

"Throwing the First Stone"

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In these end times, not only has Israel been restored as a nation, but there is a remnant of faith, Jewish people that are believers of Yeshua inside of this land and that is a miracle. While we are still small in number, the fact that we are here is a sign from God. It is because God is faithful. He is faithful to His covenant. He promised thousands of years ago that He was going to be faithful to His people and no matter how unfaithful we have been, He remains faithful.

As Jane said, there is something we believe that is special about our relationship. The Bible calls this an Olive Tree. We are different types of branches being grafted together. There is a promise there that when those branches get grafted into together - all the nations connected with the Messianic remnant in Israel - that something big will happen. God said that it will be greater than it was in the first century. How is that?

We have had a lot of people criticize us lately saying, "How can you say it will be greater than the first century?" I do not know. That is what the Bible says! I did not make that up! But listen, in the first century they did not have believers in China, in Africa, in America, and Europe. Something is coming.

In the first century we were not leading up to the time of the Messiah coming in Glory and setting His Kingdom on this earth. Something is different. He said that when we get joined together that will lead to the resurrection of the dead.

There is something about your relationship with us and our relationship with you that is bringing us to the point where the world is ready for the dead to be raised and the Messianic Kingdom to come on earth. So that is what we are excited about and that is why you are here. Your relationship with us is part of it and our relationship with you.

Key: Aglow's relationship with today's Messianic believers is vital to usher in the return of Yeshua.

One other little thought.

If God is Love and God is One that must mean that there must be people in every nation who will love one another because of Him. There has got to be that proof somewhere. Well here you are. 170 nations represented from Aglow and us here in Israel. We love one another. God must be One and He must be Love. This is what it is all about. It is a witness coming.

Key: Aglow's relationship with today's Messianic believers is a witness to God's love and unity.

Throwing the First Stone

It is interesting that the phrase of *throwing the first stone* is found both in the Torah of Moses and in the Gospel of John. This little phrase is actually well known in the Jewish world and well known in the Christian world and the two may not know that there is a connection between the two of them.

I want to show what the connection is between the two of them. It is a comparison between the Laws of Justice in Deuteronomy and Yeshua's dealing with the woman who was caught in adultery.

The first quote is from Deuteronomy 16 and this is from this past week's Torah portion which is read in each of the Synagogues. As a matter of fact, one of the leaders of one of the political parties, a woman named Ayelet Shaked, quoted from this portion this week in her campaign promise, amazingly enough.

Deuteronomy 16:18 You will set judges and officers in all of your gates that the Lord has given you in all of your tribes and you will judge the people with righteous judgment.

The first thing to see is that righteous judgment is part of the plan of God. We do not just have a spiritual philosophy. It has to come down to moral values and social justice. It is part of what we believe in. We have to bring righteous judgment.

Deuteronomy 16:19 You will not tilt justice. You will not pervert justice and you will not recognize people's faces. You will not show favoritism. Nor will you take bribes. For a bribe will blind the eyes of the wise and it will pervert the words of the righteous. But righteousness, righteousness you will pursue in order that you might live and that you might take possession of this land which the Lord God has given you.

In Deuteronomy 17:1-7, it says if someone commits a crime - either an abomination of idolatry or sexual immorality - that person must be stoned. The person who is the witness to it must be the first person to throw the stone. So, when Yeshua said that He was quoting Deuteronomy, it is found three times in the Torah, in Deuteronomy, and in Leviticus.

A Judicial System

Deuteronomy 16: 18 says that we need to appoint judges and officers which is the same word as police in Hebrew. So, we are a people that are basically for a judicial system. You need to be praying for your judicial system whatever country you are in. You need to be praying for your policeman as that is part of God's plan to preserve righteousness.

Key: Judicial systems are part of God's plan to sustain righteousness in the earth. Pray for all who make up your judicial system.

While today, we do not need to worry about stoning someone or not, this does mean that criminals should be punished. People committing crimes cannot simply be let go. There has to be courts and police, and people need to be punished.

This portion also says that we have to pursue righteousness. I want to tell you that if we are passive, righteousness will not come to pass. Righteousness just does not happen. Righteousness is something

that has to be pursued. In the horrible situation of the sex trade in Israel we cannot just do nothing. We have to do something. We have to pursue it. If we pursue a little bit, God will bless it in a big way. He can multiply our efforts, but we have to do something.

Key: We must be proactive in pursuing righteousness and as we are, God will multiply our efforts.

It is interesting that in Deuteronomy 16:19 the Word says you have to forbid bribes. Right there in the Torah. Financial corruption is part of the problem.

Key: Taking bribes cause a person's ability to rule with wisdom to be distorted, biased, or slanted against justice.

In Israel, we say that we believe this truth, yet this is part of our problem here with the religious. They say they believe in moral values, but there is corruption. There is financial corruption within the religious system. That corruption perverts the eyes. They think they are being righteous, but they are not.

Then it says in Deuteronomy 17:4 that you have to search each case. Every single case is different. We cannot just generalize. There has to be a process.

Key: Ruling from a place of righteousness and justice causes a process to unfold which proves guilt or innocent.

Righteousness is in the process. You have to walk out the process. You do not know the end. You cannot assume somebody is guilty or assume somebody is innocent before the process. You walk through the process. Part of the justice is walking through the process.

I like that Dan Juster wrote a book called *Due Process*. Righteousness is not only the result in the end; it is the process you go through to get to that end product. You have a process so that you do not have a preconceived notion.

Key: Righteousness allows a nation to possess the land.

And lastly, he said in Deuteronomy 16:20 that a righteous society allows you to take possession of the land. You see what we have to have to take possession of this land here is not more religion. It is not more armies, not more politics, and not more money. We need righteousness in this land. That is what allows us to possess this land. That is what Zionism should be about in the first place.

Israel and the Nations' Current Condition

We are not having just another country like all the other countries. God does not need another country. This country was supposed to be built on righteous, moral values, and social justice as part of our faith. That is the same for every nation that you come from.

What if in 170 nations around the world, we were praying for moral righteousness and social justice as part of our faith? We believe that we are people of faith who have right hearts that are needed to transform the societies that we live in. I am not talking about politics.

I want to say that our country is in a difficult problem. There is a lot of difficult problems. We are one nation surrounded by 22 Arab nations which are part of 49 Muslim nations. This one nation, Israel, lives in the midst of 49 Muslim nations. We are not anti-Arab; we are pro-Arab. We are all one family together.

As we look at our nation right now, there is a clash, and this is why there is no way to form a government right now. It is because of a clash between the religious and the secular. I am not talking about the Christian community in your country. I am talking about the Ultra-Orthodox community here in Israel.

On one hand we have a secular society that is sinking into deeper levels of sexual immortality. As I said the level of pornography coming against our 5th and 6th graders is astonishing. The amount of pornography, divorce, sex trade, and abortion are just horrible! The women are being ripped to shreds in this nation. It is so bad that it is even affecting the men now. What was sex trade abuse is now taking men into homosexual abuse. It is so deep. The country is so confused that they cannot even figure out what is right and what is wrong here.

On the other hand, you have a religious establishment that is claiming that they are right and saying all the right words. It is amazing. They say a lot of the things that we would say, and yet, within that community they are stealing money from the government! They are not sending their children to go serve in the army. They expect the secular people to serve in the army in place of them. Well, that means you are murdering them.

If you send somebody else to die in your place, if you are stealing money, if you are murdering, and if you are lying about what the truth is in the Bible, what are you doing!? So, there is unrighteousness on both sides and our people are so confused. We are living in the middle of that. Now you need to hear this message. We are talking about Israeli society. We are talking about the Israeli people as individuals that are lost. They cannot figure out how to get out of this maze.

And we are talking about your country. We are also talking about you personally. We are talking about me personally. What is the answer to all of this? Our people are stuck right now. There is no answer. We do not know what to do.

We just had an election, and they could not form a government. So, we are having another election. The results will be the same. We are stuck. We do not know what to do.

Well, there is an answer. And the answer is a Person.

Are We Really Looking for Justice?

Let's look at John 8.

This is what I want to describe. This whole story is about Yeshua talking to this woman caught in adultery. In some ways, it summarizes almost everything going on in the world right now. Do you know what I mean?

What is our message as believers? How can we talk to people when every single television show, everything in entertainment is all adultery? What do you mean "a" woman caught in adultery? This is

90% of western society! What kind of message do we have? Okay, it is wrong, okay. But what is our message to them? What is the solution to that?

Now let's look at how Yeshua answered that. It is amazing to think about this on all these levels.

John 8:3-6 "And then the scribes and the Pharisees brought to Him a woman who was caught in adultery and they set her in the middle before Him. And they said to Him, 'Rabbi, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery - right in the act itself — what an amazing thing to say! Moses commanded in the Torah that these types of women need to be stoned, what do You have to say? And they said this in order to test Him, to trap Him, so they would trick Him to have something to accuse Him."

Now do you understand the situation? You have people that come up, the religious leaders of that day saying, "Yeshua, we are bringing You this woman" - who is obviously repentant- she is on her knees. She is crying. They say, "She was caught in the act of adultery and the Torah says to stone her." This is a trap for Him. Because if He says she is wrong, we need to stone her, then He is lacking compassion. If He does not say to stone her, then He is not abiding by the Torah. Do you see how He is trapped there?

We feel the same way! You know, are we for the religious? Are we for the secular? How do you answer that question?! I do not know.

Now listen, the whole thing is false in the first place. Tell me something. Can you catch a woman in the act of adultery by herself? That is a good one! Something is not fitting in the story. So, we are asking the question, are these people really looking for justice, or are they looking to fill a religious image that they have? Think about that.

Key: Is what we are about connect to the Truth, or is it portraying a religious image that we think we have?

See, I am talking about today's society. This is going on right now. Are we really looking for justice? Or are we looking just to blame someone?

If you go back to the Torah, the words actually say that you will stone the man and the woman. It is the man who has the primary responsibility there. It is the man who has the primary guilt and he is the first one that has to be stoned. Not only has the crowd brought the woman without the man, it is the man who first has to be stoned. Where was he?! Was he in the crowd? Maybe, I do not know.

You see, we are stuck in this similar situation. We look at that, and we are sitting here as believers in the land of Israel, and we hear the Orthodox Jews saying to the seculars, "You are in sin. This is an abomination." We say, "Well, yeah we agree, but you are not offering an answer. What is the answer to this situation?" How do we treat people? How do we speak to our religious friends and how do we speak to our secular friends? This is a real issue for us today in the land of Israel.

John 8:6-9 And Yeshua knelt down and wrote with His finger upon the ground. When they continued to ask Him, He stood up and said, 'Who among you is without sin? Let him be the first one to throw the stone.'

Now He is adding something her. The words the first one to throw the stone is in the Torah, but He is adding here something, and He is saying, 'which one of you is without sin?'

Pursue Righteousness

Now that is actually what was meant back in the Torah because Moses said, "Pursue righteousness." It was not about finding people to stone. It was about finding righteousness.

So, we have to ask the question - the religious people, the secular people, us, you, me - the issue is not 'who to blame,' but the issue is 'are we being righteous?' Check your heart first. This is not about blaming something else or someone else. This is about becoming righteous. That is our issue. Just because you are secular or you are religious does not mean you are righteous. And our people are sinking in this.

As I said to the seculars the two big words there are *freedom* and *love*. We want love and we want freedom. But if you put love and freedom together without righteous values that equals sexual immorality. It is all they have.

Key: Love and freedom without righteous values opens the door to sexual immorality.

And on the other side, the religious, well, all we want is righteousness. All we do is condemn everybody. We are being phonies because we are not doing it right either. We need to wake up. We say to our religious friends if righteousness is in your heart, do not point to the secular people and tell them they are right or wrong. Just because you kiss the Mezuzah and separate meat and milk - that does not make you a righteous person. Let's deal with our own heart.

Key: Behavior or outward appearance does not make one righteous. Righteousness is an inward work of the Spirit.

Yeshua knelt down in the middle of the crowd and wrote on the ground as a sign to all who were there.

John 8:10-12 Yeshua stood up and said to her, "Woman, where are they?", because everyone began to walk away. And He said, 'where are those accusing you?' and she answered and said, 'no one is Lord' and He said to her, 'I also am not condemning you but go your way and do not sin anymore."

That is beautiful! What an amazing thing to say! We can look at people and say, "We love you. If you are doing something wrong, stop it, because we love you." It is not an issue of condemnation. It is an issue of love to help people where they are.

If people are smoking cigarettes, we tell them to stop because we do not want them to get lung cancer. If they are taking drugs, we want them to stop because we do not want them to destroy their mind. And when women are being convinced to do things — even convinced that they want to do it —and they are destroying their bodies — we say, "We love you! Stop it! Do not do it!"

And Yeshua continued and said to her, "I am the Light of the world, no one can come after Me and walk in darkness, but the Light of life will be in him."

Key: When the Light of Life lives within you, you cannot walk in darkness, too.

A Change of Heart

I want to tell you; it does not matter if it is politically right or left. It does not matter if it is religious or secular. We have to have a change of heart. And there is no one that can change our heart other than Yeshua. He is the Light of the world. And if Yeshua is not in your heart, then there is darkness in there. It can be religious darkness, or it can be secular darkness. It can be condemnation toward others, or it can be condemning yourself.

Look at what He is saying. Now let's hear this. Do not think about someone else right now. Think about you. Let's bring it home a little bit.

Have you been involved in sexual sin? Not all sexual sin is physical. Some sexual sin is through viewing video, or pornography. Have you been involved in something? Jesus is saying, "I am not condemning you. It is hurting you. Do not do it anymore. Come on, get out of it. Do not feel condemned. Do not get stuck in it."

This is what a lot of people do and it is what happens to women who were put in the sex trade. They get stuck in this loop of 'well I am no good. I am a piece of trash, so I might as well just go back to it again.' And Jesus says, "No, no! That is not who you are! You are my Son! You are my daughter! Here, let Me help you out of here. Let Me give you life so you get light into your life. Let Me help you out of here. You are not a piece of trash! Do not condemn yourself and do not let anybody else condemn you! I am not here for condemnation. God is not here for condemnation!"

Key: We are not here to condemn people who are trapped by sin. We are here to love them and to point them to Jesus and life.

And we are not here for condemnation. We are here to help them and give them hope. Just to tell people that they are sinning and not give them a way out of sin is not doing them any good.

Here is the deal. Yeshua is not condoning sin and He is not condemning it. Condoning sin is, "Well I understand, you know, just go on. That is just the way it is." He is not saying that. He is saying, "I do not condemn you and I do not condone it. I love you and I want to help you get out of this. There is a way out and I can help you."

That is why you and people like my daughter and others are reaching out and saying, "Look we want to help you out of this. We do not want to condemn you. We want to give you a way out because we love you and we care." There is not an ounce of condemnation in our voice and in our hearts. But we are saying, "Stop doing what is destroying your life and destroying those around you! Do not do it anymore! Come on! We have a solution for you."

You have to have a solution for someone is caught in the trap of sin. Just to tell them not to do it is not the way to help them come out of sin. Yeshua said, "I have the Light. I have the power. I have the

righteousness. I have the Spirit. I have the way to give you the 'positive energy' - as our young people say - to get out of this situation."

And then He said to the religious people, "Why are you just condemning people all the time? Why do you want to throw stones?" Okay, we do not throw stones physically. Not yet. He said, "Are you just condemning people all the time? Are you telling them that they are no good?" Is that just our religious leaders?

The Little Guy with the Stone

No, it is not. We all have that little guy with the stone on the inside. Do not be looking around at everybody else. Do you ever feel that tendency? It is not just in me is it? No. It is in everyone. That little guy in there with the stone that is looking at everyone around you saying, "He is no good. And he is no good. And that guy is no good. I am better than everyone else. I am righteous and everybody else is wrong."

You think that that is faith!? That is just complaining. That is just condemnation. Hey guys! CUT IT OUT! Right now, in your own life!

Husbands and wives turn to each other. It is easy to see that someone else is wrong. There is something in us as believers that we have to watch out for – thinking that we are so mature that we are better than everyone else. We know all the Bible verses. We have been walking with the Lord so long. And before we know it, we are condemning people as no good and Jesus says, "Yeah? What about you?"

Drop the Stones

You know, maybe instead of looking at what is wrong with everybody else we need to say, "What do I need to change?" And you know, put the stone down. Drop the stone folks. Drop the stone and say, "We have to have *personal* righteousness. This is where we are stuck."

Now I want to bring it to an end here. This is what we want to say to our people. Let me summarize that and then we will conclude.

The Gospel of Righteousness

Georgian Key: The Gospel of Righteousness is equal for men and women.

We do not condemn the women and let the men go free. We do not condemn people. We love people. We give people grace. Neither do we condone sin. We do not say that sin is okay. We have to say that sin is wrong.

C Key: The Gospel of Righteousness is not self-righteousness.

Self-righteousness is just as much as sin as sexual immorality. We have to stop being self-righteous. We do not condone sin. We do not condemn people. We do not walk in self-righteousness.

We have to have personal change right now and that change only comes through Yeshua. And we walk in that place of the balance of grace and judgment. We walk in that place of perfect righteousness. And Yeshua is the only solution. He is the Light.

And this is what we want to say in your life, in your nation, in our nation, in our people, there is only one way out of this. We are stuck politically. We are stuck religiously. It is not going to work. And the whole world is that way. Look at what is going on in Hong Kong. Look at what is going on in Iran. Look at what is going on in Europe. Look at what is going in America. In Britain. Everywhere.

We have the beast on one side and the harlot on the other side. We have violence on one side that wants to kill people and we have sexual perversion on the other side. We have to have the example of love and light and purity and that only comes through Yeshua.

Key: The only solution to the crisis covering the world is to have hearts changed by Jesus/Yeshua.

I want to pray this for you, and I also want you to pray this for our nation. Our nation is so zealous, but we are just crashing into one another. And the answer for our people - like it is for all people - is what Yeshua said, "I am the Light. I am the way out of this. I am the way out of religious condemnation on the one side and the way out of sexual perversion on the other side. I am the way out of social corruption. You have to have your heart changed."

There is not one political system that will work as long as people's hearts are corrupted. And on the other hand, any political system will work if people's hearts are right. In any situation it will work out in any business, in any religious group - if people's hearts are right it will work out. And there is only one person that can change our hearts. And it is Yeshua.

I want to pray for you. Let's open our hearts right now.

Heavenly Father, we stand at this moment of time in this month, in this week before the elections in Israel, in this Aglow International Convocation here in Jerusalem, in this relationship between Israeli Messianic and Christians all around the world, asking for forgiveness. Father we are asking for Your Light to come in to this nation, to every nation represented here, to every person here, to me and to you.

Lord, we ask for this message the perfect message of Yeshua – it is almost like Yeshua, You talked to that woman, but You are also speaking to several billion people in this last generation. It is not about condemnation. It is not about sexual sin. It is about the light of purity and righteousness.

And Father, we pray right now for every one of our hearts. I pray for any one of you right now - maybe you heard this and you did not even want to admit it because you have been having a problem with pornography, having a problem with some kind of sexual immorality, some kind of sexual perversion, I just want to pray for you right now. And Yeshua said, "I am not condemning you, but get up, stop doing it, cut it out right now. Cut it out right now! Get out of it! Turn that thing off on your computer. Get out of it! I am not condemning you, come on!"

And Father, we pray for the nations around us, the media. Father, we watch what is going on in our elementary schools. People are sinking into sexual immorality around us. God, we intercede that we could bring these people the Solution, the Light, the only Person that can come help them out. Yeshua, we ask You, give every person the answer! Their hearts can be changed.

All of sudden I see something right now. I see Yeshua looking at the heart of this woman and I look at the people surrounding you and me and all of the nations around us. Young children are sinking into guilt and condemnation because they have been watching pornography. Young woman that have been raped at the young age of 13 and 14 and they hate themselves and they say, "I am no good. I am a piece of trash," and they are sinking into it.

Believers, pastors, I hear the Lord saying, "Yeshua is looking at Pastors like He looked at that woman. He is looking at 6th graders like He looked at that woman." And He says, "I do not condemn you. You are My child. You are My son, My daughter. Come out!"

And Father, I ask You to give us strength to speak not to just this woman, but the billions of people around us that are sinking in that way that we can show them the Light and say, "We do not condemn you, but we are telling you to stop doing what is wrong. The way to get out is through Yeshua. He is the only One that can take your hand and lift you up. We break the power of sin and we break the power of religious condemnation.

And Father, we pray for that right now for every one of us. For those of you right now that are just saying 'humph, well I do not look at pornography.' Yeah, drop the stone. Father, we pray for that part of every one of us, that we are each one of us in our own way religious hypocrites, that we think that we are better than those around us. Father get that out of us. Jesus, let us hear You look us in the eye and say, "Are you without sin? And if you are not, then why are you criticizing people all the time? Why are you condemning other people? If you are not without sin.'

Father we ask You, Yeshua we are opening our hearts to You right now. We do not want sin and we do not want condemnation. Yeshua cleanse us.

And Lord, we are praying for the societies around us. I believe this is true for the 170 nations of Aglow around the world. Every one of them is facing the same thing - the beast on one side and the harlot on the other side. The violence on one side and the immorality on the other. And Father, we pray to stand up as a people of Light, Aglow, Lighthouses in every nation of the world and say, "It is not sexual immorality! It is not violence! It is Yeshua- the Light of the world! Purity, and grace, and truth, and the power to change people's hearts through His death upon the cross, through His resurrection, through the power of the Holy Spirit."

And I want to ask every one of you now, for the next 10 days to pray for the people of Israel. Our people are lost. They are lost in religiosity and they are lost in secularism. They are lost on both sides. They are so confused. Pray for our people. Do not be impressed by our people. Our people need life. Pray for our people to come to know the Solution, to come to know the Light. There is only one way. We who live here know it.

You come here for a tour. It looks pretty impressive. If you live here, it looks pretty stupid. It looks hopeless. Pray for our people and I want to ask you to do that. Whatever all your prayers are, and I want to thank you because I know that you have learned that from me and from others. You can pray all those good prayers for our people and for Israel.

The number one prayer is: pray for our people to know eternal life, to know forgiveness of sins, to be changed on the inside by the Light of the only Person in the world to give it to them, the greatest human being that ever lived, the greatest Jew that ever lived, the greatest Rabbi that ever lived, the greatest Israeli, the greatest Sabra that ever lived – Yeshua, the Messiah, the Light of the world and the Light of our people. I am asking you to pray.

Father, we pray right now, Lord that we can stand in the place of Yeshua and look to our people and look with a broken heart to our self, corrupt people and say are you without sin, where is your heart? And to look to our other people that are just steeped with sexual sin and say what are you doing? Get out of this.

And Father we pray that we would arise to be a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy people. Father we pray for the people of God to rise.

I said last prayer, but here is one more, just see it right now - that every one of you in every nation and all of the believers in every nation they are caught right there in Yeshua's situation — you are caught right in that position - condemnation on the one side and sexual sin on the other side. And we pray for the people of God to arise, to arise over that condemnation and over that sin. We will rise to be the examples of Yeshua in love and in light and in righteousness.

Father, we pray for the people of Israel, we pray for the international ecclesia, the church of God. We pray for Yeshua to be lifted up as the King of Israel, the head of the church, the Light of the world. The only hope. Yeshua said I am the Light of the world. It is like a candle touching people's hearts. It does not matter what your philosophy is. It does not matter what your religion is — if you have darkness in your heart only the Light of Yeshua can touch the inside of our hearts and bring Light.

Father we are asking You right now to touch the darkness in our hearts and make it Light. Touch the darkness in those in our family, in those living around us. Touch them, touch them as a candle touching the darkness in their hearts, with the Light of Yeshua. Touch the people around us, touch our nations, touch Israel, touch the secular Israeli's, touch the religious Jews, and touch us Lord God. Yeshua, You are the Light. You are the candle. Touch us in that place of darkness in our hearts and let there be light. Yeshua, You are the Light of the world.

Jane: I just opened to this scripture in Hosea 14:1-3

"Return Israel to the Lord your God. Your sins have been your downfall. Take words with you and return to the Lord and say to Him, forgive all our sins and receive us graciously that we may offer the fruit of our lips. Assyria cannot save us, war horses won't save us, and we are Yours and Yours alone."

The scripture goes on to talk about God's willingness to heal their waywardness and to love them freely and that His anger has been turned away from them. What a beautiful portion of scripture.

As I listened to Asher tonight, he is speaking of Israel, but He is talking to every one of us.

See the stone in your hand. Hold up your hand with the stone. Father, forgive us for every stone, every judgment. We are Your children. We are believers. We are the light. We are filled with the Holy Spirit. Tonight, we cast that stone to the ground and we ask for a new freedom and a new liberty and a new cleansing in our spirits and in our hearts. Cleansing from all sins and all judgments and all matter of things that ensnare us and keep us from moving forward in what God has for us.