

TAKE THE
— BULL —
BY THE HORNS



FINDING PEACE *in the*
RODEO OF LIFE

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Take the Bull by the Horns

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Introduction

The title of this book is “Take the Bull by the Horns.” I wanted the title to be something you can remember. Just to give you a little information, history says that the first bull dogger was William Pickett. He was born in Texas and had seen a bull dog take a steer to the ground by biting its lip and stopping it. So William decided he could do it too. So, he would ride up beside a running steer, leap from his horse, bite the steer on the lip and fall backwards causing the animal to fall down. This method is what eventually turned into our modern day steer wrestling. The point is, we have all seen steer wrestling at a rodeo; a cowboy and a steer charge down the arena and the cowboy slides off of his horse, grabs the running steer by the horns, stops it and throws it to the ground.

We use that phraseology “take the bull by the horns” to mean something is running away. This is what we have to do if something has run away or if something has gone crazy in life; we have to get the bull by horns. You have to stop it. You have to throw it. You have to do it or it will run away with your life. The next pages of this book will help you get control of your life and bring order to it so you can live in victory.

I keep hearing over and over that Jesus did it all for us. He made a way where there seemed to be no way. There was no way man could be righteous before God. There was no way that we could stand before Him and go into the throne. There was no way to have any sort of relationship with our heavenly Father because of sin. The original sin in the garden has always been in our way. Man will always need to be cleansed.

Let’s look at a couple of scriptures. You know when John the Baptist saw Jesus he said, “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world” (John 1:29). That’s what Jesus did. He took away the sins of the

world. He took away the obstacle that was keeping us from our relationship with God. In 1 John 1:1-3, it says:

“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life -- the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us -- that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ.”

You need to understand that God always wanted fellowship with man, but there was no way for man to fellowship with God because man could not come into His presence. 1 John 1: 4-7 goes on to say:

“And these things we write to you that your joy may be full. This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.”

Fellowship comes from walking and spending time with Him. Maybe I'm the only one who is catching this. Maybe you all are sitting there saying, “Yeah Pastor, we got this back in Sunday school.” But it just hit me. People are walking around in this world and they are not having a relationship with their heavenly Father. They're not having fellowship with their heavenly Father. They are not having any revelations from heaven.

They are not living a life of victory by walking in the light. Jesus is the light and the life coming into them, but they are dead, defeated by the obstacles this life throws at them. These people are dead and hung because something happened in their lives. Whatever the issues are in life, be it an offense, an injustice, rejection, their lives can never get in touch with God because the bottom line is: He said that we are supposed to trust Him and His Word in all things and when we are not trusting God for something, folks, that's sin.

Sin can't just be labeled. It's not just a can of Bud Light or Jack Daniels or some specific action. No, sin is anything that we are not letting the Spirit of God come into our lives and have dominion over. This happens because we don't fellowship with God and when we don't fellowship with God, we stay bound in those cords of sin. We stay bound in those emotions and all that we are hung up in. We keep walking, making one mistake after another and just adding to the problems. We are basically pulling the cart of our sins down the road throwing more rocks in. We are making our load heavier and heavier, while Jesus is standing there saying, "I'll take everything from you if you would turn to Me and repent. If you will just come to Me and lay it all down, if you would come to Me and give it to me, I'll take care of every bit of it. I'll work with you. I'll help you and I'll set you free. I'll come on the inside of you and I will begin to fix what's wrong with you; the things on the inside of you of why you feel inept and why you don't feel loved. I'll work by the power of the Holy Spirit so you can be whole and we can have fellowship."

You know one time I had a person come to me and they said “I just wanted to ask you, what have I done to make you mad at me?” I said, “What in the world are you talking about? Why would you think I was mad at you? I don’t understand.” Then they said, “Well, the other day I was in the grocery store and you were walking down the aisle and you didn’t recognize me. You didn’t see me.” And I said, “Well, I’m really sorry but I just didn’t see you.” Now, I am a pretty focused guy. If I have to go into a grocery store, I am trying to get out as fast as I can. I am only looking for what I need and nothing else. So I said to them, “If I missed you, why didn’t you say something? Why didn’t you say, ‘Hey Robert!’?” They said, “Well, I just didn’t and I thought you would recognize me and when you didn’t, I figured you were mad at me.” You see, there was something in them that made them feel like I wasn’t going to acknowledge them. So I had a long talk with them. We worked it all out and got it straight.

What I’m talking about is that sometimes our craziness doesn’t come from something that is real; it’s from something that we have in our head. And its base root is back in our past, upon some old sin that we never confessed to God. We never really worked it out. We never had fellowship because if we were sitting in the presence of God and having fellowship with Him and we would say, “Oh by the way Lord, I have this thought and is this right?” Or, “I had this feeling about this situation. Is this really right? Do I perceive this as correct?”

If you are sitting in His presence then He can say, “Well no, you’re not thinking straight. That’s just your personality and it doesn’t have anything to do with the situation. That was just you.” Then the Holy Spirit can deal with it. But if you never take it to the throne of God and you have fellowship with Him, then the blood of Jesus isn’t going to cleanse you and make everything straight within you.

1 John 2:1

“My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous.”

Verse 2

“And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.”

He's the propitiation for our sins. He's the mercy seat, the covering for all of our sins. There is nothing you can get yourself into that Jesus' blood can't cover and fix if you go into the light and let Him deal with it.

Verse 9, “He, who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now...”

See, John is talking about how hating your brother puts you into darkness. And like I have said, the Christian world just looks at “the four major sins”: drinking, dancing, smoking and cussing. If you don’t do any of those, then you’re pretty good and therefore you’re not walking in sin. But Jesus is talking about more than that. He is talking about what is in your heart; anger, hatred, jealousy, bitterness, and unforgiveness. These are more than just an outward manifestation of something. He says that if you hate your brother then you are not walking in the light. You can’t walk in the light because you can’t carry that burden into the throne room. God is not going to let it come in to the throne room. So you can’t fellowship with him. What you’re doing is separating yourself from Him, rather than taking it into the light and saying, “Lord, this is the way I feel.”

He says in verse 10, “He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him.”

See, he’s walking in the light so there is no cause for him to stumble. Jesus is right there with him taking care of him because he is walking in the light.

Verse 11 says, “But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.”

So in other words, if you stay in that sin long enough, you just become blind. You are walking in blindness. We humans have this ability to be absolutely, one hundred percent, completely blind, but believe that everybody else can't see. We are bumping into the walls and believing that somebody put the walls in the wrong place. We are stumbling over the chair and blaming somebody else for putting it there. It's always everybody else's fault; it's never our fault. And we believe that nobody else can see. We say, "You just can't see; you don't understand what is happening." When in reality, we are the ones who are blind and can't see and He is trying to help us come into the light.

Now I want you to look at the parable Jesus told.

Luke 19:11-13,

"Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. Therefore He said: 'A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas,'"

Everyone got the same amount, one mina, which is about 3 month's wages. Everybody got the same amount. Is salvation all the same? Saved is saved, isn't it? Confess with your mouth and believe in Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior of your life and you shall be saved, right? You're saved. Everybody got saved. So that means at salvation, at the point that somebody confesses, they receive equal access to the kingdom. A lot of people want to take the story of the minas and turn it into what gifts God has given you. The gifts you have on the inside of you. For example, one guy may be gifted as a prophet or another guy may be gifted as an evangelist and someone might think, "This guy is gifted as this and I am just gifted with this lowly gift." But He said

everybody got an equal amount. That means that all of heaven is open to every person equally.

When you read through the story, you'll find that it says one came back and said, "I got ten." Another said, "I made five." And another said, "I didn't know what to do, so I just hid mine." So when we examine this story and look at it in terms of salvation, that means one guy went out there and got a hold of the revelations of the kingdom of God and took off and ran with it. He said, "I understand this. You're going to give me *everything*. I want to be healed and I want to be whole. I want to rescue as many people as I can and tell everybody about you and live for victory. So I am just going to walk by faith." And he went out and rescued ten. And the second one had some hang ups. He didn't think his father loved him. So he didn't go quite as far as the first. He had some obstacles to overcome. But he finally got going and he got five. But the other one, he said, "Well, I am just going to squander my salvation."

So what I am saying to you is when Jesus says, "I am going to take all your sins away and I am going to throw open the door," that means everybody gets equal amounts of minas. What are you going to do with them? You see we can either sit back in life, wanting everybody else around us to change, wanting the world to change, or we can go and change our world. We can step up to the plate and say, "I'm not going to be crazy all my life. I'm not going to be intimidated all my life. I'm not going to walk in fear all my life. I'm not going to be anxious all my life. I am not going to follow the path of the family curse." So then it's up to us to *take the bull by the horns*. Stop this beast that is running our life, slide off the saddle, grab him by the horns and get this dude thrown so that we can walk in victory. It all comes through fellowship and repentance. Victory begins when we realize, recognize and say, "Lord, I am feeling this way and I repent because that's an emotion and that not You. I'm not trusting in You, and that's why I have this fear in my life."

As I began to look at this message and think about how the Lord is telling us to take responsibility for the actions of our lives, I began to think about the word consequence. I looked up the word because I wanted to make sure I was using it correctly. It's a simple word but I began to question the meaning of it. Every decision you make has a consequence. The word consequence just means the result of an action. Every decision you make is going to have a consequence to it. So if you make enough bad decisions then you are going to have a whole basket full of bad consequences on your back. The only way to get rid of those is to not let the bad consequences dig in and begin to warp and twist you from carrying the heavy load. You've got to give it over to Jesus so He can free you from those entanglements of life. Jesus has made a way for us to be free by repenting for our mistakes and allowing Him to cleanse us from our sin. He made a way, through His sacrifice on the cross, by giving His life for us and shedding His blood so we can have a relationship with our heavenly Father. He made a way where there was no way. He did all of this for us.

Ephesians 2:11-18,

“Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as

to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.”

So now we have to do our part. He has done His. We have to start out on this process of taking the bull by the horns. I believe it does no good to tell you we have a problem without telling you how to get out of the problem. We have to start out on a journey, not a race, to develop a relationship with Jesus. This means a process of increasing our time spent with Jesus daily. I’m going to lay out a map or outline to help you get there. It will be up to you to apply it in order to get results.

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Chapter One

1st Learn Who Jesus Is

In Matthew 11:28-30, Jesus said, “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

Many Christians come and they get saved. They have that experience with Jesus and they leave it right there. That’s all they ever do. They say, “Oh well, I know I’m saved.” And that’s it. They never go on. They never walk with Jesus. They never learn about Him. They never learn what Jesus likes and dislikes.

Something funny that I find in the Bible is that no matter where you look, in the Old Testament or in the New Testament, God loves a good party. It's the truth. He loves to be where people are merry. He loves to be where there is joy. Jesus' first miracle was at a wedding. God has feasts for Israel that they all had to keep. People had to stop working and laboring to sit, eat and fellowship. He loves family. God loves family and fellowship. Not getting belligerent and drunk and getting into a fight; that's just the devil's perversion of what God wanted. But He loves to sit around with people, have fun and enjoy life. That is God. But you are never going to know that unless you read the Bible and learn for yourself.

So the very first thing you have to learn is what Jesus likes and doesn't like. The best way to do this is to start reading the Bible daily. I believe it is best not to try and read as much as possible. But to form a habit of reading at a certain time every day. This will form a habit in your life. For almost 30 years I have read one chapter in the Old Testament, one Psalms, one Proverb, one chapter in the Gospels, and one chapter in the Epistles each morning before I go to work. This allows me to hear what God is saying to me in His Word before I get out into the world and hear what it is saying to me.

Chapter Two

2nd Meditate on the Word of God

Joshua 1:8, “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night,”

So the second thing to do as you are daily reading your Bible, is begin to write down the Scriptures that speak to you in a notebook. As time goes on and you continue to gather scriptures, begin to read over them. Think about them and what they mean and how they apply to your life. This is what is meant by meditating on the Word.

Some of y'all have been saved for a long time and you have been building your spiritual house. Maybe you have been building your house and you put the windows in too quick. Or maybe you didn't put them in quick enough. You know when we build a house, there are steps. There are certain things you have to do. You have to start at this point and go to the next point. You can't put the roof on before you have the walls up. I think that a lot of times in our Christian walk, because we haven't been systematically taught, we have gathered all sorts of pieces of information, but have no idea how to put them together correctly in order to accomplish everything Jesus wants for us, which is simply to be His powerful servants on the face of the earth, demonstrating His love to humanity. And so we have gathered all of these pieces, but the pieces haven't been assembled because we haven't systematically gone through them.

That's the reason why I'm writing this book. If somebody would have sat down with me and shown me these points when I first got saved and said, "Ok Robert, this is what you need to do in order to grow." It would have saved me a lot of time in my walk with Jesus.
So we must learn to meditate on the Word.

Chapter Three

3rd Learn to Take Your thoughts Captive

The third thing is that you've got learn to take your thoughts captive.

2 Corinthians 10:4-6,

“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.”

Listen to me. You have got to learn to discipline your thoughts. I was messing around with my thoughts the other day. I was hungry for something sweet. I had just eaten supper and I was sitting around hungry for something sweet. So I got a small handful of walnuts and I said, “Man, this is the best chocolate I think I’ve ever eaten. It’s a little different than normal chocolate, but this is great chocolate.” And I started eating those walnuts slowly saying, “Mmmmmmm, man. This must be like Russian chocolate or something.” I just started making all this stuff up to myself. Saying “This is really, really, good chocolate.” I finished eating the walnuts then I said, “Man, I am so satisfied. That was the best sweet chocolate that I have ever eaten.” I sat there for a minute and my sweet craving went away. Now maybe the walnuts just did it. I don’t know. But I was telling myself the thought I was going to think, not sitting there saying, “I am eating this stupid walnut and I wish I was eating a piece of chocolate.” You have to control those things. Just like you have to control thoughts

like, “I don’t think so-and-so likes me and I think they are mad at me.” Or, “I can’t believe they said or did that.” You have to learn to control your thoughts. You have to learn about Jesus. You have to meditate on His Word because you need to have the Word in order to replace the thought. You cannot just stop thinking about something. You have to *replace* the thought. This is why in step one you’re reading the Bible to learn about Jesus and His Word. Then you’re taking the Word and meditating on it so you have something to replace the negative thought that’s in your head. In Luke 4, when Jesus was in the wilderness with the devil, every time the devil said something to Jesus, He countered him by quoting to him a scripture. Jesus was simply taking the thought captive by replacing it with the appropriate Scripture. This is how you must live. When a negative thought comes to you, simply reach down in your heart and replace it with the Word and watch the mountain move.

Chapter Four

4th Learn to Roll Off Your Cares

Psalms 37:5 says,

“Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass.”

That word, commit, means *to roll off*. You have to learn to roll off your cares onto the Lord. You have to come to the place where when things come against you in a day, you cannot just look at them and let them overwhelm you. You have to let them roll off onto Jesus and say, “Lord, You’re going to take care of that because I don’t know what to do. I don’t know how to handle it. You didn’t create me as a being of worry and stress. You created me to be a being of worship and love for You and to tell people about You and to be the temple of God. Therefore, I don’t want this stress in my life and You are going to take care of it.” To roll off your cares is the very heart of prayer. We sometimes get too caught up in the formality of prayer. When you feel the stress mounting on your shoulders, you have waited too long to go to prayer. You are carrying the load instead of Jesus.

I Peter 5:7 says,

“Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”

You must realize that it is pride that keeps you from asking Jesus for help. It's the devil's number one trick for keeping us beat down. If we stay burdened with cares, then we can't do what we should be able to do. Learn to trust Jesus at His Word and by faith roll off your cares.

Chapter Five

5th Learn to Enter God's Presence

Colossians 3:1-4,

“If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.”

So the fifth thing that you must learn to do is understand and walk in His presence.

I Corinthians 3:16 says,

“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?”

When Jesus left this earth, He knew we would need help. He knew that we could not be left alone. He had a plan. He would cleanse us by His blood and make us the dwelling place of His spirit. The temple of God on earth filled with His Spirit.”

John 14:15-18,

“If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.”

What happens to us is we get so wrapped up in the activity of our lives we forget who we are. Our Christianity becomes our service of going to church, saying a few prayers and trying to be good. We must take time out of our busy lives to stop, clear our thoughts and become aware that God is in us. This takes discipline.

When you have been operating in steps one through four by reading the Word, meditating on the Word, controlling your thoughts, and rolling your cares over on the Lord then it becomes easy to enter God's presence. Like Colossians 3:1-2 said, "... seek those things above and set your mind on the things above not on the things of this world."

I'm not talking about coming to a place where the hair stands up on your neck or you begin to tingle all over. I'm talking about a place where you have peace, confidence and joy; a place where you're not overwhelmed with life and its problems. Some people want a short cut to His presence so they look for feelings, signs, and visions. They are deceived and are seeking signs, not Jesus. I call this hyper-spiritualism. In the Bible, people were always coming up to Jesus and seeking a sign. They wanted to see something happen so then they would believe. Jesus said He would give them no sign but the knowledge of the resurrection. It is the same today.

We must build a relationship with Jesus, one that is based on the Word, one that is written on our heart by spending time learning who He is. So let's put these five together and look at them again. You have to learn who He is. Then you are meditating on His Word. That gives you the power to take your thoughts captive, so then you can roll the cares of your life over on to Him and you can bask in His presence. Remember, He has taken the sin away. He has made it to where you can come into the throne room. He has done His part. He has done it all so that all you have to do is walk in it. But you have to learn the first five things that you have to do in your life if you are going to walk in victory. I don't care how long you have been walking with Jesus; there are going to be days when you're just going to get stumped. You're going to have a bad day. You're going to feel like you have lost some ground, but you usually don't lose any ground. You just aren't gaining any that day. You are having to work through an issue, having to work through a problem. That's always there. That's just life. You might as well quit trying to put on the facade that you got it all straight. We are all nuts! All of us are. There is none, no, not one, who is not crazy. I don't care who you are. We all have something on the inside of us that needs to bask in the presence of God and get worked out. That's just life. Just quit trying to fool everybody. I don't want to offend you. I don't want to hurt your feelings and I'm not talking about anyone specifically, because I am in the whole group too. Sometimes, somebody can say something to me in a wrong way and I am ready to go to war. There is no need in doing it so I just take it to Jesus.

I say,

“Lord, when they said this it made me think this and that made me want to start sharpening my sword and take their head off. I don't like that feeling. So you need to help me understand why this is going on and what is going on.” And that's sitting in His presence, talking to Him saying, “Jesus, you got to

help me do this.”

Let me put it to you like this, if you can't take time during the day to shut your eyes and feel the presence of Jesus wherever you are, then you haven't got the first five points down. You need to work on that. It's just that simple. If you can't sit in a lawn chair in the yard or wherever you find comfortable, or taking a shower or whatever. If you can't close your eyes and say, "Jesus, I love you. I worship you, Lord. You are amazing to me. I want to walk with You and be with You." If you can't talk to Jesus like that and sense His presence, then you haven't got it down yet. You cannot live without His presence.

When I first got saved, I became hungry for God's Word. I would read my Bible every night and run and tell my wife, "Look what it says here!" Everything was fresh and new to me. I found out there was a minister having some meeting during the week not far from my house. They were small meetings with not many people. I remember going the very first time. They were singing and worshiping. I had never been in a church service where people just lifted their hands and worshiped God openly. I was standing there and I closed my eyes. I had only been saved for a month or two and I remember closing my eyes and saying, "Man, I just love you, Jesus. I just thank you for saving me." And when I said that, I felt like someone set a glass over me. As I stood there, with my eyes closed worshiping the Lord, I began, for the first time, to sense His presence, although I didn't know at the time.

I had never been in the presence of God. At the church I was raised in, that never happened. I didn't know I was coming into the presence of God. I didn't know what it was. I felt like a vacuum had been placed around me. I remember kind of feeling different and thought, "Oh something's wrong. Maybe I'm not getting enough oxygen here or something. Something is funny." I started looking around the building to see if there wasn't a gas leak in there or something. And it would go away as soon as I opened my eyes. So I would close my eyes again and say, "Ok I'm sorry, Jesus. I'm just getting distracted. I love you. I am so glad I got saved." And then I would feel it again. This went on for months without me realizing what was going on. I thought something was wrong. It got to the point where I was thinking I got saved because I was going to die. I didn't realize what was happening to me. I thought that maybe I had a brain tumor because I was feeling this light headed sensation whenever I went to worship God. I would literally think this. Then one day, I was reading scripture about God's presence and I said, "That's You that I am sensing. That's Your presence I'm sensing. I'm sorry. I didn't know that was You who walked into the room. I never knew that." All of this was new to me, but because I was reading my Word every day, seeking to know more about Jesus, and focusing my thoughts on Him, I became aware of His presence with me.

You must find some place to sit down and know that you are in His presence, whether you feel anything or not. You must know you are there in His presence. That He is hearing your prayers, even if it's just for two minutes because you are in the middle of your workday, you must get there. You must work to enter God's presence on a daily basis in order to make it in this life.

So that's the first five things you have to do as a Christian to get yourself sane enough to move into step six.

Chapter Six

6th Putting On Your Armor

Step six is Ephesians 6:10. You have to put on your armor

Ephesians 6:10-20 says,

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I

may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”

You can break this down and come up with all kinds of great teachings about putting on the armor of God and what it means. But what I want you to realize is if you are living out the first five points I have taught you, then putting on the armor is just the next step in your walk of faith. When a warrior puts on his armor, he is going to war. His mind set changes; he becomes more aware of his surroundings. This is what you have to do. You must realize that you are in the world and can come under attack. But you can be ready for war. No person goes to war in a pair of shorts and flip-flops. This is what you wear when you are relaxing, not going to make war.

I Peter 5:8-9 says,

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.”

Your enemy is the devil, not people. Our war is not with flesh and blood, but with the devil and all his ways of trying to trip us up. He is always trying to get us off track by placing thoughts that are not in line with God’s promises to us. He knows if we take a thought and begin to dwell on it that it will begin to direct our lives in the wrong direction.

If you put on the armor of God and make yourself ready for war, but you are not practicing the first five points, you might as well not have the armor on. If you do go to battle, you might be going against one of your own people, not the enemy. There could be Christians who have their armor on, slinging their sword, killing more fellow Christians rather than fighting off the devil. Without the Word and God's presence to guide us, we don't understand who our enemy is. When you go through steps one through five and get in the presence of God, learn His ways, meditate on His Word, get your thoughts straight and under control and roll off your cares, then you know your enemy and know who to fight. If you haven't got the first five down, you are a dangerous person with a sharp sword in your hand, going around with the armor on, killing all those around you. Remember, it's a process. It's called sanctification. It's the process of getting all of this right.

In the military, soldiers go through boot camp where they are trained not to get their head blown off. They don't just go out there and give everybody guns and say, "Hey, you like that big ole gun over there? Well, go out there and take that gun and shoot it if you want." It would be chaos. Well, that in a sense, is what people have done with Christians. They've been told about Jesus and that Jesus has given them salvation. He has opened up the door to them. But people have run amuck. They are crazy with no focus on what is going on in life and can be dangerous to be around.

Chapter Seven

7th Learn to Use the Power of Your Tongue

Now that you have your armor on, you have to turn your mouth around. Your mouth has probably gotten defiled and the rudder of your ship has gotten turned the wrong direction. The enemy throughout your life has always wanted you to use your tongue against yourself and others.

James 3:1-4,

“My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. Indeed, we put bits in horses’ mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires.”

James goes on to talk about the tongue. You can read it all, but the point is now the mouth comes into play. The words you speak out of your mouth can be life giving or curses to those who hear. They can be weapons that advance your life or destroy it. Think about this: Everything comes out of your mouth. All your life, people have been blessed or cursed by what comes out of your mouth. This is why we have to take control of our mouths. If you haven’t done steps one through five, you

haven't learned about Jesus, you haven't meditated on His Word, you don't have control of your thoughts and you have not rolled off your cares, then what is going to come out of your mouth? Anything and everything that you want to say.

So the next step is to learn to control what comes out of your mouth and to make it an effective weapon in your life.

With a mouth under control, you can go out and change things. You are able to look at someone and say, "Jesus loves you." You're able to speak into someone's life and give them some wisdom because your mouth is now lined up to become a great offensive weapon for Jesus. Let's look at what we are supposed to do with our mouth. The Bible says we can move mountains with our words.

Mark 11:23,

"For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says."

Ok, so you have your mouth lined up, but what is the mouth going to do? How is it going to become this offense weapon for you? You have to start speaking to the mountains in your life. When I was writing all of this down, the Holy Spirit popped one thing into my heart that I have been praying about.

I said, "Lord, this thing needs to happen." He said, "You have to start speaking to that mountain. You haven't been speaking to the mountain." I said, "You're right. I haven't been directly speaking towards that thing. I've been asking You to do something. I haven't actually been speaking about

that one situation.”

See, we forget. We just want to pray that prayer, “Jesus, will you take care of that situation for me?” When Jesus is saying, “No, I took care of that sin issue so that *you* could go to the throne room and *you* could have fellowship with God. It was done so that *you* could walk in the light as He is in the light. So that *you* could be there with Him and that *you* could hear and *you* could speak to the mountain and tell that mountain to be moved.” I said to the Holy Spirit, “Man, you got me on that one. I am not practicing what I’m preaching.”

But you can bet that mountain got some missiles this morning. Do you see what I am saying? We have to speak to those mountains. Jesus said, “That’s your part; I’ve done My part. Quit asking Me to move the mountain. You speak to it and tell it to go.” All of the Word that you have learned by reading your Bible and by writing and meditating on the scriptures becomes your ammunition to speak to your mountains. Let me give you an example. You wake up in the morning and look at yourself in the mirror and the thought runs through your mind that you’re stupid and that you’re not going to succeed in life. This is a thought you have had all your life. So you say, “No, that’s not true, according to Psalm 139:13-14, God formed me and wonderfully made me. And Jeremiah 29:11 says, God gives me a future and a hope.” You just shot a missile at a mountain in your life. That is how it is done.

The next step that you're going to be doing with your mouth is binding and loosing. This is similar to speaking to your mountains. If you have a garden, you have different tools for different jobs. You may use a shovel or a hoe to move dirt depending on how much dirt you want to move. Mountains are strongholds that you have wrestled with most your life, but there are other weapons that come against you like storm clouds that arise in your life that must be put down. Mountains are permanent fixtures that must be destroyed, but storms come and go.

Matthew 16:19 says,

"And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

We must bind ourselves to what God's Word says about us and loose ourselves from the attacks the enemy throws at us. All the negative words that come against us, our thoughts of defeat that cause us to stumble, they will be stopped by God's Word coming out of our mouth. Point number seven is about getting your mouth in line. You have to start speaking to the mountains. You have to start binding and loosing.

The next part of what you're going to do with your mouth is that you ask for your needs. The Bible says that God knows what we need before we ask Him. I always thought, "Well, why don't You just do it then without me asking? I could just wake up in the morning and You would have already done it. Seems like a better system. You know what I have need of, so why don't You just do it? Why do I have to ask? I don't even know if I am asking right sometimes." The Bible says He wants us to ask. It says that we are supposed to ask for our daily needs and He gave us the Lord's Prayer. We call it the Lord's Prayer, but it's not the Lord's Prayer; it's actually the Disciple's Prayer. He gave it to the disciples to pray and told them this is the way you are supposed to pray, "Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name..." We teach people this. We teach them the Lord's Prayer and say the Lord's Prayer as if it's a prayer, but it's really not a prayer. It's an outline for you to learn to pray by.

So that's just what you are doing with your mouth. You are speaking to the mountains. You are binding and loosing and you are asking for your needs. Next, we must pray for others. Ezekiel 22:30 says, "So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one." God wants us to intercede for people. Intercession is praying for people, saying, "Lord, I know so-and so is going through a hard time and they really need something." Or "I see what is going on with our government and I ask you to move in that situation." He wants us to intercede for those things. There are four things that you are doing with your mouth: Speaking to the mountains, binding and loosing, asking for your daily needs and interceding for others.

Now let's stop and look back at what you are learning. You started reading your Bible and learning about Jesus. Then you began to write those scriptures down that spoke to your heart and meditate on them. Now you have some ammunition to use against the wrong thinking you have and can take control of your thoughts. Daily, you are rolling your cares over on Jesus and walking in His presence. You have now become a warrior and put on your armor and are slaying the enemy. Your mouth has become a weapon, destroying mountains and also a well of water spewing out blessings to all those around you. So now we need to learn how to keep it all going. We need to learn how to get the fuel to keep the engine going.

Chapter Eight

8th Learning to Worship

After you have put on your armor, gotten a hold of your mouth, and doing all these things you've learned, you are eventually going to run out of steam. You are going to run out of energy. You are going to run out of any emotional strength that you have *unless* you learn number eight, which is learn to worship.

John 4:23-24 says,

“But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

You will run out of steam. You will become tired. You will become frazzled. You will lose focus and direction if you do not have a worship life. A worship life is different than a prayer life. You can pray all you want, but if you don't have a worship life, you have no steam, no spunk, and no zip. Worship is simply taking time to express your gratitude and love to your heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus. I understand we sometimes can be people of few words and we need help to express ourselves. One tool you can use is music. You can do this by listening to songs that express your feelings and singing along with it. If you're not a singer, then read a Psalm out loud that express your feelings.

I had a mini vision one time about being in a great music hall. I was on stage and the only one in the audience was Jesus. I thought, “What do I want to say to Him?” This is the place you need to put yourself on a daily basis. Worship does not have to be in song but it needs to come from your heart, spoken out loud and directed toward Him. Something great takes place when you can worship freely from your heart and are not hindered by what people think; a pure expression of your heart to your God. When this takes place, the very life of God begins to flow through your veins bringing joy, peace, and love to your heart. This is the fuel that keeps you going.

Chapter Nine

9th Preparing Your Heart

The ninth thing you have to do in that time of worship is to prepare your heart. Proverbs 16:1 says, “The preparations of the heart belong to man, But the answer of the tongue is from the Lord.” Preparing your heart means examining your heart in God’s presence, as you are worshipping Him, to see if there is any baggage that you are carrying around.

A problem we have here, living in the country, is that sometimes you get a tick stuck on you. You don't see it right away and it bores into your skin and begins to suck blood from you. You know all of us good ole country people have probably had a tick on us at least once in our lives. When you finally discover it, you say, “Oh my God!” You get all grossed out because you have this nasty tick on you, sucking the blood right out of you. This is just what happens in life with our heart. The Bible says the enemy shoots fiery darts at us.

There are words that people say. There are instances that happen; there are things that push us over the limit. There are things that we are in need of. Sometimes we are just crazy; our hormones are out of whack or whatever. We have these issues and things just happen to us. The enemy is just like a tick. The words that we hear that get stuck in our heart become a hindrance to us. They are slowly sucking life out of us. If we don’t prepare and examine our hearts in the presence of God, making sure that we don’t have anything stuck to us, asking the Holy Spirit to get it off of us if we do, then whatever it is will fester up and makes us sick.

You can live with a tick stuck on you. You may get lime disease, but you can exist. You can have a tick stuck on the side of your neck and go around with it. Everybody might say, "Oh my God! You got a tick on the side of your neck!" But you can't see it. That is what is happening to our heart and it happens all the time. Just about the time you think you got yourself all healed up and everything is going well, then, boom! Someone stupid is going to say something to you because people feed at the trough of stupid every morning. Just about the time you think that your ship is sailing pretty good, there will be a storm.

What it takes to be free of all attachments in life is going into the presence of God. Worshiping Him and taking out your heart in the presence of God and asking Him to show you anything that does not belong there. You only want to do this in the presence of God because this is a sterile environment. If you examine yourself without the presence of God, you will get into condemnation and become critical of yourself. This is not going to be productive. You wouldn't want someone to do open heart surgery when you are out in the middle of a field. That wouldn't be too good. You want a good, sterile, and clean environment. It's the same with the presence of God and examining your heart. You don't want to open your heart out there for everybody. You want to put it right in front of the presence of God, when you know that you are in His presence, when you are worshiping Him, say, "Lord, is everything okay? Am I doing okay? I feel kind of like this or that or whatever." Let Him work on your heart. The Holy Spirit will then begin to reveal things to you that you must deal with. He will lead you to victory over the hurts of life if you will take this step and prepare your heart in God's presence. Then you know what? You go to sleep, wake up the next day and do it all over again. Because it never ends, it never quits. This is our battle; this is our walk. This is our everyday walk until we get to heaven.

Chapter Ten

10th Tithing

Malachi 3:8-12,

“Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, For you have robbed Me, *Even* this whole nation. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this,” Says the Lord of hosts, “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you *such* blessing That *there will not be room enough to receive it.* “And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, So that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, Nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field,” Says the Lord of hosts; “And all nations will call you blessed, For you will be a delightful land,” Says the Lord of hosts.

No matter what your occupation is in life, we all need money to survive. We have to learn to apply God’s principles to our life. Tithing is the only thing we do in the physical that has a spiritual effect. By honoring God with our finances we are connecting ourselves with the kingdom of God and opening up the windows of heaven in our lives for prosperity here on earth. II Corinthians 9:8 says, “And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.” When we tithe, we put our finances in the hands of God and He is able to make provision for you so you can have an abundance to help others in their need.

Some people worship all the time but never have control over their mouth. All the worship that you're doing is flying out the window because the next morning your mouth goes shooting off and you say all the wrong things. Some people have been asking Jesus to do it all for them and don't realize that they have to speak to their mountains in order to see their prayers answered. Some people love God with all their heart but never control their thoughts. That's why there is torment in their lives. I see this book as putting these points all together as one big syllabus helping you get in a place where the blessings of God can begin to flow in your life. If somebody had put this all together for me and got me off on the right road when I started out my walk with Jesus, I could have saved a lot of time. I have heard every lesson that I have shared with you, preached over my whole Christian life of 30 years, but I have never heard or seen it all put together in one book like this. I would hear someone talking about binding and loosing and I would be out there binding and loosing but never controlling my thoughts or replacing my thoughts and I would get defeated. Now that I have learned these 10 points, peace and joy rule in my life. Now it is up to you to take the bull by the horns and bring victory to your life and all those around you.

Take the Bull by the Horns

The Outline

I. What Jesus did for You

A. Takes away our sin

1. John 1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"
2. I John 2:1, 2 My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

B. Jesus made it so we could see

1. I John 2:9-11 He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.
2. Luke 19:12, 13 Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.'

a. The nobleman gave each one three months wages and told them to put it to use. Jesus has made a way for you and all has been placed in your hand so what are you going to do with it. Now that we can come to the throne room and fellowship with the Father because sin is not an issue. We have to take the bull by the horns.

C. Open the Door of Heaven

1. Hebrews 10:19 - Boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus.

II. 5 steps to level 101

A. Learn Who Jesus is

1. Matthew 11:28-30, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

2. Learning means to spend time researching a thought then applying it to your life.

3. You need to gather information then cross reference it with the Word to see if it's true.

4. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you.

a. I John 2:27, "But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him."

5. Danger is you listen to yourself and not the Holy Spirit.

a. The Holy Spirit will always bring:

1. Inspiration

2. Correction

3. Comfort

B. Learn to Meditate on Word of God

1. Joshua 1:8 “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.”

2. Take a verse and write it down. Keep them in a note book.

3. Take the verse and commit it to memory.

4. Start asking the Holy Spirit to illuminate it to you.

5. Put it somewhere you can see it and speak it out.

C. Learn to Take Your Thoughts Captive

1. II Corinthians 10:4-6, “For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.”

2. Any thought that brings torment or anxiety is not from God. You need to ask yourself what brought this thought on.

3. What can stop a thought?

- a. Repentance – clearing your conscience
- b. Renewing of your Faith – What does the Word say? Are you believing what it says?
- c. Revelation of the Word – What you really believe.
- d. Replacing the thought with Word

D. Learn to Roll off Cares

1. Psalms 37:5, “Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass.”

a. Commit means to roll off. God never intended you to carry burdens. He wanted you to pray and trust Him to answer.

b. I John 5:14, 15 “Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.”

c. I Peter 5:6, 7 “Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”

d. It is pride that makes us think it is better for us to handle our own problems than to trust in Him to take care of it.

E. Learn to Enter His Presence

1. Colossians 3:1-4 “If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.”

2. Learning His presence takes time. You can't tell Jesus you only have 5 minutes can you come quickly.

a. You have to set aside time.

b. You have to clear your thoughts.

c. You have to do something that's pleasing to Him.

1. Quote scripture, read a psalm, sing a worship song, play worship music, read a parable.

2. Pray in the Holy Spirit allow the Spirit of God to pray through you.

a. I Corinthians 14:2 For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries.

3. Create an environment that is conducive for fellowship.

III. 5 steps to level 201

A. Putting on Your Armor

1. Ephesians 6:10-20, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and

supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints— and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”

2. Putting on the armor of God is taking the revelations you have learned in the first 5 steps and now walking in that truth.

- a. Waist gird with Truth
- b. Breastplate of Righteousness
- c. Feet shod with the Gospel
- d. Shield of Faith
- e. Helmet of Salvation
- f. Sword of the Spirit - Word of God

B. Learn to Use the Power of Your Tongue

1. James 3:1, 2, “My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.”

2. What you do with your mouth

a. Speak to the mountains – The obstacles in your life

1. Mark 11:23, 24, “For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.”

b. Bind and Loose – Telling the enemy, “No!” Standing on the Word.

1. Matthew 16:19, “And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

c. Ask for Needs

1. Matthew 6:9, 10, 12, 13, “In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.”

d. Intercede for others

1. Ezekiel 22:30, “So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one.”

C. Learn to Worship - Fall in love with Him

1. John 4:23, 24, “But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

2. Take time to express your gratitude and love to your heavenly Father and your Savior.

D. Learn to Prepare your Heart

1. Proverbs 16:1, “The preparations of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord.”

2. Searching your heart so the enemy does not get in.

3. You have to examine your motives in life to see what is directing you. Only do this in the Presence of God or condemnation will come in.

E. Tithing

1. Malachi 3:10, "Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this," Says the Lord of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it."

2. This is something we do in the physical that has great spiritual significance. It shows God where our heart is and that it is connected to the work He has put us in.

Now that we have put these 10 steps into daily practice we are ready to go out and tell the world about Jesus and help others come to Him.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



As a 5th generation Texan, Dr. Robert Richarz has a deep heritage in this land. His ancestors were Texas Rangers, captains of military forts and ranchers that fought everyday hardships to help settle the area and make Texas a place where people could live safe and secure from the adversities of their times.

Today, Dr. Richarz and his wife Laura fight for the same freedoms as his ancestors in the spiritual realm. It is their dream to see people come to know the saving knowledge of Jesus and God's amazing love for them.

Dr. Richarz strives to teach people the simple, everyday applications of the Word of God through humor and his personal life stories and encounters. He and his family are deeply rooted in Texas and committed to working with the people to see their lives change forever.



Dr. Richarz serves as pastor of Living Waters Church in Utopia, Texas and is president of The Water Hole™, a Christian non-profit worldwide ministry.

The Water Hole Ministry

The Mission of this Ministry is to demonstrate the love of Jesus Christ while rescuing orphans and widows. The Water Hole Ministry has helped rescue countless of children in Guatemala who have suffered unthinkable atrocities. Some of these orphans were living on the streets getting their food from the local landfill. Pastor Richarz has partnered with Pastor Ivan Taite ([www.link](#) to web page) in supporting Casa Angelina. If God is calling you to be a part of this ministry click on the website below.

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