all that aside, there is a greater reality that missionaries must grapple with: church growth rate is FAR BEHIND the population growth rate. Translation: we are not multiplying disciples and churches fast enough to keep up with the current global growth rate. Our current missionary and ministry methods, strategies and projects do not reflect the urgency that comes from a full grasp of this reality.*
- 2.) The spiritual big-picture: as the apostle Paul clearly communicated in Ephesians 6:10-12 (N.L.T.) but as we in the West have not fully developed, there is a greater spiritual reality in which all missionary activity takes place:*

10 A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. 12 For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.

This means in the Spirit realm, there are unseen realities and unseen enemies in place – whether we acknowledge them or not. And these principalities and powers can “govern” or sway people, institutions, and even followers of Jesus for the purposes of darkness. And to be “strong in the Lord and in his mighty power” necessarily involves understanding and responding to these spiritual realities.

As Albert Einstein is purported to have once quipped, “insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.” Or in other words, business as usual – or better still, church as usual, will not do for the time we're in and the task at hand; the church MUST shift. Until the Church realizes the above two realities, it will remain ineffective and unstrategically engaged – in the middle of a raging and brutal war with lattes in one hand and sticks in the other and wondering what in heaven's name is happening.

With these assumptions out in the foreground, we can now proceed with a shared sense of urgency and gravity.

There is an ancient discipline that is, unfortunately, fading from the practices of missionaries and Kingdom workers in God's harvest: a discipline that holds the key to unlocking and re-harnessing vast amounts of spiritual power for expanding God's Kingdom. This ancient practice, put simply, is seeking to hear and obey the voice of the Lord. There are other ways we can call this ancient practice: "listening to the Father," "following Jesus," being "led by" or "filled with the Holy Spirit," but, inspired by the work, Wolfgang Simson, and pioneer house church planters in Utter Pradesh, India with whom he has worked, we will in this paper embed this ancient practice of seeking real time directions/insights on what to do, when to do it, and how to do it in a military context by calling these practices "gathering spiritual intelligence."

Intelligence differs from data in that it is strategic in content: information that has live value and relevance and can, hence, significantly alter the course of strategic planning and execution. In a wartime context, intelligence could look many ways: it could include information about hidden military bases, supply lines and weapons depots (variables that factored into Japan's bombing of Pearl Harbor and America's bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki); it could include current or projected weather conditions for a prospective air or ground strike, territorial maps of an area, intercepted radio signals, names and locations of civilians who could be won over to your side, information about enemy gatherings, upcoming enemy arms deals or military strikes, and much more concerning the nature, capabilities and vulnerabilities of the enemy. In military practice, some of this intelligence can be apprehended from the World Wide Web (e.g., projected weather or territorial maps), but most intelligence is highly classified information that is only accessible by careful digging (i.e, seeking through begging, buying, manipulating,

cheating, torturing or stealing) from the proper wells of information.

The relevance and the currency of intelligence depend solely on the reliability of its source: is the information current? Is it accurate? Is the source trustworthy? Is the source even in a position to know the inner workings? Thankfully, in the spiritual war in which we find ourselves, we have such a reliable source who is in a singular position: he knows everything, is trustworthy, and possesses accurate, current and relevant information 100% of the time. This privileged source is the all-powerful, all-knowing God who even has futuristic insight on how the Kingdom battle is going to end – insight for which any war general would give a right arm. This God is simultaneously commander-in-chief, chief-intelligence-officer, and communications operator; from beginning to end, our God has every part of the spiritual-intelligence process covered.

So what, then, is *spiritual* intelligence? Spiritual intelligence is timely and valuable revelation from God for the purpose of strategic insight and tactical guidance for any involved in Kingdom warfare. As the name suggests, we gather *spiritual* intelligence through *spiritual* means. I like how my friend, Wolfgang Simson, talks about it in his recent e-book, *The Starfish Manifesto*: “The core of the process is inspiration, an infusion of information from the spiritual world to the seen world, transmitted by means of the spirit. God uses various means for this. Dreams, visions, visitations, and hearing him speak audibly are among the most common experiences.¹” Simson masterfully fleshes this out soon after while reminding us why spiritual intelligence is needed for such a time as this in such a world as ours:

The current church scene (let alone the economic and political situation) has

¹ Simson, *The Starfish Manifesto*, p.30.

become a maze, at least for normal folk. It has become increasingly difficult to navigate spiritually, not knowing where we are on our journey, where exactly we are going, and whether we have to turn left or right at the next stop sign. To be on top of all this, we would have to look constantly at a million facts, developments, key players, and statistical developments. Nobody knows what's going on any more – except God. And, instead of constantly going after the latest information we are starting to look upward for help. Here we discover what God meant when he said: "I will guide you with my eyes." God speaks of a navigational system that he is offering to his people. It has a horizontal and a vertical dimension. The horizontal is the Bible, the unchangeable, revealed word of God that we can read and touch here on earth ("Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path." Psalm 119:105). The Bible is the ultimate map. The vertical dimension, straight from heaven, are prophetic insights, which may come in various ways: through visions, dreams, dialogs with God, angelic visitations, etc., that accentuate or temporarily lift out biblical truth, announce changes or are the symbolic red dot on the map that says: "You are here. Next left." left or right at the next stop sign.²

It is this sort of strategic insight and tactical guidance that our all-intelligent God *loves* to provide and is singularly positioned to *perfectly* provide for all who want to hear.

And so it is in the best interest of any Christian engaged in spiritual battle to gather as much spiritual intelligence as he/she can in an effort to reduce the amount of assuming and guess-work from fundamental strategic and tactical questions like: what should the next step be? For or against what should I be praying? Against what and whom am I fighting? With whom should I collaborate or ally? What are the things I need to know about this person or place historically? Relationally? Spiritually? What is the significance of this person, people or place? Is the timing ripe now, or should I be waiting? Or the ultimate tactical intelligence question: is God even behind these ministry plans, projects and initiatives? Has the authority above given the green light on this? Most of these fundamental questions are, at worst, taken for granted and assumed on our

² *ibid*, p.32.

part or, at best, answered in the natural realm using natural means, then “baptized” with a quick prayer of blessing, and given a biblical-sounding name or title to further place the theme, project or initiative in the will of God. But since the answers to these strategic and tactical questions are of urgent and mission-critical importance in shaping the course of battle plans, it would be utterly foolish to rush forward into spiritual combat without having answers and orders revealed from the ultimate source of all spiritual intelligence. Or to state it positively, blessing and power in missionary efforts come from being in alignment with the sovereign plan of God for growing the Kingdom and not moving too quickly [or slowly] or an inch to the left or to the right of what the Chief-Intelligence-Officer has communicated. Any other way is mission-suicide: literally, death.

In an effort to enlist more people into the Kingdom battle and to better equip those who are already in it, this paper seeks to put the ancient art of gathering spiritual intelligence back on to the missionary and ministry horizon – making a case that not only is gathering spiritual intelligence the biblical pattern from which we have strayed, but it is also the most effective modus operandi for any sort of Kingdom advancing work. To lay this claim, I will trace three generations of intelligence-gatherers beginning with Jesus, moving on to the disciples and then to the early church. After reconstructing this narrative thread from the gospels and Acts, I will then extract four guiding principles to help bridge from abstract truth to personal practice the implications and shifts that need to be fully embraced in order to move back to the way of the Master. And finally, we will close with three contemporary examples of missional communities that are employing intelligence gathering and, as a result, changing the placement of territorial lines and, perhaps, even changing the way contemporary warfare could be done.

Biblical Teaching and Practice

Generation One: Jesus

Any discussion of biblical teaching and practice must begin with Jesus, the expert intelligence-gathering missionary. Thinking of Jesus as an intelligence-gatherer may seem strange to those of us who may fail to embrace the mystery of Jesus' incarnation from God to the God-Man. As the God-Man, Jesus expressly and repeatedly states that he has limited himself in the things that he does and does not know. For example, Jesus clearly states that he does not know the time when the Father will consummate all things and usher in the Second Coming in Matthew 24: 36 "No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Yet, clearly, Jesus-on-earth had access to information that most human beings do not have – be it what people are thinking (like the Pharisees) or even their life situation (like the Samaritan women in John 4). What was his secret?

In John's gospel Jesus reveals His secret that was foundational for everything he did: his intimate relationship with the Father and the active intelligence-gathering in which he engaged – though framed in relational, not military, language. In John 5:16-23, we get our first window into this special relationship. Prompted by fury over Jesus' healing of the invalid by the pool on the Sabbath, Jesus reveals the how and the why behind the healing:

19Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. 20For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater things than these. 21For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. 22Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, 23that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son

does not honor the Father, who sent him.

There is a remarkable Son-to-Father dependency revealed by Jesus here that is not often taught, much less imitated. Even Jesus, God incarnate, can do “nothing” by himself; “he can do only what he sees his Father doing.” So the Son, as the ultimate “sent one,” relies on supernaturally given insight from the Father to perform miracles such as the healing in John 5. His spiritual intelligence, here, comes from “seeing” what the Father is doing; the Father must “show him all he does” (v.20); and Jesus reveals that this revelation of spiritual intelligence from the Father is a function of love: “20For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater things than these.” The implications are clear: if Jesus does not see or act on these loving revelations, then his alignment to the Father’s will and timing is off -- robbing him of any ministry power and blessing; he will accomplish nothing; or as he, himself, put it: *19Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does."*

But intelligence-gathering for Jesus doesn’t just stop at ascertaining what Jesus “sees” the Father doing; Jesus also speaks of gathering spiritual intelligence by “hearing” from the Father which is his communication line for knowing what to share with others.

There are a few examples of this; the first is in John 8:25-29:

25"Who are you?" they asked. "Just what I have been claiming all along," Jesus replied. 26"I have much to say in judgment of you. But he who sent me is reliable, and what I have heard from him I tell the world." 27They did not understand that he was telling them about his Father. 28So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am the one I claim to be and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. 29The one who sent me is

with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him."

The parallels to John 5 are clear. The pattern continues over from "seeing" to now "hearing;" in fact, Jesus goes so far in v.28 to say "I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me."³ And as in John 5, once again, this spiritual intelligence is a function of intimacy with the Father: "29The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him. " Worth mentioning at this juncture is that Jesus speaks of intimacy with the Father, not special ontology as the God-Man, as his source of revelation/intelligence. Intimacy is reproducible; it is encouraged and even prayed for by Jesus on his followers' behalf. Incarnational ontology is not. Intimacy was at the heart of Jesus' ability to see what God was doing and hear what God wanted him to say and do. Unlike most intelligence gathering in the natural world, it was relationally revealed through intimacy with the source – not brokered, stolen, intercepted, manipulated or coerced. God, the Father, *wanted* Jesus to see and hear; and Jesus, the Son, *wanted* to see, hear and obey. And so real time "downloading" of critical revelation happened frequently and effortlessly.

And once, he received fresh intelligence, Jesus always obeyed and acted on it – to the very last detail. One example that develops this thought further is in John 12:47; there Jesus highlights the fact that the Father determines content (what to say) as well as

³ Examples re-occur in the gospels of Jesus hearing from God and relaying the word to people. For example, there is John 10:18: "No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father." There is also John 14:22-24: "22Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, "But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?" 23Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me."

manner (how to say it).

47As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it. 48There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day. 49For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. 50I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say.

There is a precision and accuracy to Jesus' ability to hear and reproduce revealed intelligence: "So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say."

This is a remarkable statement: Jesus is so close with the Father and so perfectly adept at gathering spiritual intelligence from what he sees and hears from the Father that he is able to say that *eternal life* hangs in the balance of his accuracy in repeating the content of what the Father has told him to say and the manner as well! The stake is at the highest marker; Jesus assures the readers with absolute confidence in his ability to hear and reproduce spiritual intelligence.

So in summary, Jesus has revealed his source of spiritual power and spiritual authority several times in John's gospel: his intimacy with, dependency on and obedience to the Father's revelation shown and spoken to Jesus. Jesus' missionary activity is primarily then *responsive* – not self-initiating. The Father is in the possession of critical, time-sensitive information and always initiates as the sender of intelligence. The Son, in want and need of intelligence, always receives revelation from the Father and follows what he "sees" the Father doing and what he "hears" the Father telling him to say. There is no deviance to this spiritual intelligence chain. This apprehension of and adherence to spiritual intelligence is Jesus' openly declared secret to his power and authority. Or to put it another way: the master missionary was also a master spiritual-intelligence

gatherer!

Taking this point of view to its natural implications, all of a sudden, we get greater color into the ministry of Jesus; his entire *modus operandi* in ministry boiled down to following intelligence from the Father. It determined his itinerary – when, where and how long he would stay in an area as we see in Mark 1; after Jesus heals Simon’s mother-in-law, we’re told he became a busy minister: *32That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. 33The whole town gathered at the door, 34and Jesus healed many who had various diseases.* We would imagine that with this new open door early in Jesus’ ministry, that he would camp out there and continue a healing ministry. But connecting the dots of what we know about Jesus’ *modus operandi*, we can safely conclude that in vv.35-39, when Jesus spends time alone in prayer, the Father gives new intelligence and new tactical orders, for when the disciples return to tell him that “everyone is looking for you!” Jesus oddly enough says, *‘Let us go somewhere else—to the nearby villages—so I can preach there also. That is why I have come.’ 39So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons.* Fresh spiritual intelligence moved Jesus out of the hometown of Simon’s newly healed mother-in-law to a new town – even though there was significant openness to Jesus there!

Perhaps an even better example of how spiritual intelligence made a significant difference in Jesus’ missionary endeavor on the level of ministry “results” is in John 4, when Jesus uses the intelligence to find a Luke 10 “person of peace” and evangelize her

entire Samaritan town through her.⁴ Prevailing custom and culture dictated they, as good Jews, should go around the Samaritan region for fear of becoming morally polluted by these socio-religious “half-breeds.” But Jesus, as we saw earlier, listened for live and mission-critical intelligence as his *modus operandi*. And so he takes the disciples, to their chagrin, through the Samaritan town – not because he is presumably tired and cutting geographic corners – but because the Father must have revealed what he was about to do there. That this is the case becomes more transparent once Jesus arrives, for he breaks yet another socio-religious convention by talking to the female town outcast by the well – an act strange enough to warrant a question from the woman herself: *9The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)* While their conversation does run long, the sentence that most caught the Samaritan woman’s attention was the fresh revelation the Father supernaturally provided for Jesus in vv.17b-18 after she replied she had no husband: *Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. 18The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."* While the previous and ensuing conversation about living water and worship in spirit and in truth were no doubt captivating, it is the spiritual intelligence of the five husbands and current live-in boyfriend that most caught the Samaritan woman’s attention. The way we know that is in not only through the content of her response in v.19: *19"Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet"* but also from the content of what she tells the entire village in v.39 as the

⁴ It was my friend, Neil Gamble, from Father’s Hand Ministries who first helped me to see the connection in John 4 when spending time together in December of 2008.

reason for why they should meet Jesus: *39Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did."* And so, we see the mass evangelization of a village and beyond that comes as a result of Jesus' practice of gathering spiritual intelligence from the Father and acting on it. It did not make sense to the religious (i.e., the disciples), nor did it make sense to the religiously confused (i.e., the woman). But Jesus saw, heard, and spoke, and the rest is literally history.⁵

Generation Two: Jesus' Disciples

But this powerful modus operandi of gathering spiritual intelligence would not stop at Jesus; a closer examination of the gospels will reveal that Jesus not only modeled the practice of gathering spiritual-intelligence, but He also taught on it with a unique spin: by speaking explicitly about the intelligence-providing ministry of the Holy Spirit. There are two settings in which Jesus explicitly teaches on the spiritual-intelligence providing ministry of the Holy Spirit: the Olivet Discourse and the Last Supper. Both are worth examining as they delineate just how the Holy Spirit is involved in passing on Jesus' missional modus operandi to the next generation.

We look first at the Olivet Discourse of Mark 13 where Jesus directly connects the dots between fresh intelligence and missional engagement:

9"You must be on your guard. You will be handed over to the local councils and flogged in the synagogues. On account of me you will stand before governors and kings as witnesses to them. 10And the gospel must first be preached to all nations. 11Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to

⁵ The implications of this are staggering, and we will explore them more in the principles and suggestions section near the end.

*say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit.*⁶

This is Jesus' promise of "just-in-time" revelation that he provides for the express purpose of addressing future worry: *do not worry beforehand*. The Holy Spirit will "download" to Jesus' followers the exact words to speak when the time is needed: specifically the right missional moment when they will be on trial *before governors and kings as witnesses to them* according to vv.8 and 11. The fascinating part of Jesus' prophetic utterance is the closing part of v.11: the intelligence will be so precise and so strong that Jesus says that it will literally be the Holy Spirit speaking – not them: *Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit*. Such strong language leaves little doubt that Jesus fully intends for this spiritual-intelligence gathering to continue after he is gone.

Jesus further reinforces this reality in his Last Supper Discourse where he directly addresses the disciples' fear that they will be directionless when he is gone. If Jesus, the God-Man, is the only means of hearing from the Father, then, indeed, the disciples have everything to lose in terms of their bridge to the supernatural world should Jesus die. But Jesus takes several opportunities in John 14-16 to assuage them by teaching them that the "downloading" or communicating of spiritual intelligence from the Father is, in point of fact, a significant reason why the Holy Spirit is sent to the disciples. The amount of communicating verbs Jesus uses overflow; I have highlighted them in the three series of

⁶ This same notion of guidance in preaching is later reinforced by the apostle Paul in Ephesians 6:18-20: *18And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. 19Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, 20for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.* Notice also the close connection between praying in the spirit with prayer for the proclamation of the gospel. And also notice: both power and content are asked for. And Paul is a third iteration or generation from Jesus.

teachings below.

*John 14:15: "If you love me, obey my commandments. 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. 17 He is the Holy Spirit, **who leads into all truth**. The world cannot receive him, because it isn't looking for him and doesn't recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you... 25 I am telling you these things now while I am still with you. 26 But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—**he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you.***

The Advocate was one called along side to help. The nature of the help that Jesus illuminates here is revelatory: "17 He is the Holy Spirit, who *leads into all truth*" – truth that Jesus later explains in v.26 as consisting of "*everything I have told you.*" The Holy Spirit *leads* (v.17), *teaches* (v.26), and *reminds* (v.26) Jesus' disciples of Jesus' teachings. In addition to all those communicating verbs, the Holy Spirit also *guides* (v.13), *speaks* (v.13), and *tells whatever he receives* (v.13) from Jesus – with the same sort of precision and submissiveness that Jesus demonstrated with the Father as we see here in John 16:

*13 When the Spirit of truth comes, **he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future.** 14 He will bring me glory by **telling you whatever he receives from me.** 15 All that belongs to the Father is mine; this is why I said, '**The Spirit will tell you whatever he receives from me.**'*

The third passage in this discourse, John 15:26-27, adds one more phrase: *testify all about me* [Jesus] as we see here:

*26 "But I will send you the Advocate—the Spirit of truth. He will come to you from the Father and **will testify** all about me. 27 And you must also **testify** about me because you have been with me from the beginning of my ministry.*

What's interesting about these verses is the close connection between the Holy Spirit

testifying about Jesus in v.26 and the disciples, in turn, *testifying* about Jesus. While the reason Jesus provides for the disciples' testimony about him in v.27 has to do with their connection with him *from the beginning of my [his] ministry*. The close proximity – one after another – of Jesus sentence layering of the Spirit testifying about Jesus, then the disciples testifying about Jesus, is hard to ignore. Could it be that the “how?” for their testimony is the Spirit's provision of spiritual intelligence in v.26 and the “why?” their history with Jesus from the beginning (v.27)? While Jesus does not spell it out directly, the order is obvious and unmistakable. It is presumably through the help of the Spirit of truth who initiates revelation about who Jesus is to the disciples that provides the content and empowerment for the disciples to turn around and testify about Jesus to the world. So once again, as we saw with the Olivet Discourse teaching, there is a close connection between the Spirit's provision and missional practice and discourse.

So in summary, then, it is readily apparent that Jesus never intended for this ancient practice of gathering spiritual intelligence to stop with him; instead, he passed on the Holy Spirit as well as teaching on the Holy Spirit to his disciples that was designed to promote continual gathering of spiritual intelligence – this time – from the Holy Spirit for the purpose of testifying about Jesus.

Generation Three: The Early Church

So to continue framing the alternate story, we may go one step further now: if this practice of spiritual intelligence-gathering was the foundational guidance system (a G.P.S.) for Jesus and an important ministry of the Holy Spirit that was passed on to the first disciples, then we would expect that listening for intelligence would continue on in

the life and expansion of the early church. There should be evidence specifically within the book of Acts of fresh spiritual intelligence being given in moments when the gospel needed to move forward; and, on top of that, evidence that the early church took this guidance system seriously. Thankfully, the book of Acts provides us with just what we need as Dr. Luke furnishes supernatural story upon supernatural story of God, an angel or the Holy Spirit “leading,” “guiding,” “speaking,” or “telling” – the very communication verbs Jesus forecasted in the Olivet and Last Supper Discourses. In fact, this open heaven communication is the standard: the pattern in Luke’s entire narrative account. The pattern consists of God initiating the communication of spiritual intelligence, followed by the obedience of the early church leaders, followed by powerfully and newly-forged inroads into the conversion of new people groups. The pattern is so repetitive that one can hardly read the book of Acts without concluding that the growth of the church is founded on GOD’S initiative – not Man’s. Reinforcing this conclusion would be the map that Luke provides from the start in Acts 1:8; there he tips his hand about the lead role of the Spirit in the opening chapter: *8But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.* This is his key to understanding the progression of the whole letter: beginning with the reception of the Holy Spirit and ending with witnesses going to the “end of the earth.” What this paper is hoping to re-establish is the intelligence aspect that dominated this empowering. It was not only a raw and mysterious power for bold proclamation, but the Holy Spirit was also – if we take Jesus’ earlier teachings seriously – a personal guide, communicating intelligence to people willing to listen and obey. Those factors together

resulted in the expansion of the gospel from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth.⁷⁸⁹ While a fair treatment of the book of Acts would require pages and pages of analysis, for the purpose of the big picture, I hope to paint broad strokes of a handful of missional

⁷ The first such opportunity is at Pentecost where the reception of the Holy Spirit leads to explosive church growth. But we will skip this example since Luke does only implies in chapter two, that the reception of the Holy Spirit on Peter is the empowering factor behind his first ever open-air preaching that leads to 3,000 being added to their number that day. Any reader that has been tracking the life of Peter through the gospels would know that there was something different happening, and the releasing of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost is the sole factor. Considering what Jesus said would happen when the Spirit comes (giving them the words to say, empowering a bold witness, leading them into all truth), we can safely deduce that Luke is assuming we can connect the dots.

⁸ Then, chapters 3-4's healing of the lame beggar and ensuing bold preaching by Peter in the temple courts that bring another 2,000 into the church can also be attributed to the same phenomenon. And in the event the readers cannot pick it up, Luke even gives in Acts 4, the punch line: *7They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what power or what name did you do this?"*

8Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! 9If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, 10then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. 11He is " 'the stone you builders rejected, which has become the capstone. 12Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."

13When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. 14But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say.

⁹ In Acts 6, Stephen takes his turn to be empowered by the Holy Spirit. This is what Luke says about it: *8Now Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, did great wonders and miraculous signs among the people. 9Opposition arose, however, from members of the Synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called)—Jews of Cyrene and Alexandria as well as the provinces of Cilicia and Asia. These men began to argue with Stephen, 10but they could not stand up against his wisdom or the Spirit by whom he spoke.*

In Acts 7, Luke even tells us again that Stephen is filled with the Spirit and even records one side of the dialogue, that Stephen speaks to the Spirit: *54When they heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him. 55But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 56"Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."*

moments where God – through some revelatory means – takes the initiative to communicate intelligence that must be obeyed in order for the Kingdom to explode outward.

The first such instance is in Acts 8 with the astounding supernatural events surrounding Philip's evangelization of an African eunuch. It is worth mentioning that before Acts 8, the gospel has not spread out of Jerusalem post-Pentecost. It was contained in a way that it was never supposed to be. The first recorded instance we have from Luke on the gospel moving out of Jerusalem towards Samaria and the ends of the earth is right here in Acts 8 with Philip. While Philip's first foray out of Jerusalem into Samaria was authenticated with incredible signs and wonders, what happens a paragraph later in Acts 8 stretches the limits of imagination, space and time. Notice how Luke sets up this wondrous encounter with the communication of tactical intelligence:

26Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." 27So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, 28and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the book of Isaiah the prophet. 29The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it."

The evangelistic directions are unabashedly overt: the bridging of the gospel into an entirely new continent (Africa) is initiated by an angelic visitation! And if this is not enough, evidence of God's orchestration of this redemptive encounter is further reinforced by how picture-perfect the scenario is: Philip bumps into an Ethiopian eunuch who is spiritually seeking (Luke tells us he *had gone to Jerusalem to worship*) and who just happens at that moment to be reading in the book of Isaiah a prophecy about Jesus! Not only this, but he is in great want of someone to explain the prophecy to him.

Listen to how Luke so carefully [and near comically!] highlights the eunuch's spiritual hunger in vv.30-31, 34.

30Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked. 31"How can I," he said, "unless someone explains it to me?" So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him... 34The eunuch asked Philip, "Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?"

And if this is not enough reason for laughter, look at the receptivity the eunuch displays once Philip preaches the gospel to him:

35Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.36As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" 38And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.

From start to close, this whole conversation could hardly be any better scripted – until we realize that v.38 is not the close of this story. Its closing is in vv.39-40 where we see the supernatural initiative of God in even greater power and technicolor:

39When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. 40Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.

Even before Star Trek technology was ever conceived on earth, the Lord of the harvest translocates/ transports Philip to the next assignment halfway through the eunuch's baptism! Talk about commitment to reaching the ends of the earth! The Lord of the harvest does it all in this category-exploding story and leading example of how Acts 1:8

could look when the main character (i.e., God) actively scripts, communicates, and *literally* moves forward every piece of the unfolding redemptive narrative – even to the continent of Africa.¹⁰

The next groundbreaking missional moment fueled by spiritual intelligence that we find in Luke's account of the early church is in Acts 10 with the evangelization of Cornelius' household and the dramatic implications of it in the self-identity of the early church. Where the unique dynamic in the Acts 8 narrative was the dramatic translocation of Philip at the end of the eunuch's baptism, the unique dynamic in play in this narrative is the double-pronged communication line that the Lord of the harvest employs: we witness spiritual intelligence coming to both gospel missionary and gospel audience in a near comical juxtaposition. Here's how Luke begins the account, leading off, first, with the *Gentile's* reception of the spiritual intelligence:

*3One day at about three in the afternoon he had a vision. He distinctly saw an angel of God, who came to him and said, "Cornelius!"
4Cornelius stared at him in fear. "What is it, Lord?" he asked.
The angel answered, "Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God. 5Now send men to Joppa to bring back a man named Simon who is called Peter. 6He is staying with Simon the tanner, whose house is by the sea." 7When the angel who spoke to him had gone, Cornelius called two of his servants and a devout soldier who was one of his attendants. 8He told them everything that had happened and sent them to Joppa.*

Note how positively Luke has described Cornelius: as a God-fearer and also as one who is not only undisturbed by the vision but is also obedient to it down to the "t." Luke follows this with an account of the spiritual intelligence "downloaded" to Peter, who is

¹⁰ It would be easy to call this an anomaly. But the strange and unusual initiative of God becomes more frequent just one chapter later in Acts 9 with the conversion of Saul – where God again showed strong initiative, but we will skip this example since it does not *immediately* lead to a different person's conversion.

curiously at a tanner's house where dead and unclean animals were sure to abound:

9About noon the following day as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. 10He became hungry and wanted something to eat, and while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance. 11He saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners. 12It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles of the earth and birds of the air. 13Then a voice told him, "Get up, Peter. Kill and eat."

14"Surely not, Lord!" Peter replied. "I have never eaten anything impure or unclean."

15The voice spoke to him a second time, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean." 16This happened three times, and immediately the sheet was taken back to heaven. 17While Peter was wondering about the meaning of the vision, the men sent by Cornelius found out where Simon's house was and stopped at the gate. 18They called out, asking if Simon who was known as Peter was staying there. 19While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Simon, three men are looking for you. 20So get up and go downstairs. Do not hesitate to go with them, for I have sent them."

Interestingly enough, Luke shows Peter, the Christ-follower, in need of greater spiritual intelligence—getting both a vision *and* an exhortation in vv.19-20. And the reason for this is not merely Peter's hardened socio-religious categories, but also because the Lord of the harvest was providing the key for understanding these series of events that Luke felt merited the sheer amount of text repetition¹¹ that he was inspired to retain – a key we will visit shortly.

The result of both Cornelius and Peter following the revealed spiritual intelligence is spectacular and dramatic:

44While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. 45The circumcised believers who had

¹¹ 48 verses in chapter 10 and 18 in chapter 11.

come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. 46For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, 47"Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." 48So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

To the astonishment of circumcised believers, the very phenomenon of Pentecost is reproduced on a micro-level with an entire Gentile household! The Spirit is moving outward visibly and powerfully out of geographical Jerusalem and cultural Jerusalem as well. And therein lies the significance of this intelligence-prompted narrative that goes far beyond the conversion of a Gentile household: it helps demonstrate to the early church leaders that the gospel is for the Gentiles as well.

Luke plants the seed for this in chapter 10: *34Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism 35but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right."* And this seed germinates a chapter later in the climactic moment in Acts 11 that persuasively paves the way for the Jerusalem Council decision to keep the bar low for converting Gentiles a few chapters later: *17So if God gave them the same gift as he gave us, who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God?" 18When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, "So then, God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto life."*

So we see once again, as with the Acts 8 Philip-Eunuch narrative, a pattern continuing where God supernaturally prompts and initiates spiritual intelligence – here to both missionary and audience – that results in a breakthrough in the advancement of the

gospel to the ends of the earth.

Our third example of such intelligence-prompted breakthroughs is in Acts 13 with the multi-cultural church in Antioch which, from this point forward, progressively rises in prominence above the Jerusalem church in the course of Luke's writing.

1In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. 2While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." 3So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. 4The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and sailed from there to Cyprus.

What is of additional significance is that the communal nature of this spiritual intelligence; where God spoke to Philip, Peter and Cornelius individually, here, the communication is to an entire spiritual family, is weighed by that family and confirmed/sent out by that family. Entire groups of people are hearing from God and responding now: a group that interestingly has "prophets," a category of people that has been strangely missing so far in the Acts narrative and the Jerusalem church. It is an undeniable maturation: the community heard, weighed and confirmed the spiritual intelligence; but ultimately, Luke can still say that *4The two of them [were] sent on their way by the Holy Spirit*. And sent they are by the initiative and intelligence of the Holy Spirit onto what became the first of many missionary journeys.¹²

¹² a missionary journey on which Paul would receive further spiritual intelligence about the inner character, motivation and immediate fate of a sorcerer who appeared to believe in Jesus:

9Then Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked straight at Elymas and said, 10"You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right! You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery. Will you

The next occurrence of this continuing pattern is in Acts 16 where God dramatically changes the course of the 2nd missionary journey from going north toward Central Asia and, instead, west into Europe:

6Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. 7When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. 8So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. 9During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." 10After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

Here is an interesting development: to date in Luke's narrative, God has primarily been supplying intelligence, empowering bold witness with signs and wonders, and even in the case of Philip, transporting him to his next assignment. Here, we see God playing an even more active role in the process by literally blocking the missionary attempts of Paul, Timothy, and Silas: *having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia... they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to.* We are not told how or why the missionary team was at odds with what God wanted them to do; we only know that they were not in alignment with God. But thankfully, God supplemented the firewalling with fresh spiritual intelligence about where they were really supposed to go. And so, thanks to a new set of instructions, Europe receives the gospel for the first known time.

never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord? 11Now the hand of the Lord is against you. You are going to be blind, and for a time you will be unable to see the light of the sun."

And such is the pattern; these are the prime but not lone examples. But in the event, the reader would like to see more examples of God consistency initiating and providing spiritual intelligence for the purpose of Acts 1:8 being birthed on earth as it is in heaven, I have supplied below a quick-hit list of more examples that carry slightly lesser impact than the ones I earlier furnished but still communicate the point:

- While in Corinth, Paul in Acts 18, God keeps Paul in Corinth for a duration of time beyond what he normally stays: a year and a half. *9One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. 10For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city." 11So Paul stayed for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God.*
- Consider also Acts 21 while Paul is with the Ephesian leaders for the last time, God provides more spiritual intelligence, this time, through a prophet named, Agabus, about what to expect ahead in Jerusalem: *10After we had been there a number of days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. 11Coming over to us, he took Paul's belt, tied his own hands and feet with it and said, "The Holy Spirit says, 'In this way the Jews of Jerusalem will bind the owner of this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles.' "*
- Consider also Acts 23 where spiritual intelligence keeps Paul encouraged during his trials – despite his apparent disobedience to the Spirit: *11The following night the Lord stood near Paul and said, "Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome."*
- Consider also Acts 27 where God supplies new intelligence in the form of a vision that helps keep Paul and his shipwrecked crew alive. *21After the men had gone a long time without food, Paul stood up before them and said: "Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss. 22But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed. 23Last night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve stood beside me 24and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.' 25So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will*

happen just as he told me. 26Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island."

As the repetitiveness and sheer volume of these examples indicate, the provision of this sort of supernatural intelligence is a regular occurrence in the evangelistic and apostolic ministry of the church. *That means Paul and friends are REGULARLY hearing from God about what to do, where to do it, when to do it, and how to do it.* Though it is rarely, if ever, talked about, reflected on or imitated in the West, this intelligence-gathering and responding was the norm: the standard of missionary spirituality and practice in the first century – begun by Jesus, taught and passed on to the disciples and carried forward by the early church.

This is the bottom line: God SPEAKS directions to his people in a wide array of ways so the kingdom can break into new groups of people. We cannot celebrate the early fruit and apostolic growth of the early church without also seeing the close correlation to its practice of gathering and obeying spiritual intelligence. The Holy Spirit did it but not independent of the apostolic workers – instead, in a loving partnership or inclusion of them. Thus, the message of Acts is not just: “Wow: look what the Holy Spirit did!” But it is “Wow: look what the Holy Spirit can do when people stop assuming they know what God wants and, instead, begin listening and obeying!”

It is at this juncture that we will turn the corner to look at applicable principles we can draw out of these narratives for the purpose of further illuminating the way for modern day Kingdom workers.

Four principles to take from the Jesus and Acts narratives:

The first golden principle is easy to pluck from the lode of Scripture through

which we've sifted: *Initiative is God's – not ours*. This distinction is more than semantic and, quite frankly, requires more retraining in our current milieu than we may realize; it's a milieu where people reward initiative and action and call it good "leadership." When we fully embrace both the modeling and teaching of Jesus (not to mention his disciples and the early church), it changes our entire modus operandi – which, given our massive departure from the ancient standard, may be worth spelling out, albeit briefly.

We would *think* differently. Instead of going into autopilot mode of strategic thinking and planning, a new reality would dominate our minds: the one James advocates in chapter four of his letter: [highlighted below]

*13Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money."
14Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. 15Instead, you ought to say, "**If it is the Lord's will**, we will live and do this or that."*

The Lord's will – not ours – would become our consuming thought: our green light that we look for at every turn and intersection.

In addition to *thinking* differently, we would *feel* differently. Instead of experiencing the anxiety that comes with feeling the weight of responsibility to make everything happen, we would, instead, experience the supernatural shalom peace Jesus spoke of at the Last Supper:

26But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. 27Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

We would experience this otherworldly peace for no other reason than having a living, breathing relationship with our “Advocate” or “Counselor” who actively guides and shows us the Way, the Truth and the Life.

And most importantly, we would *act* differently. The seismic shift would mean we only take the initiative to listen and obey – not to create the plan *ex nihilo*. We would become active listeners: active watchmen and watchwomen who are strong enough to wait on God instead of muscling through our human plans with human means and resources. This shifting would also show in greater life submission and surrender and on newfound premiums spent on listening in prayer. Imagine ministry board meetings where the first hour is spent listening in prayer for spiritual intelligence before anything else – as an act of unity, of corporate surrender, and of faith that “God exists and rewards those who seek him” (Hebrews 11:6). How much more efficient could such meetings be and more powerful the outcome?

These are just a few quick examples of what life could look like should we embrace our first principle: *Initiative is God’s – not ours*.

The second principle is one that needs repeat hearing since we filter these insights as children of Modernity who are used to controlling and manipulating an outcome; here is the principle: *there is no ministry formula or technique in gathering spiritual intelligence*. Formulas and techniques are universal; and one uses both without thought of particulars in order to produce a known result in a desired time frame. Formulas and techniques are the same regardless of who is using them and regardless of what variables are thrown in. Their strength lies in its precision and universality of application: plug

and chug yields ... product. Gathering spiritual intelligence is in no way, shape or form either a technique or a formula.

The process of gathering spiritual intelligence is more like a G.P.S. navigation system. There is an element of guidance that is relative to the position of the traveler; and so the directions vary depending on the starting and ending point, and even vary depending on traffic or weather conditions in a certain area. Several variables are, not only factored in, but necessary for the process. For example, one would never use the same set of G.P.S. directions from home to one's local school in order to drive from the grocery store to the local school. It is unthinkable because Global Positioning Systems are guidance tools that give you real time directions right where you are right to where you need to go. The Global Positioning System is only useful if the traveler knows this and stays in alignment with the directions.

Spiritual intelligence works the same way. Just because Jesus' prophetic insight about the Samaritan woman's boyfriend situation worked for her in that moment in space and time doesn't mean that the same intelligence will work for the same woman a month later, or work for the woman about to be stoned by the Pharisees. That particular Father-given insight was pinpoint precise for that time for that woman to reach that village; no more; and no less. Historical success does not ensure future success, let alone, even one more success at the next turn. The moment we turn spiritual intelligence that worked in the past into a universal method or technique is the moment we flip off the power switch to the G.P.S. If we have a method, then we no longer need live, fresh intelligence. And that is a dangerous place to be.

Nowhere better do we see this truth than with the seven sons of Sceva in Acts 19. These Jewish men, obviously enamored with a new “power tool” in the supernatural, rely on it as technique to their detriment as we see in v.13: *13Some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed. They would say, "In the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out."* So Luke, after giving us countless examples of spiritual-intelligence gathering with explosive results, masterfully gifts us with a story to warn future generations from becoming formulaic instead of desperate for intelligence. The story continues:

14Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. 15(One day) the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" 16Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding.

A frightening warning that stands as a stark contrast to all of Luke’s other stories that involved obedient acting upon fresh revelation!

Embracing the second principle requires that we understand what spiritual intelligence is and how to properly use it. The power is not from the methodology or technique; it is in a true alignment to the will of God in the who, what, when, where, how and why of Kingdom action – all variables that God is able to effortlessly factor in. Spiritual intelligence, thus, is not a new ministry technology or “silver bullet.” It is God’s real-time, real-person guidance system that He loves to give to close friends with whom he wants to labor alongside.

This leads us to the next principle, which may be the hardest one for task-oriented

missionaries to hear: *Intimacy with the Father lies at the heart of gathering spiritual intelligence.* As we gleaned earlier from our look at the life of Jesus, spiritual intelligence is only supernaturally revealed to the person who is and wants to be close with God. To know God is to *hear* God and *see* with greater clarity what he is doing. The bad news is that there are no short cuts. If we want to hear more, we need to grow in intimacy with him. Period. Books, training seminars and prophets are of minimal to no short-term use in our relational journey with God.

The great news is that all of us – even the smallest child— can know God intimately and, hence, hear from him! This is certainly how Jesus spoke to us. As we earlier discussed, Jesus couched his spiritual intelligence squarely in the context of his intimacy with God, and he universalizes that intimacy-intelligence connection to us as well in John 15:15: *I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you* [and, in context, the Holy Spirit will make known to us after Jesus is gone]. Though some may feel otherwise, we are not merely servants who are left in the dark as to what the Master's thoughts, feelings and intentions are. Jesus has changed our connection point with the Master such that, now, we are part of his inner circle of close friends. The relational inclusion is a foregone and unchanging conclusion; we can act like servants who don't know, but the reality is that we CAN, and we DO know since we have one called alongside us to guide, clarify, remind and reinforce all the spiritual intelligence we need. This is the fantastic reality of the third principle: God wants to and will keep us in the loop because of our new status in Jesus Christ.

The implications are, quite frankly, *enormous* for all of us who long to walk in the same spiritual authority/power we find in the intelligence-gatherers in the gospels and Acts. It means that spiritual authority/power is not primarily a function of our ministry competence but of our spiritual intimacy with God. Competence we can augment through training, education, experience and coaching. It involves fine-tuning our gifts, abilities and skill-sets: what we know, what we can do, and what we are good at. Add discipline and time to the desire, and voila: competence!

Intimacy, thankfully, works differently. It has its own dynamics, its own timing, its own “training school,” and its own “benchmarks.” It focuses on – who we know, how much we love them, and, most of all, on how badly we want to be together with the other person. And so, it is worked out in the middle of two people’s real and natural lives. The process is more fluid; the template non-existent. And at the end of the day, no matter how complicated we adults think relationships can be in a sinful world, even a child can “get” intimacy when with a loving parent who wants to be close to his child. This child can pick out dad’s voice in the womb as well as in a crowded room. It can want to spend every waking and sleeping moment with dad. It can learn to trust dad; learn what pleases him – *all because it WANTS to and because it associates all good things in life to the father*. Intimacy, then, is simpler than we have come to know and freely accessible to any – big or small.

And so embracing this third principle yields a release. We are freed from the shackles of expertise and ability. We can go farther than our education and our abilities – limited only by God’s plan for us in his world. We can see miracles, heal the sick, cast

out demons, reach an entire town through one person, make a new continental inroad with the gospel, and even be transported from one area to another – if we are close enough to the Father to recognize when he is speaking and calling us to be out in the harvest fields with him. Intimacy – not competence – is the fertile soil in which seeds of intelligence can be planted.

This brings us to our fourth and final principle that builds on the foundation of the previous three. If all we're saying is true about a God who initiates revealing fresh and timely intelligence to those who want to hear him, then one final step remains: obedience. *Obedience is the prerequisite to movement[s]*. Obedience is to spiritual intelligence as wind is to a sail; without it, we go nowhere. Without obedience, what is conceived in heaven will never be born on earth. It is the make-or-break ingredient, the deal breaker.

This is why Jesus emphasizes obedience so much. We could talk about how obedience affects our relationship with God -- communicating and growing our intimacy with one another¹³, or we can talk about obedience's role in affecting our relationship to the Kingdom – securing a stable foundation.¹⁴ But to show the global impact that

¹³ To follow up on principle three, we see in John 14 the critical role obedience plays in our intimacy with God: it communicates love to God and causes God to draw near in intimacy with us:

*21Whoever has my commands and **obeys** them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me **will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him**" ... 23Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will **obey** my teaching. **My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.***

¹⁴ This is what Jesus gets at with his grand finale of the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7:24*Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall,*

obedience plays in God's Kingdom, I want to point out its role in the launching of disciple-making movements of entire nations. Listen to Jesus in the often-quoted Great Commission of Matthew 28 – this time, keeping an open ear for the role of obedience in propelling the movement:

*18Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.** And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

How will entire nations be disciplined according to Jesus? There are two verbs he uses to modify the main action of “making disciples;” they are “baptizing” and “teaching.” The second is the one of relevance; what are we to “teach” people? Obedience (*teaching them to obey*) and divine revelation (*everything I have commanded you*); in other words, the Great Commission is activated by radical obedience to divine revelation. And if we fail to transmit this obedience-based disciple-making, then entire nations will fail to be disciplined. So in Jesus' mind, *obedience is, indeed, the prerequisite to viral movements.*

These are the four main principles that we see operational, taught and assumed in the gospels and Acts. They are simple yet radical; freeing yet costly. And they force us to ask mettlesome and life-altering questions. Are we willing to give up control and “give the keys” to God – opting for “followership” over traditional executive “leadership”? Do we trust him enough to come through for us? Are we ready to stop

because it had its foundation on the rock. Obedience plus divine revelation equals an unshakeable foundation.

looking for the “silver bullet” methodology and trust the voice of the Holy Spirit first and foremost? And can we persevere in listening often for fresh intelligence and not just yesterday’s revelation? Do we love God and hunger for his voice more than anything this world offers? Do we long to spend time with him – not only for the purpose of guidance but because we want to sit at his feet? Are we willing to obey whatever God tells us to do – even if it costs us everything we’ve built to date? Can we, as Paul did in Philippians 3, call these former things we used to stand on for confidence (in this case for mission and ministry) – like giftedness, experience, wisdom, skills, and training --- “loss” (i.e., detriment) and “garbage” in comparison to just knowing Jesus? These are the fundamental and unpopular questions that every Kingdom worker must be asking. But it is in asking the right questions that we stumble closer to the right answers.

Case Studies: Real Life Stories Of People Who Do This

The temptation of reading a monograph like this is to toss it aside as non-scalable or non-reproducible for the “real world” in which we live. In anticipation of this, this final section will give three current and real-to-life accounts of various groups of Kingdom workers who have implemented these principles with varying levels of success in their work. You will see all four principles at play between the three examples.

Case Study 1: What happens when the Holy Spirit provides spiritual intelligence to a young house church socializing in a lounge?

A group of young Asian-Americans primarily in their 20’s and young 30’s gathers together as a weekly house-church in the Southern California area. Without having a building or paid ministerial staff, they have walked into significant spiritual authority in the use of spiritual gifts like prophecy, healing, and visions. There is a genuine hunger

for God and bona-fide expectation that God will speak to them; and he does – often with great precision and edification through the utterance of prophetic words where the one speaking will, taking a step of faith, share intelligence that God revealed to him/her about the person’s past or present [and sometimes future] that only that person could have known. The use of these spiritual gifts has primarily been used *in-house* – for shepherding, inner healing and discipling men and women who already know Jesus – until one day when God decided to shift their understanding of who they are as Kingdom people.

One Friday evening when they were socializing at a popular and crowded lounge, the Lord revealed fresh intelligence to one fellow (we’ll call him John) about their server. Even though John was there for social reasons, he obeyed the spiritual intelligence the Holy Spirit was giving him. John disappeared from his conversation, tracked the server down and began to share the details of the insights God provided along with some accompanying words of exhortation. The server responded with great surprise at the precision of the spiritual intelligence and asked who John was. He responded with something to the effect of, “We’re Christians who hear from God and share with others what God tells us.” At this, she disappeared into the back and re-emerged soon after with the entire serving staff in a John 4 moment that recreated what happened to the Samaritan woman. All of the servers were eager to meet the people who had spoken with such love and accuracy about their friend’s life and wanted to hear words for themselves as well. This turned into a spontaneous prayer time where the house church members dispersed to pray for each server – all this on a Friday night while the servers were on the clock! Some received Jesus that evening, and the group was invited to come back any time to that lounge.

The beauty of this story is not only the prospect of what could happen in the lounge and the six degrees of separated people from the lounge but, also, the result in this house church: thanks to their experience prompted by spiritual intelligence, the group is now praying and listening about how they can start churches in the lounge and not just be a church that bring others to their house. Their DNA is shifting toward a missional-networked paradigm where they multiply – not just add to the Kingdom – and all by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit who has his eyes set on “the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

Case Study 2: Bay Area Organic Church Planters

Over the last two years, an informal, relational and organic network of people have begun meeting together as missional learning communities spread out through the bay area: Davis, Berkeley-Alameda, Dublin, Sunnyvale, San Francisco, and San Rafael. This group of Kingdom-minded people has had the mantra of “Just listen to Jesus, and obey him” at its core, but only in the last several months has it explored what that could look like corporately and strategically. Fueled by some training from people God has used overseas to plant churches vis-à-vis signs and wonders, Chris Daza, Neil and Dana Gamble, the church planters have taken initial steps towards gathering spiritual intelligence as a corporate life rhythm and practice.

Two in particular I’d like to highlight are a group collaboration to reach the University of California Berkeley campus and a weekly outing some engage in called “treasure hunts.” We begin first with Berkeley. While gathering together for a listening prayer meeting in Alameda where we asked the Lord of the harvest what the next step was after receiving training on the place of signs and wonders in church planting from Chris Daza, the Berkeley campus came to the fore. As a matter of testing

and confirming, we committed to sending teams of people to various sites in the city and on the campus to listen, walk and gather intelligence. In addition to that, one friend even started a social networking site on Ning for us to collect and compare intelligence derived from the natural realm on the history and significance of Berkeley and from the supernatural realm consisting of any impressions, visions, or prophetic words that God communicated to us about Berkeley. What came out of this corporate intelligence gathering collaboration has been a plethora of insight on Berkeley. I will list some samples below:

- Berkeley is the birthplace of movements in the Bay area – carrying a spiritual significance beyond what most can see. Berkeley is a woman who has given birth to many children and even now a woman in labor.
- God loves Berkeley like a toddler son and also like a mother duck that guides her ducklings.
- Berkeley is not as spiritually dark as many believe – just spiritually curious and misguided, and functions as a spiritual capital or epicenter of the Bay area where things are “inaugurated.”
- God wants to remove the deep spiritual roots of the giant tree that Berkeley represents, and that he was going to do it quickly and easily despite the towering and intimidating presence that Berkeley gives.
- There was sin that happened in Berkeley surrounding the building of the trans-continental railroad through the area: sin of greed, abuse, conflict and such that brought in “unholy cargo” of demonic spirits that have exercised levels of dominion in Berkeley.
- God is about to do something in the lives of people associated with a Bank of America building and a Chinese restaurant on campus.

The group has been praying over these insights and been intentional about pairing up those who are more prophetically oriented with those who are more apostolically oriented in order to keep the balance of turning to God for insight and for planting the gospel in new places and peoples. In addition, plans are in place for coordinated prayer-walking, prophetic action, binding and loosing of the demonic, praying over buildings and neighborhoods, and intelligence-inspired-evangelism on campus by people in this group

as well as with the Southern California house church network mentioned in Case Study 1. The net effect of gathering intelligence has been, at times murky as we journey through these old-but-new practices, but mostly encouraging as we have come to see Berkeley through God's eyes and not through the eyes of fundamentalism or evangelicalism. That is the first application.

As for the second step we are taking, we took a page from the missional group, Campus Church Networks, by utilizing their intelligence-guided evangelism called, "treasure hunts." Treasure hunts are the spiritual-intelligence-baptized versions of scavenger hunts where a group of people listen for intelligence and, as a step of faith, commit to writing down a list of objects, phrases, or people that were supernaturally communicated to them while praying and listening. In the example I will detail below, a pair of men wrote down a Buddha statue, a soccer ball and a skateboard, and then began to prayerfully look for the stores or the treasures of people to whom the set of spiritual intelligence refers. Going out in pairs as Jesus sent out the 12 in Luke 9 and the 72 in Luke 10, the pair prayer walks the complex of stores until further insight is given or until they discover a store or person who has "keys" to these insights. To "test" if they are on the "right trail" in the treasure hunt, they will throw out a feeler question like, "Do you sell any soccer balls or skateboards or Buddha statues here?" In this particular example, the intelligence led the pair to a store filled with Buddha statues; they immediately prayed over the store and the statues for a stripping of any demonic power or influence that may be in the idols. But as they looked around they saw no soccer balls or skateboards. As a step of faith they asked the store clerk if they sold any soccer balls or skateboards only to discover that there were plush-toy soccer balls hidden away and that the young female

clerk road skateboards in her free time. It was a perfect match – just not visible in the natural realm until they began to take steps of faith to ask and socially engage. This led to a long spiritual conversation with the clerk and an ongoing friendship where they drop by weekly and pray for her and even sometimes communicate more spiritual-intelligence received from the church planting fellowships specifically for her. She welcomes the insight, prayer and friendship and has been open in all spiritual conversations they have had. The group continues to pray for her as a Luke 10:6 “person of peace” who could be the doorway to the planting of a church in his/her oikos and indigenous culture. And the remarkable part of it all is that this friendship would have never formed were it not for God’s initiative, the spiritual intelligence God provided to the “t,” and a couple of friends of Jesus who loved him enough to obey and risk looking foolish.

Case Study 3: What happens when surrendered people gather together expressly for the purpose of listening to the Father?

By the Lord’s choreographing, my wife and I are part of a gathering of about a dozen Simple/Organic Church movement leaders¹⁵ who gather together several times a year to listen to God for spiritual intelligence to which we then respond. Sometimes that response looks like life surrender in an Abraham-sacrificing-Isaac-on-the-altar moment, sometimes it’s prayer and identificational repentance for the sins of the church and the sins of the land, sometimes it’s prayer-walking, sometimes it’s prophetic actions, sometimes it’s asking God to open or close “spiritual gates” supernaturally revealed to us, sometimes it leads to discussions about promoting cures for Malaria or AIDS – the

¹⁵ This list includes a veritable who’s who in the simple/house/organic church movement: Jim Rutz, Tony and Felicity Dale, Neil Cole, Dezi Baker, Wolfgang and Mercy Simson, Curtis Sergeant, and Neil and Dana Gamble. And tucked somewhere obscurely into that mix is my wife, Leslie, and me.

responses vary with the intelligence that is revealed.

In the summer of 2008, we met in the town of Globe, Arizona – a copper mining town bordering Native American Apache reservation lands that was once an important city in the Southwest but now struggles socio-economically. Most of the first day was spent in the Arizona outdoors, struggling to hear from God about what he wanted us to hear and do. It was not until later that evening that our spiritual “receivers” began to tune in to the spiritual intelligence God was providing.

There were several pieces of spiritual intelligence that we received. First, one fellow saw a picture of a Native American Apache Medicine Man around a fire wheel on a hill-top, dejected and declaring curses upon those who had slaughtered thousands of their own people – some of whom were piled as corpses in a nearby ditch. The cursing was not so much an act of malice as much as it was an act of helplessness and confusion in response to real slaughter that had happened years back – before the Apaches were relegated to reservation land. When we had realized that the very hill where this cursing took place was the hill in which our bed and breakfast was situated, we knew what we had to do. We repented on behalf of Americans and settlers who had greedily stolen Apache lands and killed their people – asking God to remove the stain on the land and to silence the blood that cried out to God as Abel’s did at the hands of Cain. Standing upon the very same hilltop, we redeemed the symbol in the vision and instead formed a wheel of blessing where, with hands held-together, we proclaimed blessing as we simultaneously overlooked reservation land as well as “city” land. We were standing literally and spiritually at the crossroads, “closing the spiritual gate” of curses and replacing it with blessing – all in response to the revelation and intelligence God had

given us.

Other spiritual intelligence transmitted to us included revelation of a “spirit of death” that held sway in the region. The Holy Spirit supernaturally provided insight into two arenas in particular that we needed to pray over and reclaim for the Kingdom from the influence of the local spirit of death: the first was a house where significant sin happened that provided a spiritual gateway, if you will; and the second was the school system in Globe. As for the house, the Spirit revealed that years ago in the 60’s, one particular house was the epicenter of sinful activity. It was a three-story house with a ravine in the back and built to be hidden into a hillside that overlooked the ravine. This was no ordinary house: it had an elevator down to the third level below where an indoor swimming pool – of all things – was situated and hidden from the outside. And the house belonged to a doctor who – instead of fighting for life as his Hippocratic oath dictated — brought death by performing abortions in the house. It was also a place where the sins of the 60’s happened frequently with drugs and sex. All of this (vision of the past and details of the house) was supernaturally given to one person and later confirmed to the “t” by a neighbor with whom we spoke as we visited and prayed over the house: there WAS a doctor who used to live there, WAS a swimming pool on the lowest third level, and WAS an elevator – information that none of us had access to before. And what’s more, further research showed (after we had returned home) that this was the house where Anton LaVey, author of the satanic bible, would retreat to when he penned the satanic bible and even spent his later life there. The Spirit had led us to this very epicenter of great evil and stronghold of sin to pray over and cleanse it.

As for the “spirit of death” in the schools, there were signs in the natural realm of

what was happening supernaturally with the stronghold of death: there was an unnatural hatred of children in the town showing itself in a variety of strange ways: no P.T.A. in the schools; no parks near or patches of grass in the schools; schools that looked like prisons; no youth centers or recreational programs for youth in the entire city; no faculty or administration showing up at the high school baccalaureate; and also, most specifically, in three suicides that had happened within months of one another that school year – suicides that were not publicly acknowledged in the graduation ceremonies of two deceased seniors! Eerily unnatural – supernaturally unnatural. The Lord led us to prayer-walk around the schools, anointing the doorways with oil, and reclaiming it as a place of shalom and life – not death and hatred.

Where did all of this go? How we figured into it all, the Lord only knows; and how it will end, the Lord only knows also. But I am happy to report that the spiritual intelligence seemed to match what God has been continuing to do in Globe since we left. First off, just a few weeks after we prayed for blessing for the Apaches and healing on the land, a high ranking tribal leader walked into the café which one of our members owns and asked our friend, Dezi Baker, to come and pray for one of the children in his reservation who had gone insane.¹⁶ I'll let Dezi pick up the story from here (from an email he sent):

The Monday after your departure found me back at the coffeehouse bright and early and in accordance with my regular routine. In truth, I was filled with enough faith and wonderment to tell anyone who would listen that things were going to be different around here from now on. (This was different for me from Colorado) but how could I bring such things up in the course of casual conversation? As it turns out I wouldn't have to.

¹⁶ It is worth noting here that “white men” do not enter the sovereign self-governing states of the Apaches. Arizona law does not apply there. So if you die there, that’s it. You cannot enforce outside law in it. So certainly this is a remarkable open door that has historically rarely swung open.

My first customer that morning turned out to be an Indian man whom I have a cordial relationship with; He comes in most mornings and is a respected member of the Nava-pache tribal council. A position of import if you take into consideration that when combined the Navaho and Apache nations are larger in size than most countries. All that being said, on this Monday morning my Indian friend needed more than just casual conversation and a great vanilla latte, and so with very few words (a practice which is common to his people) he asked me if I would help him with a young Indian boy who had slipped into insanity over the weekend.

His request surprised me a bit for to my knowledge I had never given him a reason to believe that I could help with such a thing. And so that is what I said, "What makes you think I could help with such a thing?" "Because, you are known to have a peaceful spirit." He said, "and I thought you might share your spirit with this boy and maybe it would bring peace to him also." "How am I known?" I asked. And so he told me how I was known and believe it or not the following is pretty close to word for word what he said.

"The Apache believe that a man's spirit can be passed to another by placing your hand on another's shoulder. That is why we do not like to be touched. You place your hand on people's shoulder and call them friend. The Apache you call friend say they have peace when you touch them. That is what they say in the churches. That is why many of our teenagers come here for lunch. Because their parents allow it. You see the Apache also believe that spirits can be passed through the preparation of food. They allow you to prepare food and drinks for their children because the Christian Apache says that you have a spirit of peace. Something the white churches don't have. You accomplish here what no church can accomplish."

I know this sounds like it came off a B-movie script or something but that is how it went down. The funny part is... because of how this went down, I knew exactly what to say. An experience I am not too familiar with but I went with nonetheless. Taking a cue from scripture I told him that the spirit of peace, which I have about me, is not my own but belongs to another far greater than myself. I also told him that I did not have to see the boy but that the name of my Lord could deliver him right here and now. And so I spoke the name Jesus over a boy I had never seen and in the presence of this man. I never even got the boy's name. I heard from one of the Psychologists at the "Indian Wellness Center" that the boy got better that day. Which saved him from a trip to the asylum.¹⁷

Dezi reflects on this story even several months later as part of a spiritual shifting that happened in which a “replacing authority” happened: an authority in which he and other

¹⁷ Taken from an email message to me dated Wednesday, July 2, 2008 at 11:53pm.

followers of Jesus needed to walk fully into and an authority in which the Holy Spirit provided the precise intelligence we needed to shift the spiritual landscape of the city of Globe. So what happened with this Nava-pache leader and boy represents more than just a new relational bridge but also a supernatural one.

In addition, there has been significant progress in the public school system since then. God has positioned for the first time in Globe history an all Jesus-following six-seat city council in Globe (in which Dezi is a member) that is committed to seeking the peace and prosperity of Globe and bringing Kingdom values into the transformation of the whole city.¹⁸ And one way God is answering our prayers is by removing two corrupt city officials who have stonewalled any attempts at reforming Globe's educational system which is dead last in the state of Arizona. Legal battles are taking place even as I write this paper that are sure to not only remove the officials from office but also penalize them for criminal activity. This change is needed because as of the date of this writing in March 2009, the Globe-Miami school district has lost 18 public school teachers to resignation and fired 15. And none of these 33 combined teachers have been replaced – further proof that some people are at the highest level are not doing their job of reforming the worst school in the state of one of the worst states in the country.

That is the macro-view, but on the micro-view hope is rising in Globe: youth centers are being built, and as high school youth talk to Dezi, they consistently tell him

¹⁸ Not only has God made "history" by turning over all six seats to followers of Jesus but he has also given this council group the singular opportunity of replacing six critical human authority positions – most of which were corrupt or underperforming – by no initiative of this council. These six positions of influence are: the chief of police, the district attorney in the city, the school superintendent, the city manager, the county supervisor and the corporation commissioner. Never before in Globe history have these many positions been open all at once! What I didn't mention earlier was that our listening group also prayer walked around the civic buildings in response to spiritual intelligence where we saw a golden chain around all of them and Dezi's café nearby. We prayed for the end of corruption and the ousting of dead weight in the city. It appears God answered that prayer and was showing us what he was about to do.

that they feel a change in the air in Globe. All of this is happening in correlation to our gathering of and responding to spiritual intelligence regarding the spiritual state of Globe. Dezi had been prayer-walking and fighting for the schools for a long time – even previously hearing the phrase “save the schools, save the city” as he prayed on-site, but in a way that we don’t fully comprehend causally, Kingdom progress in the school system raced powerfully forward when God decided to reveal intelligence to a group of people that just wanted to hear and obey him.

Dezi had these further insights on the shifting that happened as we followed the supernatural intelligence that give us both hope and warning:

However I think that anyone we talk to should understand that all of this takes place in the City of Globe, which like the rest of the world is also east of Eden. So, what we instituted was not a time of fruitfulness but a time of labor and toil from which God's best often comes. That means that in these times of persistent difficulties and denied predicament we labor and toil not only in sunshine and rain but during times of drought and a storm as well – most of this due to the freewill of men and God's law of sowing and reaping; two powerful forces bound together and sworn to each others purpose. So what is different here and now is that we see a renewed time of kingdom work where the potential yield of kingdom fruit is great because of the change in the spiritual climate. Cooperation with groups of people is now possible when before it was not. New revenues and avenues of approach can now be seen when before they could not...and so on. Freedom has now emerged but the price of freedom is still constant vigil. We need workers to keep that watch. Disciples of His who can stay awake during these final hours of prayer and not slip back into their pliable sleep of denial.¹⁹

These are the insights that the Lord has been “downloading” to Dezi since June of 2008 when these events happened in Globe. And as you can see, they help keep us from an over-triumphalistic understanding of the Kingdom; they remind us that the battle wages on – perhaps even as it needed to in the eleven months in between D-Day (June 6, 1944)

¹⁹ Taken from a facebook email to me dated March 6, 2009 at 8:38am.

and V-E Day (May 8, 1945) in World War II. The battle wages on – though with a renewed sense of hope and progress that a beachhead has indeed been established, and the governing authority has been shifting, if not already replaced.

This story in Globe – be it in Arizona or the Planet Earth – is still being written, but it has played a tremendous primer for me and learning experience for us all in rediscovering the mission-critical role of spiritual intelligence in Kingdom warfare. God DOES speak; and we who love him and love the lost only need to pick up the receiver, listen and obey.

And so ends the case studies of real life groups of people with whom I have trusted relationships. Most of these stories have happened in the last several months and go back no farther than June of 2008. And they demonstrate to me that the ancient practice I earlier delineated of gathering spiritual intelligence prior to going on the missional offensive is indeed still viable, valid, preferable and necessary for all of us who long to follow Jesus HIS way in order to redeem HIS world. It is my hope and prayer for all who love the Lord and love the lost to come to experience the spiritual intimacy and authority that come when we simply turn on our spiritual “receivers” and tune in to the voice of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit who have been speaking for centuries to a church that has forgotten it is in a battle.

I close now with the apostle Paul’s words to the Ephesian church:

10Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 12For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have

done everything, to stand... 18And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. 19Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, 20for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

May God open up the Spirit realm for all of us in the battle that we may be standing strong, alert in prayer, tuned in to the “words given” us, and fearless as we should be.

For the glory of the King, Amen.

Suggested Readings:

Simson, Wolfgang. *The Starfish Manifesto: a Prophetic Roadmap for an Apostolic Journey*. Kandern: Starfish Publishing, 2009.

Rutz, James. *MegaShift: Igniting Spiritual Power*. Colorado Springs: Empowerment Press, 2005.