

# EQUIPPING FOR ONENESS: IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVING RELATIONSHIPS



Eternity Past to Eternity Future  
William F. Cox, Jr., Ph.D.  
Regent University  
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# LOVE'S RELEVANCE TO CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:

Understanding The Great Cosmic Warfare Against God's  
Love for His FAMILY.



# Cosmic Warfare BATTLEFIELDS

- A. Heaven (Eternity Past)
- B. Garden of Eden
- C. Garden of Eden (After the Fall)
- D. Restoration of God's FAMILY
- E. WHY?
- F. The CHURCH in Battle
- G. Human Nature
- H. Kingdom Citizens/Royal Priesthood
- I. New Heaven & New Earth (Eternity Future)



# A. Battlefield: HEAVEN (Eternity Past)

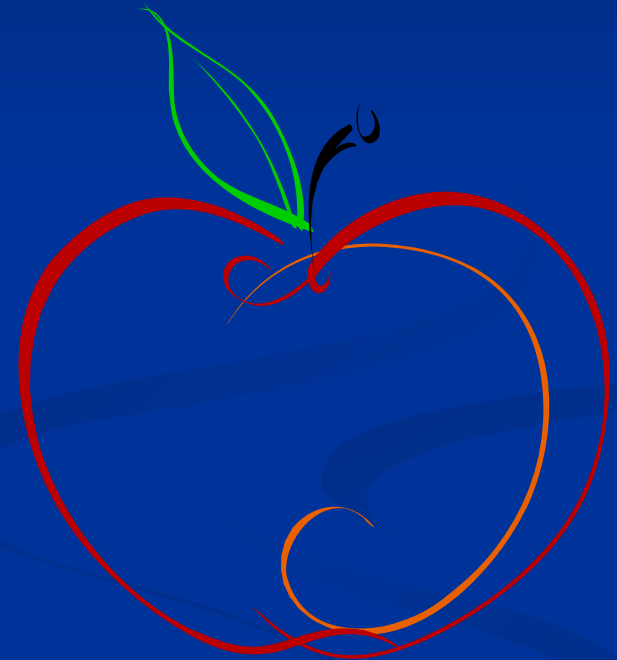


- God had a heavenly FAMILY that was harmoniously in order.
- BATTLE #1: -- Lucifer, accompanied by 1/3 of the Angels (Rev. 12:4), pridefully broke up God's heavenly FAMILY (Is 14:12-15; Ez 28:12-17)
- This FAMILY break up surely broke God's heart given the integrity and expansiveness of His heart
- (FUTURE BATTLES—Strangely, Satan not destroyed but will be sometime in the future. In the meantime expect more battles against God!



# B. Battlefield: GARDEN OF EDEN

- A uniquely new higher order family of God's image and likeness was created through Adam and Eve for whom God was responsible within the provision He set for their free-will.
- God created a material universe reflective of His spiritual kingdom and commissioned humans to govern this kingdom as He would.
- Adam and Eve were inherently in intimate loving relationship with God & one another; singularly fitted to live God's way
- Living in the *context* of intimate fellowship with God, the primary activity or *task* of Adam and Eve was the "Dominion Mandate."
- The "cultural mandate" of responsibility for one another is implied but not overtly needed by virtue of each person being fully self-governed under God.
- The Two Greatest Commandments needed no articulation—they were naturally manifested. There was no need for the Great Commission.
- BATTLE #2— In vindictiveness, Satan broke up God's earthly family by fueling pride through distrust/disbelief in God and His Word (Gen.3:6).



# C. Battlefield: GARDEN OF EDEN (AFTER THE FALL)



- All humans broken-heartedly expelled by God from the Garden as disobedient children BUT for the lovingly responsible purpose of redemptive restoration.
  - Now the context is life lived in the Dominion Mandate struggle of governing among the effects of sin on all creation including self
  - The primary task now becomes restoration of a righteous intimacy with God and with each other—precursors to the Two Greatest Commandments, the Great Commission and the implied Cultural Mandate.
- Accordingly, a vicarious reconciler is lovingly promised (Gen. 3:15). The Message Bible says, “The energy of reconciliation is the dynamo at the heart of the universe” (Introduction to Book of Ephesians).



# C. Battlefield: GARDEN OF EDEN (AFTER THE FALL)

- Humans now of a dualistic /schizophrenia nature—possessing the nature of God (but not the life) and of Satan (receptively – Eph.2:2).
- BATTLE #3— Satan incites Cain to kill Abel. God unsuccessfully directs Cain to master the sin impulse.
- BATTLE #4—Satan’s wicked nature in humans had everyone but Noah rebelling against Father God to their own destruction.
- BATTLE #5— Unity of satanically inspired rebellion against Father God by all humans brought scattering of locations and language (Tower of Babel).
- etc., etc., etc. – continued broken relationships in God’s FAMILY on earth.



# D. Battlefield: RESTORATION OF GOD'S FAMILY



- Lovingly initiated by God, Abraham fathers the nation of Israel to be God's chosen people (Gen. 12) as precursors to the Great Commission. Moses leads God's people into their unique, God-desired destiny "I will be your God & you will be my people" (Ex. 5:1; 6:7, 19:6; Lev. 26:12; Deut. 26:18; 2 Cor. 6:16; 1 Pet. 2:9...).
- The Jewish religious leaders progressively misrepresented God to His people making legalistic performance the supposed expectation of God rather than love-driven obedience.
- Jesus came to restore God's lovingly chosen people back into His Family (-- not primarily to enhance the Dominion Mandate). (Is. 61:1-3; Luke 4:18, 19; Matt. 11:4,5).
- FUTURE BATTLES – Satan and his evil force will continue to attack the Body of Christ at every legal and illegal opportunity.
- BATTLE #7— Respecting the authority of God's priests, Jesus lovingly, in His High priestly role, fulfills the Law, becomes the SACRIFICIAL Lamb defeating SIN and incorporating all who believe into His JEWISH FAMILY.



# E. WHY?

1. God wants intimacy with those created to be like Him (I Thes. 5:10; I John 4:17b). He loves all people so much He sent His most loved One to die in place of us (John 3:16).
2. In redeeming His family, God's wisdom ways are revealed (Eph. 3:10). That wisdom is exclusively of an inter-personal, moral order (not primarily cognitively oriented) according to James 3:13, 17-18; I John 1:7.
3. The overarching plan of redemption occurs by way of the voluntary, vicarious sacrifice of Jesus.
  - a. Lovingly inviting, God joyfully adopts believers (not primarily performers) into His Jewish family
  - b. Believers become the literal physical body of Christ to continue His work by demonstrating the fullness of Him (Eph. 1:16-19; 23)
  - c. The Body of Christ here on earth is so cherished that we will, by His power, become His spotless Bride – talk about intimacy!
4. Since Jesus denied use of His divine rights and privileges to accomplish all He did only by Holy Spirit empowerment, Christians can do likewise by the Holy Spirit.
5. The essence of what Jesus did related to moral relationship (Is. 61; Luke 4:18; Matt. 11)
6. Obviously, it's all because of being loved by the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.



# F. Battlefield: THE CHURCH IN BATTLE

- The Primary activity of God's FAMILY on earth is to expand and to mentor His FAMILY for Kingdom living. This Great Commission activity is accomplished through rebuilding relationships via The Two Great Commandments.
- BATTLES – As Prince of the temporal realm, Satan continually works to diminish God's earthly FAMILY both in numbers and in obedience.
- His Family is to continually maintain/regain the liberty Jesus purchased at the Cross. His Body is to do even greater works than Jesus did (John 14:12) which can only happen via Holy Spirit empowerment (Acts 1:8) and doing what Jesus tells us to do (cf. John 8:28). Eventual FAMILY unification via Jewish jealousy (Rom. 11:11) is a relationship not an academic issue!



# G. Battlefield: HUMAN NATURE



- Without the Lord and Holy Spirit empowerment sin nature is invariably victorious over the inherent image of God (imago Dei) within.
- BATTLES – Innate desire in saved and unsaved alike to know and worship God is in battle with opposing innate desire to be one's own god (pride).
- Receiving of God's love primarily through other humans (Matt 22:39) and the drawing of the Holy Spirit (John 15:16) nurture the innate hunger for God and thereby diminish rationalizations and excusals for sinning -- thus facilitating surrender of self to God.
- Biblically based discipline strengthens imago Dei qualities. Conversely, ungodly environmental pressures frustrate imago Dei qualities and feed pride thereby enhancing the sin nature (Eph. 6:4).
- BATTLES – Sin and spiritual weaknesses give Satan legal access/right to actively torment people so warfare needed to regain freedom.
- BATTLES—Child rearing/educational/discipleship practices prevent sin nature manifestations through developing self-control via conformity to God's ways. Love-based relationships and spiritual warfare prevent and/or remove internal dysfunctions that affect responses to life events—academic and otherwise.



# H. Battlefield: KINGDOM CITIZENS/ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

- With salvation, the primary citizenship (1 Pet. 2:9) of Christians as new creations (2 Cor. 5:17) is in God's eternal Kingdom. Temporal nation citizenship is not primary and evil kingdom membership is cancelled. In fact, Christians are also Royal Priests, Ambassadors, Warriors, servants, family, heirs, and the bride of Christ in this new national status. The fact that education is preparation by a kingdom for citizenship in that kingdom has huge implications for this new status. Accordingly, the primary goal of Christian education is discipleship for kingdom living, not academics (Rom 14:17).
- BATTLES—Activities of the individual Christian and the Church at large now are to be conducted consistent with the Matthew 6:9-13, 33 perspective rather than by the world's perspective (2 Cor. 10:3-5; Eph.4:27, 6:10-18).
- Kingdom life that Christian education prepares for replicates the works of Jesus (John 14:12; Matt 10; 28:19-20; Luke 9 and 10) It is Equipping for Oneness (John 17:21-23, 26). The challenge is to bring Equipping for Oneness into the academic setting!
- ONENESS Support:  
Matt 22:37-40 – Love God and neighbor  
Matt 28:18-20 – Bring more into family  
John 14:20 – Jesus in Father, us in Jesus, and Jesus in us  
John 14:23 – Trinity to live in us



# H. ...Continued

- ONENESS Support continued:
  - John 15:4-7 – Remain in Him and vice versa
  - John 17: 11, 21-23 – to be one with each other and with Him
  - I Cor. 12:12-27 We are all one body
  - Ps. 91:9 – make Him our habitation
  - I Thes. 5:10 – He died so we can live in Him
  - Acts. 17:28 – We live in Him
  - Gal. 2:20 – Christ lives in me
  - Eph. 2:15 – believing Jews and Gentiles are one New man.
  
- Nature of the kingdom – In heaven it's all about loving relationships – it actually has nothing directly to do with temporal world competencies (Matt. 13:11). This is the Kingdom we are to bring here on earth as we pray in the Lord's prayer (Matt. 6:9-13). The Kingdom is Power. (Acts 1:8; 26:16; I Cor. 2:1-5; 4:20; 11:1; Rom. 14:17).
  
- Evidence for nature of Kingdom:
  1. Bride – John 3:27-29; Eph. 5:25-32; Rev. 19:7; 22:14-17.
  2. Beauty of Bride – Ps. 45:10; 4:8-10;
  3. God's love – Is. 62:5; Jer. 31:20b; Zeph. 3:17; John 3:16, 15:9, Eph 3:18
  4. Body/Bride – I Cor. 12:12-27
  5. His blessings – Ps 16:11, 36:8-9
  6. Our response – Ps. 27:4



# H. ...Continued

- Equipping for ONENESS likely includes:
  - a) Unconditionally loving
  - b) Inner healing ministry
  - c) Building culture of honor
  - d) Deliverances
  - e) Love languages
  - f) Sound discipline
  - g) Redemptive actions
  - h) etc.
  
- The purpose of these battles is to add citizens to God's eternal Kingdom and to set them free from Satanically inspired hindrances, initially and subsequently (John 10:10). It is all based on adhering to the truths of God and rejecting the lies of Satan.



# I. Battlefield: NEW HEAVEN & NEW EARTH (ETERNITY FUTURE)



- BATTLE won: When Christ returns to claim His bride to fully restore His FAMILY, the primary activity of our earthly existence will be complete.
- Affirmatively living the Two Commandments (Matt. 22:34-40) and the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20) and defeating the forces of evil (Eph. 6:11-18; 2 Cor. 10:3-5) constitute the essential tasks of Kingdom building activities.
- The Dominion Mandate occupying contextual setting has been largely a means and not an end -- the material world is destroyed by fire making place for a new heaven and earth (2 Pet. 3:7-13; Rev. 20-22).



This message about the priority of restoring relationships is summed in 1 Cor. 13. Without love and thereby loving relationships, possession of all knowledge and understanding all the mysteries of the universe, particularly as sought through academics, amounts to absolutely nothing from God's perspective! So while education – in service to the Dominion and Cultural Mandates – is noble, it is nothing without love. Conversely, love is typically projected through natural world competence.

William F. Cox, Jr., Ph.D.

Regent University

[wallcox@regent.edu](mailto:wallcox@regent.edu)

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