

Course: Spiritual Exercises

Title: Lesson #5 – “My One-Word Resolution” or “My One Word”

Part 2

## **“MY ONE-WORD RESOLUTION” or “MY ONE WORD”**

### **Part 2: My Seven-Year Story Making “My One-Word Resolutions” and Living by “My One Word” – and What They Have Been**

In [our last lesson segment, Part 1](#), I refreshed our minds about what Spiritual Exercises are just to get us back on track and in focus. Then I laid the groundwork for the Scriptural exercise of making holy resolutions and the daily lifestyle role that making holy resolutions should have in our lives and discipleship after Christ. I also gave you just a teaser about what a “One-Word Resolution” is and how I was introduced to this practice and exercise 7 years ago. If you haven’t watched that segment, I’d encourage you to do that.

What I want to do now is continue that personal story and give you some personal testimony about how I have implemented this exercise. So, I’m calling this Part 2 of our lesson: **“My Seven-year story making ‘My One-Word Resolutions’ and living by ‘My One Word’ – and what they have been.’**

#### **So ... now back to my story...**

So, now that I’ve given you a little personal background about my long-standing exercise of making resolutions, and especially New Year’s resolutions, let me pick up the story of how I came across the book [My One Word](#), and how it changed the way I make my resolutions.

It was late in the year of 2014. I was thinking ahead and praying about 2015. And, like Mike Ashcraft says in the teaser about his book, I was one of those who made lists of resolutions. They were all good resolutions. They were all resolutions that I thought I should make to serve the Lord more faithfully and walk more closely with Him.

But, I would think, pray, and meditate during the closing weeks of the year. And you know how that, even though the last 6-8 weeks of the year are busy with holiday events, and get-togethers, and activities, we usually still have some break from the normal pressures and focus of our regular work schedule. So, there may be some extra time in there to give a little more attention to other things ... like preparing and making resolutions for the new year. And I would. And the lists of resolutions would be numerous, detailed, comprehensive, and oftentimes maybe overly-ambitious.

And I meant well ... I was very conscientious about it.

But then, when the new year comes, your normal activities and responsibilities resume, and you get back to your usual demanding workload, and your attention becomes absorbed and preoccupied again just to live your normal life in many of the usual ways.

And what happens to your resolutions? I would often lose track of what I had resolved to do and what I had resolved to change and do differently. Sometimes I would even lose my lists of resolutions! It's like I wouldn't have the attention and time to fulfill my regularly-scheduled ministry activities and also give attention to and focus on making the extensive changes like I had resolved I would do.

And so very often, I would just revert back to some of my old imperfect ways just by default. Or, maybe I would become distracted, then discouraged, then defeated – and finally just give it up in frustration. And then, to make matters much worse, I would get depressed over my perceived failure to keep my resolutions.

### **Then, I discovered My One Word**

Then, I discovered this book My One Word and read it. It changed everything for me. I began making “My One Word” Resolution beginning in January 2015, and I have continued that practice to the present.

I prayed about one major resolution that I should make to change my ways before God, and when I focused on that “One Word,” I discovered that other changes I need to make would also be included in “My One Word” and they, too, began to fall in line with “My One Word,” and I was actually pursuing several paths of growing in grace while I was focusing on “My One Word.”

### **How it has worked for me...**

I think that maybe the best way to illustrate how “My One Word” works, and how it may prove to be a beneficial spiritual exercise for you, is to give you a personal testimony about how I have worked it in my life and experience.

So, let me give you a year-by-year testimony of what “My One Word” resolutions have been and how the Lord impressed each one on my life – and especially as I have prayed about what changes the Holy Spirit needed to make in my life as those changes were inspired and energized by the Word of God.

### **2015 – “REST”**

So, as I say, 2015 was coming up. I knew there were changes that were going to take place in my life and ministry. Changes were going to take place in the church I was

pastoring. I didn't know how they were going to go or what the outcome of all these changes would be. I would find out later – but I didn't know in 2014 going into 2015.

So, I was praying and seeking the mind and will of God for how I should lead in these changes. And, I was anxious about it all. I was anxious because of the uncertainty. I was anxious because I knew it was going to be an eventful and impactful year ... I just didn't know how the events would go or what impact it would all have on all of us.

As I prayed about it all, the Holy Spirit reminded me that I must have faith in God, trust Him, faithfully obey what I knew that I must obey – and **REST!**

And, always, as you seek a “My One Word,” your word to live by will come from God's Word. He will give you the “One Word” He wants you to adopt and practice, and He will give you that word from His Word, the Scriptures, the Bible.

So, the words of Matthew 11.28 were impressed on my soul: “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you **REST.**” There it was – “**REST!**”

There were many others, like Psalm 37.7 KJV, “**REST** in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him...” To “**REST**” in the LORD means to give up my own worry and anxieties and trust Him implicitly ... have confidence in His good intentions and purposes for me.

So, I went into 2015 resolved that I would not worry, or be anxious, or try to take matters into my own hands, but rather “**REST**” in the LORD, trust Him, and wait patiently for Him to work out His sovereign will and gracious pleasure in my life and ministry.

### **2016 – “DELIGHT”**

As 2015 turned into 2016, the circumstances of my life and ministry began to be more complicated and difficult. But God was always there, working His sovereign pleasure and will in everything that was happening and developing. And I could sense that some of those circumstances were not headed in ways that were going to be particularly to my personal liking or pleasurable to enjoy. In other words, things were shaping up that had all the prospects that it would be personally painful and bitter to my personal tastes.

But, God was becoming more and more personal to me at the same time. I was enjoying more of His Presence and the joy, peace, and comfort of His personal company. I was “resting” in Him more. I was learning to trust Him more and just enjoy being with Him regardless of how things turned out for me personally.

So, as I continued with the LORD in 2016, He taught me that it isn't enough for me just to “REST” in the LORD – as in just resigning myself to accept whatever He had planned for me – but I must “**DELIGHT**” in Him! I must not be content with just a passive and

stoic acceptance of His will, but I must enjoy Him! I must treasure Him above my every other possession and personal experience!

And so “My One Word” was **“DELIGHT.”**

Again, “My One Word” for 2016 came from The Word of God.

- ▶ Psalm 37.4, “**DELIGHT** yourself in the LORD, and He will give you the desires of your heart.”
- ▶ Psalm 1.2, “...but his **DELIGHT** is in the law of the LORD, and on His law he meditates day and night.”
- ▶ Psalm 40.8, “I **DELIGHT** to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart” [quoted again by our Lord in Hebrews 10.7]
- ▶ Romans 7.22, “For I **DELIGHT** in the law of God, in my inner being...”

And so the LORD began to draw my heart to seek Him for the sake of the **DELIGHT** of His company and His pleasure.

And not only did I learn more to **“DELIGHT”** myself in knowing Him, but I also reveled more in His **“DELIGHT”** in me! Proverbs 8.30-31 speaks of Christ in the work of creation, “...then I was beside Him, like a master workman, and I was daily His **DELIGHT**, rejoicing before Him always, rejoicing in His inhabited world and **DELIGHTING** in the children of man.” And Proverbs 15.8 KJV, “The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but the prayer of the upright is His **DELIGHT.**”

There are so many other delightful Scriptures that call on us to **DELIGHT** ourselves in God just for the pure pleasure of knowing and enjoying Him! And many others that assure us of God’s own personal **DELIGHT** in us as His children and treasured possessions!

And so I resolved to more and more **“DELIGHT”** in God just for the pleasure of knowing Him and enjoying His company and His pleasure in me!

## **2017 – “FOLLOW”**

As 2017 opened up, I could sense early on that there were going to be major changes in my ministry and in our lives as we had lived and known them up to that point. I didn’t know when these major, seismic changes and transitions would shift, but I knew they were coming. Nor did I have any idea where the direction or the course of our lives would take during the upcoming year.

So, going into 2017, “My One Word” was **“FOLLOW,”** and I resolved to the LORD that I would **“follow”** Him wherever His will would lead us. I got “My One Word” **“follow”** from John 12.25-26:

“Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves Me, he must **follow** Me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.”

So, there I had it. Jesus Himself was following the Father’s will even to the Cross. I resolved that I would **“follow”** Jesus wherever He chose to lead us, take us, and go with us. I also knew that wherever He leads us, and wherever we follow Him to, that’s where He wants us to be to be working through us. That’s all that any of us is ever called to do anyway, is **“follow”** Christ.

So, on May 28 of 2017, I resigned the pastorate where we had served for the previous 35 years because I believed that Jesus was calling us to **‘follow’** Him ... we just didn’t know where. As it turned out, we pretty immediately **‘followed’** His leadership to come here where we are now. **“Follow”** was a good word for 2017 – and for every day of every other year also, of course!

### **2018 – “ABIDE”**

As we went into 2018, we had been here at Buck Run for six months; so this new course and direction for our lives was still very new to us. I was suffering from a bad case of disorientation because the whole structure and order of my life and ministry had suddenly changed, and I hadn’t prepared for it. For the previous 45 years, I had been pastor of a church in some role or another – most of those years as a lead pastor. Now, for the first time in almost half a century and for all of my adult life, I was not a pastor of a church.

I’m not saying it was a bad place to be in, just different. I was not depressed or disheartened by the changes in my function and roles, but I was very disoriented, and somewhat confused and casting about for what I was supposed to do.

That’s when the Holy Spirit began to impress the word **“ABIDE”** upon my spirit – as in **“Abide in Christ.”** Or, Paul uses the same original word in 1 Corinthians 7.27, **“So, brothers, in whatever condition each was called, there let him remain [or, ‘abide’] with God.”** The word **‘abide’** simply means ‘to dwell, remain.’

God began to reassure me that I was not in a bad place at all! I had not lost my identity. My identity was still **“in Christ.”** I was still the same child of God. I was still the same servant of the Most High God. I was still a disciple and follower of Jesus Christ. I was still loved by God and by my Savior and Lord Jesus Christ. All that had changed was my practical activities and ministry roles.

So, during that time, God began impressing me that He had brought all these changes into my life and ministry because He wanted me more for Himself. He wanted me to spend more undistracted time and attention on seeking Him and delighting in Him. He wanted

me to focus on and cultivate more my relationship with Him. If I was going to ‘follow’ Him, He would lead me to more ‘**abide**’ in Him.

John 15 began to reverberate in my soul:

<sup>4</sup>**Abide** in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it **abides** in the vine, neither can you, unless you **abide** in me. <sup>5</sup>I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever **abides** in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup>If anyone does not **abide** in me, he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. <sup>7</sup>If you **abide** in me, and my words **abide** in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup>By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. <sup>9</sup>As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. **Abide** in my love. <sup>10</sup>If you keep my commandments, you will **abide** in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and **abide** in his love. <sup>11</sup>These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

And so, “My One Word” for 2018 was “**ABIDE**” as in “**abide** in Christ,” “**abide** in His love,” “**abide** in the fullness of His joy.” I began to explore, express, and enjoy more my intimacy and my relationship with Christ and what it means to “**ABIDE**” in Him.

## 2019 – “CONQUER”

The more I focused on abiding in Christ, the more conscious I became of my indwelling sin. And especially all the sins of “self”: like self-will, self-love, self-ish, self-seeking, self-pleasing.

The struggles of temptation to have my own will and way and to have what I wanted to have for myself were vicious and fierce and unrelenting. The more I wanted to abide in Christ, the more my indwelling sin nature seemed to revive, rear its ugly head, and rage with desire for what it wanted. It was war. It was an internal civil war that renewed its intensity and ferocity. It was a constant battle and fight for mastery over my will. It was like I was constantly and daily living in the raging war that Paul describes in Romans 7.21-23:

<sup>21</sup> So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. <sup>22</sup> For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, <sup>23</sup> but I see in my members another law **waging war** against the law of my mind and **making me captive** to the law of sin that dwells in my members.

Peter describes this battle, this conflict, this war with this call to spiritual arms: “Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which **wage war** against your soul” [1 Peter 2.11].

And Paul describes his personal battle plan to **CONQUER** his indwelling sin in the language of destroying fortresses and strongholds and taking his every thought, feeling, and activity captive to serving Christ:

For though we walk in the flesh, we are not **waging war** according to the flesh. <sup>4</sup>For the **weapons of our warfare** are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. <sup>5</sup>We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ... [2 Corinthians 10.3-5]

I was far too often and too much being defeated, conquered, and being taken captive by my own indwelling sin. So, I resolved to “**CONQUER**” my indwelling sinful desires for my own glory, my own getting, my own gratification. I didn’t want to just struggle with my indwelling sin, which all believers do – I wanted to **CONQUER** my indwelling sin by the grace of God.

In Romans, chapter 6, leading up to the inner struggles and warfare against indwelling sin that he describes in chapter 7, Paul makes this victory proclamation in Romans 6.12-14:

<sup>12</sup> *Let not sin therefore reign* in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. <sup>13</sup> Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. <sup>14</sup> *For sin will have no dominion over you*, since you are not under law but under grace. [my emphases added]

When Paul says, “*Let not sin therefore reign* in your mortal body,” he is saying ‘**CONQUER** your sin, don’t let it **CONQUER** you.’ When he says, “*For sin will have no dominion over you*, since you are not under law but under grace,” he is saying ‘**CONQUER** your sin through the life and power of God’s saving grace because God’s grace will not allow your sin to **CONQUER** or have dominion over you.’

Now, the way I came up with “My One Word” **CONQUER** is actually by creating an acrostic. You can say I cheated on “My One Word” if you want to, but I also adopted seven other key words for every letter of the one-word **CONQUER**.

So, Here’s how I resolved to **CONQUER** my indwelling sin:

- ▶ **C**ommit to loving God with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength – make God Himself the supreme and chief love and desire of my life
- ▶ **O**wn personal responsibility for my response to this temptation
- ▶ **N**avigate my desires away from the temptation and seek the Face and pleasure of God
- ▶ **Q**uestion the source and nature of every desire and temptation – where is it coming from? from the Father? or from the flesh?

- ▶ **U**nite all the strength and desires of my love and will to seek God and His pleasure [Psalm 86.11]
- ▶ **E**mploy all the means of grace God has made available to me: the Holy Spirit, the Word, prayer, obedience, fellowship with the saints, accountability – and most of all, confession of my sins
- ▶ **R**eceive and **R**ejoice in the promised resolve, life, strength, and desire of the Holy Spirit to choose to love Christ ... and Receive and Rejoice in His forgiveness when I do fail

## 2020 – “Conquer / LOVE”

Some years – or however long a season you choose to live by your “My One Word” – you may choose to adopt and live by the same “One Word.” Just carry it over and carry it on until you believe it has worked its intended grace and growth in your life.

I did that in 2020, last year. I retained the “My One Word” “CONQUER,” but I added a companion “My One Word” to give it a sharper, more intensified focus and application: **“LOVE”** ... just the simple, bottom-line, first-commandment, root-of-all-things **“LOVE.”**

Actually, **“LOVE”** is the keyword to the “C” in “CONQUER.” The “C” in “CONQUER” is “I **C**ommit to **loving** God with ALL MY HEART AND DESIRES ... I **C**ommit to purity and holiness and pleasing Christ...” That, of course, comes from the First and Greatest Commandment of all in Deuteronomy 6.4-5:

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall **love** the LORD your God with ALL your heart and with ALL your soul and with ALL your might” [my emphases added].

And Jesus repeatedly confirmed the primacy and first priority of **LOVE** in His teaching and preaching.

When I adopted ‘CONQUER’ as “My One Word” in 2019, I knew that **LOVE** is at the root of all my sin, and so it will also be at the root of all my conquering my sin. You say: “How can love be at the root of all sin?” Well, it’s because all my sin traces its root and origin and birth back to what I choose to love. All of my sin and all my temptations to sin are born in the womb of my desires and what I want. And I want and desire what I love.

All of my temptations to sin are just solicitations and opportunities that are presented to me by the Tempter to indulge in some illicit and fleshly desire that my indwelling sin nature loves and wants.

In my struggles and fight to CONQUER my indwelling sin, I repeatedly traced it back to what I was wanting, what I was loving. James does his spiritual forensics on our temptations and sin when he diagnoses it this way:

“But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by *his own desire*. Then *desire* when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.” ~James 1.14-15, my emphases added

When Paul describes his own personal inner spiritual struggles and warfare with his indwelling sin in Romans, chapter 7, he repeatedly describes it in terms of “what I want” and “I have the desire.” It’s our dueling desires, the constantly raging war of opposing loves. He even says that the cardinal sin that woke him up to his wretchedness and extreme sinfulness before God and “slew” him was the sin of covetousness! What is covetousness? And what makes covetousness so bad? Covetousness is our love, desires, and lusts which are perverted, and mis-guided toward and mis-placed upon the wrong objects of desire. We love what we’re not supposed to love. We don’t love what we are commanded to love.

So I find it to be a law that *when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand*.<sup>22</sup> For *I delight in the law of God, in my inner being*,<sup>23</sup> but *I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members*.<sup>24</sup> Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?<sup>25</sup> Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin. ~Romans 7.21-25, my emphases added

Do you see the war of competing loves, conflicting loves, adversarial loves fighting against each other in our inner souls and desires?

The apostle John starts off 1 John, chapter 2 with “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.” So, what instructions does he give us when he teaches us how we may not sin? He commands us to regulate our lives and conquer our sins by choosing Whom we love:

“**Do not love** the world or the things that are in the world. If anyone *loves* the world, the *love of the Father* is not in him. For all that is the world – the *desires* of the flesh and the *desires* of the eyes and *pride* of life – is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its *desires*, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.” ~1 John 2.15-17, my emphases added

By the way, it was from this Scripture that I framed the “Q” in “CONQUER” as “**Q**uestion the source and the nature of every desire and temptation – whether it is from The Father or from the world...”

So, that’s why, in 2020, I carried over the “My One Word” “CONQUER,” but then added the more focused “My One Word” “**LOVE.**” I adopted Deuteronomy 6.4-5 to memorize as my key Scripture to keep me focused on “My One Word”: to CONQUER my indwelling sin by LOVING the LORD my God with ALL my heart, soul, mind, and desires.

## 2021 – “Conquer / FIGHT”

So, that brings me to where we are today – the beginning of 2021. Again, I’m retaining my 2019 “One Word” for 2021, except that again, I’m extending it with another intensifier “My One Word” ... the word “**FIGHT.**”

I’m still battling and waging the ‘CONQUER’ war against my indwelling sins of ‘self’ – I’m waging that war by emphasizing and focusing on ‘LOVE’ as the primary weapon of my warfare. When I adopt and commit to practicing the “My One Word” ‘**FIGHT**’ for 2021, I am acknowledging that I am responsible to engage this war with all the weaponry and armor that God has given me by His saving grace and put at my disposal to **FIGHT** with.

In fact, this resolution “**FIGHT**” is actually already built into the “My One Word” I adopted for 2019: CONQUER. Remember that I told you that CONQUER is actually an acrostic with every letter being another resolution. So, the “O” in CONQUER is for “OWN” – “I Own personal responsibility for my response to this temptation...”

When I adopt the “My One Word” ‘**FIGHT,**’ I am acknowledging that if I CONQUER my indwelling sin with all of its illicit loves and desires, it will not happen on its own. My indwelling sin will not be conquered automatically just because I’m saved. I cannot be naïve, inattentive, lackadaisical, or passive about this inner war. Romans 7.22-23 is always raging in my members:

<sup>22</sup> For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, <sup>23</sup> but I see in my members another law *waging war* against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members.

I must FIGHT!

My indwelling sin will not be conquered without putting up its own fierce, vicious, and passionate **FIGHT** against me – even from within me; and I must **FIGHT** it back just as fiercely, just as viciously, and just as passionately in the life and power of the Holy Spirit.

I want to take the time here to tell you just how serious this FIGHT is. When Paul reminds us in Ephesians 6.12 that we do not “wrestle” [or fight] against flesh and blood, but against spiritual forces of darkness that are committed to eliminating us, the word that he uses for “wrestle” is used only this one time in the New Testament. It was a Greek contest [or ‘exercise,’ if you will] in which the fighters fought with one another until the victor, the conqueror, not only threw his opponent down, but pinned him and rendered him immobile with his own hand on his neck. In other words, the conquered opponent was rendered so weak, that his conqueror actually had his hand on his jugular vein and esophagus – he had the power of life and death in his hands over his opponent.

## THAT IS THE **FIGHT** WE ARE IN!

Paul charges Timothy in 1 Timothy 6.11-12: “But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. <sup>12</sup>**FIGHT** the good **FIGHT** of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.”

For Paul himself, that **FIGHT** was a **FIGHT** that lasted right up until the end of his life and ministry – it was one of the last testimonies that he gave before his own martyrdom: “I have **FOUGHT** the good **FIGHT**, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith” ~ 2 Timothy 4.7.

However, let me be perfectly clear about one truth: I am in no way suggesting or teaching that our **FIGHT** against our indwelling sin can be waged and won by any power or strength that is inherent in us. In all of these discussions and teachings about **CONQUERING** our indwelling sins and **FIGHTING** against it in our struggles for holiness and godliness, I have tried to always emphasize that we don’t **FIGHT** sin and temptation to sin with our own will power or resolve or by making resolutions. In fact, if there’s one lesson I have learned from a life-long war against my indwelling sin, it is that ***IT IS MY OWN WILL THAT I’M FIGHTING AGAINST!*** The only power and strength that we have to **FIGHT** and **CONQUER** our indwelling sin is by the strength and power that is given to us by the grace of God.

You will never will-power yourself to holiness. What we are talking about is becoming more and more like Jesus Christ in every way: in our values, in our attitudes, in our character, and in our conduct. And you can’t do that with any and all the energies and strengths that you possess in yourself. God will have to work in you and through you to **CONQUER** your sin. You can **FIGHT** victoriously against your sin only in the strength that God gives you by His grace through the Holy Spirit.

In that all-equipping passage in Ephesians 6 where Paul trains us in spiritual warfare, he begins his training by reminding us that the only strength and weaponry we have for our **FIGHT** against sin is “in the Lord”:

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. <sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup> 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 firm. ~Ephesians 6.10-13

And so, I am resolving to assume my personal responsibility to **FIGHT**, even while I'm trusting in and relying upon the strength and power of God to make my **FIGHT** victorious and **CONQUER** my indwelling sin. The way I commit to **FIGHT** is by **LOVING** God with all my heart and obeying every word He gives me in the Scriptures in the power of the Holy Spirit.

By the way, I have also adopted Caleb in Joshua 14 as my model, exemplar, and my encouragement to engage this on-going **FIGHT**. In Joshua 14, they are taking possession of the Promised Land that God is giving them as their inheritance. That in itself is a prequel of the life we are now living in Jesus Christ as you will discover in Hebrews 3-4. God promised them the land. God is giving it to them by driving out their enemies from before them. But they must **FIGHT** to take possession of what God promised and is giving them. God Himself is **FIGHTING** with them and for them as they **FIGHT** at his command.

So, Caleb comes to his long-time comrade and compatriot during all their years of wandering in the wilderness, and he reminds Joshua how Moses promised them that they could have the territories that they believed God would give them if only they would trust Him and obey Him to go and take it. That was 45 years ago, but now they are in.

So Caleb asks Joshua to give him an additional 'mountain' or hill country territory that still had giant warrior inhabitants still living in it, the Anakim. He knew it would be a **FIGHT**, but he was prepared to take on that **FIGHT** because he knew that God would **FIGHT** for him and with him.

And, get this – Caleb was an 85-year-old man by this time. He was no spring chicken any longer. He was no merely ambitious young whippersnapper. He was an old, seasoned, experienced saint who wasn't just out itching for a **FIGHT**, but was still willing to continue to **FIGHT** for what God had given him to have:

<sup>10</sup> And now, behold, the LORD has kept me alive, just as he said, these forty-five years since the time that the LORD spoke this word to Moses, while Israel walked in the wilderness. And now, behold, I am this day eighty-five years old. <sup>11</sup> I am still as strong today as I was in the day that Moses sent me; my strength now is as my strength was then, for war and for going and coming. <sup>12</sup> So now give me this hill country of which the LORD spoke on that day, for you heard on that day how the Anakim were there, with great fortified cities. It may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall drive them out just as the LORD said. ~Joshua 14.10-12

So, that's where I am this year. Still warring against my flesh and my indwelling sin, but still committed to **CONQUER** it by living by the supreme law of **LOVE** and being willing to engage the **FIGHT** as God gives me the strength, armor, and weaponry to **FIGHT** with.

I have been mightily helped and encouraged over the years in my struggles against sin and my aspirations for holiness by the ministry and writings of Jerry Bridges. He has written extensively on this subject especially in his books The Pursuit of Holiness, The Practice of Godliness, Holiness Day by Day [among others also...], but he wrote this little paragraph in one of his books that struck me years ago and has stuck with me as a constant motivation and inspiration to **FIGHT** against my indwelling sin:

“We Christians greatly enjoy talking about the provision of God, how Christ defeated sin on the Cross and gave us His Holy Spirit to empower us to victory over sin. But we do not as readily talk about our own responsibility to walk in holiness...We pray for victory when we should be acting in obedience.” ~Jerry Bridges [Pursuit of Holiness]

My act of obedience is to responsibly engage the FIGHT against the sin that dwells in me and CONQUER it in the strength and power of the grace of God.

OK – that is just a personal practical narrative of how this spiritual exercise of making holy resolutions has worked in my life and experience.

I hope you will join us for the next segment which will be some more teaching and examples from the Word of God to encourage us in this exercise: “Biblical authority and Precedent for and Examples of a ‘My One Word’ Resolution.”

I hope you’ll join us then also...

Here is the YouTube link to this lesson’s video:

[https://youtu.be/WrvSAI\\_QKiA](https://youtu.be/WrvSAI_QKiA) | Length 54:28