



## ■ Winning God's Way – The Call to Serve Part two by Loren Cunningham

Sometimes God does something dramatic to get our attention. That's what happened to me in 1975. My family and I were enjoying the peace and quiet of a borrowed cabin in the Colorado Rockies. I was stretched out on a lounge chair in the midday warmth, praying and thinking. I was considering how we Christians - not just the mission I was part of, but all of us - could turn the world around for Jesus.

A list came to my mind; categories of society which I believed we should focus on in order to turn nations around to God. I wrote them down, and stuck the paper in my pocket.

The next day, I met with a dear brother, the leader of Campus Crusade For Christ, Dr. Bill Bright. He shared with me something God had given him - several areas to concentrate on to turn the nations back to God! They were the same areas, with different wording here and there, that were written on the page in my pocket. I took it out and showed Bill and we shook our heads in amazement.

**Here's the list (refined and clarified a bit over the years) that God gave me that sunny day in**

**Colorado:**

- 1. The home**
- 2. The church**
- 3. Schools**
- 4. Government and politics**

5. The media
6. Arts, entertainment, and sports
7. Commerce, science, and technology

These **seven spheres of influence will help us shape societies for Christ**. God gave us these handles to use in carrying out Matthew 28 - to disciple nations for Him. He obviously didn't just intend them for us in YWAM, or for those in Campus Crusade. I believe He is wanting all His people to see these seven and use them to extend Christ's reign throughout the earth.

How do we go about reclaiming these seven areas that are so influential in any nation?

### **God's Infantry, Air Force, and Missiles**

First, we are to take territory from Satan in the place of prayer. With the power of the Holy Spirit, through the mighty weapons of spiritual warfare enumerated in Ephesians 6:10-20, II Corinthians 10:1-6, and James 4:7-10, we are told to **pull down the devil's strongholds**. We must pray against the enemy's influence in whatever area we are aware.

One person put it this way: Going with the gospel to every person (Mark 16:15) is like God's infantry. Discipling nations (Matthew 28:18-20) is His air force. And intercession for the nations (Daniel 9, Nehemiah 9, Ezra 9) is like intercontinental missiles. Praying is a very powerful part of the spiritual warfare we enter into to recapture this world for Jesus Christ.

**Our prayers should be specific.** As we listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit in our minds, He will tell us how to pray. (See Proverbs 3:5,6; Isaiah 55:8; Isaiah 59:16; I Timothy 2:1-6; Isaiah 62:6,7.) We then pray for the Holy Spirit to bring His influence to people in a strategic area:

Let's say it is regarding the government of a certain region. We should pray for a Christian witness to come to the individuals in that government, leading them towards the Lord Jesus. Then, if individuals won't submit to the Lord Jesus, we can pray that God will replace them, putting someone else in their place who will do His will.

**This is what is implied every time we pray this phrase in the Lord's Prayer: "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven."** If His will were presently being done everywhere on earth, then it wouldn't be necessary for Jesus to tell us to pray that

it would be!

After we have prayed for a specific category - be it a government, a school system, an area of the media, or whatever - God may then choose to use us in the very arena for which we have been praying. He may call us to penetrate that influential place for Him, placing us, like Daniel or Joseph, in a place of authority.

In whatever area of influence God has given us, whether it's our family or a presidential palace, we are to live out His will in our lives. We aren't to do it in a way that lords it over others, but we are to be servants like Jesus was. Jesus wants to rule the world through us. But He extends His authority through us as He sees us giving up our rights for His sake and the gospel's. (Mark 10:42-45)

Let's look at those seven areas again.

### **The Home**

Through families, we are **discipling the next generation** of every nation on earth. Mothers and fathers are already discipling that next generation, for good or for bad. We can seek to establish Christian homes along biblical patterns that will shine as light in places of gross spiritual darkness. I know of one family living in a country totally hostile to the gospel, working in a professional field. Because of strict laws against speaking on religious matters, they are greatly restricted in their witness. But they have reported that even the manner in which the husband relates to his wife and children is having an impact on the people around them. People are being drawn to the light of Jesus through the role model of this Christian family in their neighborhood.

### **The Church**

Through churches, we are to disciple the nations of the world. How do we do this? I don't believe we are to do it by staying inside the walls of the church and believing it is Christ's Kingdom on earth. Attending church should be like a pit stop for Christians. The race is going on out in the world. The Kingdom of God is in us, and we take it out into the world wherever we go. We come to church again and again to get our tanks filled, to be fed, revived, and restored, before going out again into the race to establish God's Kingdom in the world.

### **The Schools**

From day-care centers and preschools, to graduate schools in the most prestigious universities of the world, the next generation is being influenced every day. This is a precious opportunity - an arena to shape the world for Jesus.

In Iceland during the ninth century, pagan Vikings came ashore and found a small population of Christian settlers from Ireland. The Vikings made the Irish Christians their slaves and gave them what they considered a menial job - taking care of their children. Within three generations, they shaped a country. In the year 1000, the people of Iceland voted to declare themselves a Christian nation.

Christians must be involved in every sphere of education: writing curriculum, teaching, and administering. Some should remain as salt and light in public schools, while others lead in Christian schools. Parents are to be active, too - partnering with the teachers and delegating authority to the teachers to disciple their children.

### **The Media**

Media-bashing has become a popular sport lately. Everyone from right to left in the political spectrum, and many Christians as well, have become convinced that the media folks are conniving to rob them of their rights. But how many of us realize that this is a mission field of enormous proportions? According to a recent poll by Lichter and Rothman of 238 media elite, fifty percent claim to have no religious belief at all. Only three to five percent go to church or synagogue regularly.

This is a rate of unevangelized people equal to many so-called "closed countries."

Pick your least favorite newsman. Get his or her face firmly in your mind. Then realize that this is a person for whom Jesus Christ hung on the cross - this is an individual worth the sacrifice of the Son of God.

It is hard to overstate the importance of the electronic and print media in shaping our society. Why then have Christians ignored this arena, leaving a vacuum for the unrighteous to fill? We can't complain of the lack of truth in the press if we are not willing to go among them, carrying the One who said He was the way, the truth, and the life. Again, some will be led to penetrate the non-Christian media while others work in Christian networks and newspapers.

### **Government**

Have you ever said, "Don't get involved in politics! It's a dirty business - no place for Christians"? If you have, you have been voicing the will of Satan. You didn't mean to, but you were giving the devil's point of view.

Where did we get the idea that Christians should not run for political office? We certainly didn't get it from the Bible. We don't even have to turn to the heads of state of Israel, like David or Solomon. After all, they were leading a country that at least gave lip service to being God's people. Look instead at two other examples - men who served in government in heathen countries - Daniel and Joseph.

These two young men exercised godly principles and conduct and found themselves as prime ministers. Early in their careers, no political pollster would have given them any chance of gaining their positions. Daniel was a refugee, a foreigner, an outsider who didn't play by the rules of the king's court. Joseph suffered sibling rivalry of the worst kind, met a woman who had a fatal attraction to him, and found himself languishing in the dim recesses of an Egyptian dungeon. Not exactly the lifestyles of the rich and famous! Daniel, later in his political career, was thrown into a very small space where he was outnumbered by extremely large lions who hadn't had their lunch yet.

Can the godly win in the political arena? If it were possible in ancient Egypt and Babylon, it is possible today - in any country. But if a Christian seeks to serve the Lord in government, he or she will also have to face a modern den of lions. God will allow that to purge and build character, as well as to teach lessons that will later be applied in His style of leadership. Servant leadership. God is searching for men and women today who will give up their rights and be raised to positions of national leadership. However, He will only exalt them after He has tested them to be sure they will not end up like King Saul - taken by the love of power, rather than remaining the servant of all.

### **Performing Arts, Entertainment, and Sports**

Whoa, you say. Surely this is the devil's own domain. Isn't "Christian entertainer" a contradiction in terms?

I don't know how I got this idea growing up, but somehow I became convinced that anything fun, anything exciting with movement and color, was probably sinful.

Example: Really godly people dress plainly; the holiest wear all

black (or all white, depending on the group).

Example: A good joke has no place among truly spiritual people.

Example: Anything is more sacred if it is done soberly, without any emotion. When at all possible, use seventeenth-century language when you talk to God, like King James English. Better yet, prayers should be said in a monotone, without any degree of inflection in the voice.

Perhaps you share only part of those ideas, but by and large, this is the picture we have painted to the world of what it means to be godly. And what does this say about God Himself? Since He is the most righteous of all, He must *never* smile! He must be dressed all in black, speak in a strange monotone, and never even move. (Didn't we learn to show respect for God as our parents constantly reminded us, "Sit still! You're in the house of God!")

No wonder the idea of a Christian entertainer strikes us as odd. Again, look at the scriptures. Do we see a dull God, a colorless God, a lifeless God? The devil wants us to think fun is his department, but that just isn't true. Read the book of Revelation and you'll see. There's a rainbow of color around God's throne, and the Creator of all energy is not sitting there impassively.

One of my favorite scriptures, in Zephaniah, shows God singing and rejoicing over us! He celebrates because of the actions of those who love Him. The God who created us in His image experiences emotions and knows great joy as well as sorrow. He is the center of excitement, the author of drama, pageantry, majesty, and beauty.

Any territory which we abandon, Satan will fill. That has happened in the performing arts. Modern drama was born as a form of evangelism - the Church created morality plays to teach the truths of scripture to an illiterate public in the Middle Ages. We must recapture drama and every form of entertainment for Jesus, seeking Him for creative ways to show the world who He is.

### **Commerce, Science, and Technology**

Filthy lucre. Climbing up the ladder. The rat race. Even the common terms of our language show that we basically believe making money is a dirty business. Can a Christian succeed in business? Does the Holy Spirit want you to win in the corporate world? Can a rich man enter the Kingdom of Heaven?

Jesus said it wasn't easy. He knew how hard it was to serve God

when we are blessed with material things. 'When the rich young ruler approached Him in Luke 18, Jesus looked into his heart and saw that money, not God, sat on the throne. He told him to give all that he had to the poor and follow Him.

Was Jesus giving a pattern for everyone? Yes, if money is number one it is an idol. The Lord will test you, to see if money means more to you than He does. He may ask you to give away everything you have - more than once. But it may be God's will for you to serve Him as a missionary in the business world, blessing you with finances so that you can be a blessing to many others. John Wesley, writing two hundred years ago, gave us up-to-date advice in his tract called, "The Use of Money." He urged those who loved Jesus to "Gain all you can... save all you can... give all you can!" It's hard to improve on that advice.

Science and technology are also avenues for Christian service. These are categories which some Christians have avoided in the past. But true science and Bible Christianity are totally compatible. Not only that, science and technology desperately need the spiritual leadership of Christians. Never before has a society been able to work so many technological miracles, and yet been so unsure of its moral moorings. We need Christians who will enter these areas as their mission field.

When John Kennedy set the goal of putting a man on the moon before the end of the Sixties, his vision spun off into a knowledge explosion that we are still reaping the benefits of in everyday life. If the space race generated new devices, such as pocket calculators, lap top computers, and other microelectronic wonders, why couldn't the race to reach every creature with the gospel also expand new frontiers of knowledge?

Let me give you just one example. At Youth With A Mission's University of the Nations, our provost is Dr. Howard Malmstadt, a brilliant scientist and a humble man of God. Under his direction in U of N's College of Science and Technology, our people have invented a compact chemical analyzer that can analyze everything from soil to blood serum. Its application in third world countries will include agriculture, industry, medicine, and nutrition. Their next goal is to make a portable, battery-operated version of the chemical analyzer, so that it can be taken on special missionary projects.

The heartbeat of the men and women at the College of Science and Technology is to help fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus Christ. At the same time, they're expanding fields of human

knowledge.

Have you ever been asked by a full-time Christian worker what you do for a living and you've replied with a little shrug, "Oh, I have a secular job"? Immediately, the distinctions are drawn. Sacred and secular. Clergy and laymen. God's work, my work, the devil's work.

It works out like this in our minds. There is a kingdom of darkness - that takes place mostly on Friday and Saturday nights. The kingdom of light, God's Kingdom, happens on Sunday. The rest, Monday through Friday, is the secular kingdom. You don't think or talk about the other two kingdoms on workdays. You just do your job and get your paycheck.

This is not a Bible-based idea. I believe that for the Christian there is no such thing as the secular world. Every person is in one kingdom or the other; light or darkness. We need to see this, then pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in my job... in my business... in my career... in my farm... in my schoolroom... in my television station..." or in whatever area of influence and work to which God has called you.

We have been so split in our thinking as Christians that we have been confused and have confused the world watching us. There are only two kingdoms and they are at war. We need to win for the kingdom of light by moving into these seven areas of influence in the opposite way that Satan is working. 'Where he is spreading hate we must show love. Where greed prevails we must outdo everyone in our giving. Where intolerance is winning we need to show loyalty and forgiveness. God's Spirit enters into this world through His people, moving in the opposite spirit to wrest the power from the god of this world and give it to Jesus, who is King of kings and Lord of lords.

Jesus has commanded us to go and disciple all nations. In the past we have gone into countries as missionaries, giving the gospel and teaching the people how to read and write. We didn't get involved in teaching government, politics, or economics. We let the Marxists do that. In country after country in the Third World, the Communists took young men educated in missionary schools and "disciplined" them on how to run a government.

But God is saying to us, "I know more about running a government than anyone. I know more about farming or fishing than you do. I know more about your business, your teaching. I know how to best communicate and use the media. I want to teach you My principles, so that you can teach others to observe all I have



commanded and have a great harvest of souls. I have a calling for you and I want you to succeed at it. I just need for you to obey Me."

As we disciple the nations by giving them godly economic systems, Bible-based forms of government, education anchored in God's Word, families with Jesus at the head, entertainment that portrays God in His variety and excitement, media that is based on communicating the truth in love, and churches that serve as sending stations for missionaries into all areas of society, we will see the fulfillment of the Great Commission and multiplied millions coming into the Kingdom of God. As we do this, Jesus promises, "I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:20)

Jesus has promised to give the earth to the meek, to the humble, to those who have surrendered their rights to Him. He wants us to claim the nations of the earth as His inheritance. He promises us that we will gain it all if we give it all.

It won't be easy. He doesn't promise comfort or ease. He promises His soldiers will have harder beds. Jesus said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." (Matthew 8:20)

Jesus doesn't promise you will be rich; He promises to meet your needs. He will feed you, but the food might not always be what you like. He promises that you will have shelter, though it may be in crowded conditions. He promises that you may be arrested like He was arrested. You may even be one of the more than 300,100 who will die this year for the sake of getting the gospel out. But He also promises that you will reach an entire generation - every creature! For the promise is included in the commandment when He says, "I want you to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

**He says to occupy until He comes.** To occupy means to take leadership. It's not huddling together on some mountaintop wearing white robes, waiting for the end. When an occupation army moves into a nation they take authority in the economy, the military, the media and the schools. Jesus is telling us to take authority.

How do we do it? Not by force. We are to do it by becoming His slaves. It's the opposite way the world conquers. We are to take leadership through serving - as slaves, as the meek, as the humble. The meek will inherit the earth.

Does this sound impossible? Not at all. If you try to save your life, you'll lose it. But if you lose it for the Lord's sake and the gospel's, you will save it. Jesus did it. He humbled Himself as far down as anyone could possibly lower themselves. Right down to the bottom of Hell itself. Now God has exalted Jesus and promises that every knee will bow before Him. That same Jesus is telling us to follow Him. Take up His cross. Become a slave. Lose your rights and you'll win the Kingdom. You'll rule and reign with Jesus. You'll gain the whole world for Jesus!

This article is part two of a two-part series compiled from the book, *Winning God's Way*, by Loren Cunningham.

**Loren Cunningham** is the Founder and President of Youth With A Mission (YWAM), an interdenominational missionary movement. Since 1960, hundreds of thousands have gone with YWAM to 215 countries. YWAM has nearly 7,000 staff in 315 ministry centers and also sends out over 25,000 short-term volunteers each year. As a missionary-evangelist, Loren has ministered in over 175 countries, speaking at conferences, Christian festivals, in churches, and on university campuses. He is a missionary statesman with valuable insight into the problems of our generation. Loren and his wife, Darlene, and their two children live in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii, where YWAM has established a missions-oriented university.

It was at a YWAM and Keith Green Memorial Concert in December 1982 in Tampa, Florida that I stood to make my public commitment to the mission field. Loren Cunningham then asked those of us standing to ask God to place a country into our mind, and to then come forward to talk with a person representing that country. God instantly flashed three words to my mind: "India, India, India". I thought this strange since I had been thinking about England for a couple of years. The next summer I was in London leading three different evangelism teams at three different locations. The third location I was sent to was in West London at a place named Southall, or otherwise known as 'Little India'. Three years later I returned to Southall, to work as outreach director for a church in this densely populated Indian suburb. More than a dozen years later I finally made it to the country of India and had the privilege for 3 months to be the first Bible teacher at a newly formed Bible School. - John Beckerink

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