



THE
OAK
INITIATIVE®



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Peace That Prevails

By Rick Joyner

The Oak Initiative was formed when three hundred Christian leaders from over a hundred different denominations, movements, and ministries, as well as Christian leaders of business, government, the military, education, and arts and entertainment came together for three days to address the great crises of our times. It was a remarkable and possibly unprecedented gathering. The level of wisdom and insight that flowed during this meeting was remarkable, as was our prediction accurate that we were entering a time of continuous and increasing crisis. The goal of that meeting was to determine how to prepare believers for these times, and how we could become the light we are called to be in the increasing darkness. In response to this, The Oak Initiative was formed.

In the five plus years since The Oak was formed, the crises have indeed increased in both magnitude and frequency. Almost every week now, there seems to be a new, bigger, and more threatening crisis. They no longer just threaten our bank accounts; they threaten our way of life and even our lives. Our government has seemingly used each crisis to strip us of our liberty. The yoke now borne by citizens has become far heavier in the last five years. The threats and outright attacks on our basic freedoms are now constant.

Even so, there cannot be a victory without a battle, and there can be no great victories without great battles. Through all that is pressing down upon us now, there will be ultimate victory.

When Jesus was asked about the signs of the end of the age, almost every sign He spoke of was a catastrophe or disaster. Then He told us three things we need to do to confront them: 1) Stand up, 2) Look up, and 3) Rejoice! (see Luke 21:28) These we must resolve to do, and in this order.

Stand Up

To “stand up” means to refuse to be intimidated, to refuse to be ruled by fear, and thereby refuse to retreat. As Martin Luther King, Jr. said, “If a man has not discovered something that he will die for, he isn't fit to live.” Actually, only a small percentage of people have such purpose and resolve, but they are the transcendent ones who have dictated the course of history. These “stand up” people will be the ones who prevail in our times.

Some have translated the “stand up” in the Lord’s statement to “straighten up.” This is just as appropriate. If we are going to make it through the times, much less prevail in them, we must cast off the sin that has been entangling us to walk uprightly before the Lord. In Romans 14:17, we are told that the kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. The peace and the joy are the result of walking in righteousness, which is doing what is right in the sight of the Lord.

Look Up

The next thing He said to do was “look up.” To look up is to see Him, who He is and where He sits. He is above all rule and authority and dominion. His kingdom will surely come, and His will is going to be done right here on earth as it is in heaven. Whether we live to see it, or we do the work so that others can see it, to serve the King begins with seeing Him. We will always honor Him as the Lamb and will likely be thanking Him forever for the cross, but He is no longer “Jesus of Nazareth.” He is the risen Lord, the King of kings who has all power and dominion and authority. This is why looking up to see our King is what gives us our boldness.



Rejoice

Then we are told to “rejoice” because our redemption is near. As we approach the end of this age, true Christians are going to be increasingly distinguished from pseudo Christians and the heathen by their joy. This is not joy in the sufferings of others who are going through these tribulations, but it is the joy of the Lord that is greater than any trial, and the joy of the Lord is our strength. This joy will be the result of the Lord being increasingly close to His people in these times, and joy in the glory of the Lord that will be shining even brighter in the darkness.

Next Phase for The Oak

In Scripture there is a wilderness between the place of the promise and the Promised Land itself. The greater the promises, the more difficult the wilderness is you have to go through to attain them. This is God’s way of preparing His chosen ones to walk in their purpose and to be good stewards of the promises.

It is also a biblical principle that anything that happens too fast or too easily is almost always insignificant. For this reason, the wise embrace their trials to learn from and mature so as to be found trustworthy of our calling. In Scripture this is called “making your calling and election sure” (see II Peter 1:10 NKJV).

The Oak has likewise been through a long, hard wilderness. Just as Israel had some of its greatest encounters with God in the wilderness, and there laid a solid foundation for its culture and government that would serve them in the land of promise, The Oak Initiative has also experienced some remarkable things while in our wilderness. We are viewed as an organization many times our size because our impact has been so significant. We’re thankful for all that we’ve been able to accomplish, but “we have not yet begun to fight!” Now our vision and purpose is more clear than ever, and our ability to accomplish it much stronger.

The mandate of The Oak Initiative will be articulated after our upcoming Board Meeting and follow up Summit with our members. Though it may seem with crises like Ebola and ISIS growing so dramatically, seemingly by the day, that we don’t have any time to delay, what is actually needed more at this time is the wisdom and steady resolve that is founded on the “righteousness, peace and joy” that *is* the kingdom of God.

Becoming “Oaks of Righteousness”

Basic to fulfilling our purpose, we must become the “oaks of righteousness” we are called to be. We have much to do in these times, but the foundation of all “doing” in the kingdom is “becoming.”



The symbol of the oak tree is taken from the “**oaks of righteousness**” in Isaiah 61:3. The entire chapter defines our mandate as Christians, as this is the text that the Lord chose to begin His ministry with. The oak tree is a symbol of the righteous because it is so strong and steady, able to endure the crises and storms of life, due to its root system as deep and expansive below the ground as its branches are above the ground. Those with such strength and depth will not be reactionary or panicky, but steady and resolute. We do not intend to be worn out by “the tyranny of the urgent.”

One definition of “crisis” is the point in a disease when it is determined if a patient will live or die. Every crisis is an emergency, but we must respond to emergencies with a coolness that will enable us to respond properly to them. Responding in the wrong way, which we will be most prone to do if we are panicky, can multiply the danger.

As a pilot, I have faced a number of emergencies. A few were life threatening, and a couple of them were so bad it seemed unlikely that we could make it through them. In one of those, my co-pilot’s panic became more of a threat than the actual emergency. We had lost one of our two engines, and in his excitement, he almost feathered the good engine.

Obviously, I made it through these emergencies. In each of the crises I felt a great calm, which I attribute to the peace of God. The peace of God is founded on peace with God. Even if we crashed, I knew we are far more likely to survive a “controlled crash” than an uncontrolled one, so I resolved to stay in control just as much as I could. A controlled crash requires the pilot being in control, and that requires he first keep himself under control.

All Christians should have an unfair advantage in these times because of the peace of God. Love may be the most important fruit of the Spirit, but peace is the linchpin fruit of the Spirit that holds all of the others together. For example, if you lose your peace, are you going to keep your patience? If you lose your peace, will you keep your joy, etc.?

Even your love will begin to unravel if you lose your peace. For this reason, the peace of God is the taproot, or main root, of the oaks of righteousness that will cause us to stand strong in the storms of this life. For this reason, Jesus is The Prince of Peace, who will rule from Jerusalem, which means City of Peace.

The Lord of hosts, or Lord of armies, is the title most used by the Lord in Scripture. In fact, it is used for Him more than ten times as much as all of His other titles combined. Yet we are told in Romans 16:20, “**And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly**” (NKJV). It is a revelation that it is not the “Lord of armies,” but “the God of Peace” who will destroy the enemy. The peace of God is an incomprehensibly powerful weapon that no enemy can stand before. Never, ever lose your peace.

In Colossians 3:15, we are exhorted to, “**let the peace of God rule in your hearts**” (NKJV). We must resolve every day that we will not be controlled by fear, but we will walk in faith. If fear controls us, then it is our lord. We will serve no king but Jesus, and He is the Prince of Peace who will rule from the City of Peace.

Romans 10:15 declares: “**As it is written: ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!’**” (NKJV) One of the things we must continually be reminded of in these times is that our message is not one of doom, but is in fact the greatest message of hope the world has ever heard.

We are already witnessing what was prophesied in these times. Men’s hearts would fail because of the fear of what is coming upon the world. They get all of the bad news they can handle on the networks. They need a message of hope, and the greatest hope of all is that the most righteous and just King there will ever be is coming, not to take sides but to take over. His purpose is redemption, reconciliation, and restoration. He did not go to the cross so He could come back to destroy the world, but to save it. This is why we are told in Ephesians 6:15 we are to “**have shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.**”



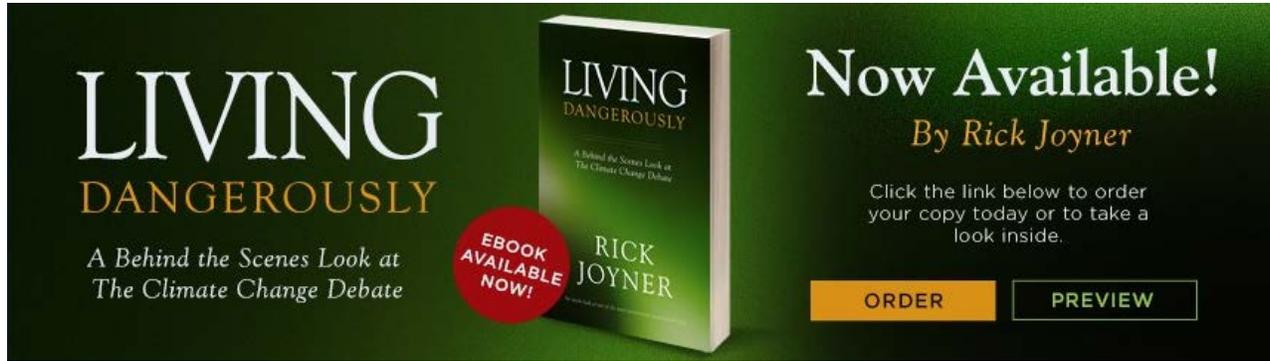
As it is written that the foundation of the kingdom is righteousness, in I Thessalonians 5:23, the apostle writes, **“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (NKJV)**. So it is the “God of peace” that sanctifies us, as is confirmed in James 3:18, **“Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace” (NKJV)**.

So let us embrace the command of Philippians 4:6-7: **“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (NKJV)**.

Thanks again for being a faithful member of The Oak Initiative. Our marching orders will soon be published, and we will be more engaged in the times than ever. Our success will be determined by who we are more than by what we do, so resolve that you will grow strong in the Lord and in His purpose for your life. His purpose will never fail.



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