

Guard Your Tower (Go To Meeting)

Tom Fannin—September 11, 2021

Today is the 20th anniversary of the Trade Center attacks that happened on 9/11/2001. Do you remember where you were that day? What occurred that day in your life?

I was in my office that day and was having a conversation with one of my co-workers and someone came down the hall and said, ‘Hey, there’s been an attack in New York City on one of the Trade Towers,’

We immediately got to a television and turned it on and started watching. Like many people, we watched in disbelief of what was happening that day. In some ways it reminds me of the feelings I have been having recently with what’s been going on in the world, in particularly here in the United States. That same time of feeling of:

- What is this?
- What are these things that are going on?
- Why?

With the theme of what happened that day 20 years ago with the Trade Center Towers coming under attack, collapsing and also the loss of many, many lives:

- Are we guarding our towers?
- Are we guarding the buildings, the structures that we have?

*What I’m talking about is our **spiritual lives!***

- Are we guarding our spiritual lives?
- Are we doing our part to make sure that we stand?
- That our towers stand?

Let’s reflect or remember just what building we are ourselves!

1-Corinthians 6:19: “WHAT! Don’t you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, which you have *within you* from God, and **you are not your own**? For you were bought with a price.... [the precious blood of Jesus Christ, redeemed] ...Therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (vs 19-20).

We belong to God, a purchased possession! That happened when we entered into covenant with God and Jesus Christ.

John 14:23: “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode... [dwelling] ...with him.’”

That’s talking about all of us. Hopefully all of us tell God the Father and Christ daily that we love Them, and that it’s our desire to obey Them and keep Their commandments.

We have God and Jesus Christ dwelling in us; They both dwell in us through the Holy Spirit. ***That’s the building we are!***

None of us would ever want God and Jesus Christ to vacate our building. Where would we be if God and Jesus Christ left us? *We would be hopeless!* We need God and Jesus Christ dwelling in us.

We know that we’re all built on a foundation, which was laid by Jesus Christ. That’s what we’re building on.

Ephesians 2:18: “For through Him we both have *direct* access by one Spirit to the Father. So then, you are no longer aliens and foreigners; but *you are* fellow citizens with the saints, and *are* of the household of God. You are being built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets...” (vs 18-20).

We know they came before us and a lot of things they did were inspired by God to be written for us. We are built upon what they did and accomplished.

“...Jesus Christ Himself being *the* chief Cornerstone in Whom all the building, being conjointly fitted together is increasing into a Holy temple in *the* Lord; in Whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in *the* Spirit” (vs 20-22).

We see here that Paul writes that we are a habitation for God; we’re being built upon Jesus Christ the chief Cornerstone!

Matthew 7:24: “Therefore, everyone who hears these words of Mine and practices them, I will compare him to a wise man...”

That’s what we want to be; we want to be among the wise, because ‘the wise shall understand’ (book of Daniel). We need understanding, and we know where it comes from. We want to practice and listen to what Christ says.

“...I will compare him to a wise man, who built his house upon the Rock; and the rain came down, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; but it did not fall, for it was founded upon the Rock” (vs 24-25).

Verse 26: “And everyone who hears these words of Mine **and does not practice them** shall be compared to a foolish man...”

There are several instances in the Bible where it talks about those who are wise and those who are foolish. But in this case, if it’s not built upon the Rock it’s foolish, compared to a foolish man:

“...who built his house upon the sand; and the rain came down, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell, and **great was the fall of it**” (vs 26-27).

As we read this we think about two houses being build here. When you look at homes and think about two being built side by side—one upon rock and the other built upon sand—once the homes are built and you stand back and look at them, it may be hard to determine which one is built on the foundation of rock and which one is built on the foundation of sand.

But the day of trial or testing comes! The storms come; they come upon all of us! As Christ mentions here the one built upon sand *falls!*

We need to be mindful of what house we are, what we’re being built upon, because with what happened that day to the towers in New York, sometimes the trials, tests, and the storms come and we want our structure to stand!

We’ll talk about structure and what we want to be built or made out of. A lot of analogies given in the Bible about structures and building.

1-Corinthians 3:9: “For we are God’s fellow workers; *and* you are God’s husbandry, *even* God’s building.”

Here’s another example written in God’s Word about us being God’s structure, His building!

Verse 10: “As a wise architect, according to the grace of God that was given to me, I have laid *the* foundation, and another is building upon *it*. But let each one take heed how he builds upon *it*.”

The apostles and prophets reveal things to us; they built the foundations for us to build upon, and it started Christ.

Verse 11: “For no one is able to lay any other foundation besides that which has been laid, which is Jesus Christ.”

We can’t build spiritually on any foundation ***except the foundations started with Jesus Christ!***

Verse 12: “Now, if anyone builds upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay *or* stubble, the work of each one shall be manifested;

for the day *of trial* will declare *it*, because it shall be revealed by fire; and **the fire shall prove what kind of work each one’s is**” (vs 12-13).

We want to make sure that our structure is built upon what will last, hopefully gold, silver and precious stone, and *not wood, hay or stubble!* Have you experienced this in your walk with Christ, in your spiritual life, or maybe sometimes trials or tests came upon you and the outcome wasn’t good. Maybe there wasn’t a good outcome; maybe some loss suffered there.

Maybe on the other side you had a test or trial that declared that you were made out of gold, silver and precious stone, and you weathered that trial and did well.

With God’s Spirit working within us, we’ve had a chance to review how we do with trials and tests, and God’s Spirit allows us to know so we can work on ourselves and correct ourselves.

Verse 14: “If the work that anyone has built endures, he shall receive a reward.” *That’s what we want, to receive our reward!* To be able to stand!

Verse 15: “If the work of anyone is burned up, he shall suffer loss...”

Sometimes that has happened, but hopefully the type of loss that costs us our reward and being in God’s Kingdom. God’s the Judge of those things! God will make that known. But for us, we want to make sure that we are built on the right foundation and do our part.

“...but *he* himself shall be saved, yet, as through fire. Don’t you understand that **you are God’s Temple**, and *that* the Spirit of God is dwelling in you? If anyone defiles the Temple of God, God shall destroy him because the Temple of God is Holy, which Temple you are” (vs 15-17).

I want to talk a little bit about knowing what Temple we are and that we are built on Jesus Christ, that God and Jesus Christ dwell within us through the Holy Spirit. *We need to be on guard ourselves!*

Proverbs 4:23: “**Above all guard the door of your mind with diligence**, for out of it *are* the issues of life.”

This Proverb is written for everyone who reads God’s Word, but for us who are under covenant, this is our responsibility. I don’t know if you’ve ever thought of it that way, ***but once we enter into covenant with God and Christ, we belong to Them as They dwell in us!***

It’s no longer something that we just try to do, it’s our personal responsibility to guard our

mind. How do we do this? *Hopefully, we do it in a proactive way!* That we are watching out

- for things that we need to be careful about to not take into our mind
- that we're not doing this in a reactive way where things are already upon us and maybe within us

Think about this, we need to really be diligent in a proactive sense, thinking about what's out there and can be affecting us, and making changes to that.

If you find yourself struggling in reactive manner, where it's always at the door for you, maybe you want to review this and be more proactive about how you're guarding yourself, guarding your mind!

It's important that as we guard ourselves—guard our towers—that we understand what we're fighting against. Paul makes it pretty clear what we're fighting against.

Ephesians 6:11: "Put on the whole armor of God so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." *Spiritually, that's what we're fighting against, the wiles of the devil!*

Verse 12: "Because we are not wrestling against flesh and blood, but against principalities *and* against powers, against the world rulers of the darkness of this age, against the spiritual *power* of wickedness in high *places*. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God so that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having worked out all things, to stand" (vs 12-13).

This is what we're fighting against! This is what we're up against! It's spiritual things, spiritual battles against us. ***We can't underestimate what's going on out here and what's at work in this world: Satan, the demons, and the spiritual influence!*** We see that deception and this influence is happening more and more across the world right now.

And it's going to be happening more and more within the Church. We need to stay on guard! We need to understand what we're warring and fighting against.

2-John 6: "And this is the love *of God*: that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, exactly as you heard from *the beginning*, that you might walk in it, because many deceivers have entered into the world; those who do not confess *that* Jesus Christ is coming in the flesh *of true believers*. This is *the spirit of the deceiver* and the antichrist. Watch out for yourselves in order that we may not lose the things we have accomplished, but *that* we may receive a full reward" (vs 6-8).

We've been called and came under covenant through Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and received God's Spirit. We've been growing and developing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ since that point. We've all accomplished a lot, but:

- we have to watch out
- we've got to be on guard

We don't want to lose what we've accomplished; something to be mindful of.

Going back to the towers and what happened in New York, it was a surprise attack! I'm sure that many of us have heard different scenarios of what happened that day and who was behind it; why it happened. Nonetheless, it was a surprise attack!

We have to be ready for surprise attacks ourselves! Surprise attacks a lot of times comes from places we don't expect them to come. Certainly that wasn't expected to happen that day 20 years ago. Surprise attacks a lot of times come from within.

What I want to talk about now is what we have to be on guard for with surprise attacks within us, the Body of Christ, the Church; what can go on in the Church to surprise us!

2-Corinthians 11:12: "But what I am doing, I will do, so that I may cut off *any* occasion from those who are desiring an occasion; so that in the things they boast of, they also may be found even as *we are*."

Let's just say that Paul had a lot of challenges being an apostle of Jesus Christ, to go out and instruct Gentiles in Christ and salvation for them. But He was constantly being bombarded by the Jews and others that sought to discredit him. But Paul was faithful to God and Christ in what he did in his preaching and teaching. We have a lot of the words in the letters that he had canonized for us.

Verse 13: "For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers who are transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And *it is* no marvel, for Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore, *it is* no great thing if his servants also transform themselves as ministers of righteousness—whose end shall be according to their works" (vs 13-15).

This happens! It happens in the world and in the Church. There are those in the Church that transformers. They may look and sound a certain way, and it may sound real, but again, they may not be one of us. They may be a minister or agent of Satan among us. Something we have to be careful of and on guard for within the Church.

*Peter writes about this; 2-Peter 2:1: “But there were also false prophets among the people, as indeed there will be false teachers among you... [the Body of Christ] ...who will stealthily introduce destructive heresies... [a little here, a little there, a twisting of the Scriptures] ...personally **denying the Lord who bought them**... [part of the Church, possibly part of those who entered into covenant by the precious blood of Christ] ...and bringing swift destruction upon themselves. And many people will follow *as authoritative* their destructive ways; *and* because of them, the way of the Truth will be blasphemed. Also, through insatiable greed they will with enticing messages exploit you for gain; for whom the judgment of old is in *full* force, and their destruction is *ever* watching” (vs 1-3).*

We’ve seen this within the Church, but there is a judgment coming for that, and it’s in full force and it will happen! Again, we are talking about things within the Church that we need to be looking out for and guarding. They’re talked about and they will—and have—happened, and are happening currently.

Acts 20:25: “And now behold, I know that you all, among whom I have gone about proclaiming the Kingdom of God, will see my face no more.”

This is one of the things that Paul did; he proclaimed the Kingdom of God.

Verse 26: “Wherefore, I testify to you on this day that I am pure from the blood of all.”

Paul did his job; he was faithful and followed the instructions that he received through visions of Jesus Christ and His word and command.

Verse 27: “For I have not held back from preaching to you all the counsel of God.”

That’s what Paul did and that’s what true ministers and elders in the Churches of God should be doing. They should be preaching all the counsel of God and nothing else.

Verse 28: “Take heed, therefore, to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has **made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He purchased with His own blood**. For I know this: that after my departure grievous wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will rise up speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after themselves” (vs 28-30).

We’ve seen this! For those of us who have been in the Church for a while, yes we have seen this. I’ve seen this, and it’s going on today. Something that we have to have awareness of and be on guard for.

1-Timothy 4:1: “Now, the Spirit tells *us*...”
*We talked just a little bit about that, but **the Spirit does lead us; It’s our helper and guides us and instructs us in all things.***

“...explicitly that in *the* latter times some shall apostatize from the faith, *and shall follow **deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons***” (v 1).

What are doctrines of demons? *A quick explanation:* there are the doctrines of God, the Truth that we hold onto and study and should know. The *doctrines of demons* are those that ***come in a subvert the doctrines of God, of Christ!*** That’s what those things are: to deceive!

Verse 2: “Speaking lies in hypocrisy, their consciences having been cauterized *with a hot iron.*”

We see where these people are with their conscience and ability to be able to change, repent and have the inner working of God’s Spirit and the fruits of God’s Spirit that are produced. Something’s happened there to where their conscious is no longer this way, they no longer have that mind! *It’s cauterized with a hot iron!* Many will follow after that deception and those deceiving spirits. We need to be on guard for that.

We have God’s Word here that we read and study. We should be watchful and mindful of these things. We shouldn’t be afraid, because they do occur.

Colossians 2:6: “Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, be walking in Him.”

When we were baptized that’s one of the things we were encouraged to do, and asked to do. We agreed to walk as Jesus Christ walked. We need to be walking in Christ.

Verse 7: “Being rooted and built up in Him, and being confirmed in the faith, exactly as you were taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.”

That’s a good way to wrap up what we’ve been talking about as far as needing to be on guard against deception. We need to make sure that we’re rooted in Christ, that we’re grounded in Christ: our structures, our towers, who we are. Confirmed in the faith, following through what we have been taught and what we have been instructed Divinely in God’s Word. We need to be rooted in that, and our structures will stand.

I’ll just say right now to all of us in the Churches of God, it’s a time for us to listen very closely to what’s being said, talked about, taught to the people of God. Take note of anything that’s against God’s Word. It’s a critical time in the Church, because what Satan—the god of this world—and the demons are performing right now in

this world, as that goes on in the world, it's also going to on and be intensified within the Church of God, the Body. Again, ***we need to pay attention to this so we can stand!***

Brethren, we need to have confidence, and some of the things I've mentioned here are troubling. We don't need to be troubled by these things, we just need to be on guard and ready, having a readiness of mind for these thing. To be guarding our mind and rooted in Christ. If we are that way, we will be fine!

1-Peter 1:3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His abundant mercy, has begotten us again unto a living hope through *the* resurrection of Jesus Christ from *the* dead; unto an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and unfading, reserved in heaven for us... [that's what we all have to look forward to; speaking of all us]: **...who are being safeguarded by the power of God through faith for salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time**" (vs 3-5).

We've talking about guarding ourselves, being safeguarded by the power of God ***IF*** that's what we desire; ***IF*** we're staying faithful and doing our part, ***THEN*** God safeguards us through His power. He puts His protection around us. His Spirit leads and directs us so we can have understanding and identify these things that come upon us that may be deceiving or against His Word. ***God power through His Spirit does that for us!***

1-Peter 2:25: "For you were as sheep going astray... [that's what we were] ...but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls." *That's Jesus Christ!* Both God and Jesus Christ watch out for us and take care of us.

Christ is the guardian of our soul as He sits at the right hand of God and He intercedes for us, because He knows what it's like to be human. To be as we are and face the trials and the tests, especially the demonic spiritual ones. He knows what that's like.

God and Christ protect us by their power! This is what I want to bring out her. We need to have confidence in that. If there are things that are being taught and said that are not correct, as long as we're in God's Word and studying, it will be revealed to us and we'll know. We'll be able to reject it and get away from it if need be.

1-John 2:24: "Therefore, let what you have heard from *the* beginning dwell in you; if what you have heard from *the* beginning is dwelling in you, then you will be dwelling in the Son and in the Father."

We are called to the Truth and we received

that knowledge and understanding. We need to continue to dwell in that and not be pulled in another direction.

Verse 25: "And this is the promise that He has promised us: eternal life. These things I have written to you concerning those who are leading you astray. But you yourselves have dwelling in you the anointing that you received from Him; and you do not have need of anyone to indoctrinate you; **for the same anointing instructs you in all spiritual things, and is true, and is not a lie; and if you do exactly as it has taught you, you will be dwelling in Him**" (vs 25-27).

Verse 28: "And now, little children, dwell in Him, so that when He is manifested we may have boldness, and not be put to shame before Him at His coming. If you know that He is righteous, you *also* know that everyone who practices righteousness has been begotten by Him" (vs 28-29).

So, we have that special anointing from God and Christ. We need to stay faithful to that. If we are, we don't have to worry, our towers will stand! God's Spirit instructs us in the things of God. It allows us to see and understand things that we need to be grounded in.

2-Chronicles 15:1: "And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded. And he went out to meet Asa, and said to him, 'Hear me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin. The LORD *is* with you while you are with Him. And if you seek Him, He will be found by you. But if you forsake Him, He will forsake you'" (vs 1-2).

So, for all of us, we need to continue to seek God, and we need to continue to be with God. If we are with God, He is with us! We don't want to be at any point in our spiritual lives where God and Jesus Christ are not with us. We know what we need to do to make sure that They continue to dwell within our structures or towers.

God is with us, all of us! As long as God is with us, our towers will stand whatever attack may come upon us: whatever deception, whatever it may be, we need to have faith in this!

Psalms 121:1: "I will lift up my eyes to the hills: from where does my help come? **My help comes from the LORD** Who made heaven and earth" (vs 1-2). *That's where the help comes from! It comes from God!*

Verse 3: He will not allow your foot to be moved; He Who keeps you will not slumber."

With the protection we have through the power of *God, stays with us 24/7!* It's with us all the time!

Verse 4: “Behold, He Who keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade on your right hand. The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. **The LORD shall preserve you from all evil; He shall preserve your life**” (vs 4-7).

We belong to Christ, to God! They will preserve our life. Yes, it’s physical at this point, but the life we’re talking about for us is *the next life, the spiritual life!* That forever inheritance that look forward to, all of us. **He will preserve your life!**

Verse 8: “The LORD shall guard your going out and your coming in from this time forth, and even forevermore.”

We need to take comfort when we read these Scriptures, even though there are a lot of things going on in this world right now. We don’t know how much time we have left, things could be coming quickly or in the next several years, or things could go on for some time; we don’t know.

However, we do know that as long as we’re faithful God provides for us and takes care of us in all these things we face.

Psalms 27:1: “The LORD is my Light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?”

We don’t have to be afraid of anything as long as God is our Light and our Shield!

Verse 2: “When the wicked, **my enemies and my foes**, came upon me to eat up my flesh, **they stumbled and fell.**”

Yes, there are those who would like to devour us spiritually; Satan being the head. Satan is our enemy, but with God on our side, even the most powerful beings stumble and fall.

Verse 3: “Though an army should encamp against me, my heart shall not be afraid; though war should rise against me, even then I will be confident.”

We don’t have to be afraid like that day when those towers (in New York) got struck by the planes and fell. We don’t have to be afraid of those attacks, **we will stand because we have God and Christ holding us up!**

Verse 4: “One thing I have desired from the LORD, that I will seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life...”

That’s what our focus needs to be on, being in the house of God all of our lives into eternity! That’s what we need to be thinking about.

“...to behold the beauty of the LORD and to

inquire in His Temple... [some day we are going to see God and Christ face-to-face] ...for in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion, in the secret place of His Tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me upon a Rock” (vs 4-5).

I wanted to finish with a few uplifting Scriptures that we need to remember to give us confidence and boldness in Who we have as our Protector, our Leader, as our Guide: *God and Christ!* They hold our hands and take us.

Whatever goes on in this world—and it is a troubling time right now—we need to be on guard, especially in the Church. Right now we need to pay close attention to what’s going on in the churches, and what’s being taught.

But if we stay faithful to God and His Word, we don’t have worry about being deceived in that manner either. They will take care of us and provide for us; They will reveal things to us that we need to know.

We do belong to God and Christ, so be mindful of this and continue to guard your tower, our body, our temple!

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Corinthians 6:19-20
- 2) John 14:23
- 3) Ephesians 2:18-22
- 4) Matthew 7:24-27
- 5) 1 Corinthians 3:9-17
- 6) Proverbs 4:23
- 7) Ephesians 6:11-13
- 8) 2 John 6-8
- 9) 2 Corinthians 11:12-15
- 10) 2 Peter 2:1-3
- 11) Acts 20:25-30
- 12) 1 Timothy 4:1-2
- 13) Colossians 2:6-7
- 14) 1 Peter 1:3-5
- 15) 1 Peter 2:25
- 16) 1 John 2:24-29
- 17) 2 Chronicles 15:1-2
- 18) Psalm 121:1-8
- 19) Psalm 27:1-5

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Transcribed: 11/28/21

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