

# FirstFruits Gathering At Harvest Christian Church

## Shutting the Gates of Hell August 15, 2017 Suzi Armstrong

### Colossians 3.1-2 NIV

<sup>1</sup>Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, **set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated** at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup>**Set your minds on things above**, not on earthly things.

- We have the ability to “set” our mind and heart. This is a powerful thing!
- To set your mind and heart means to have a fixed focus, to be intent on something, to have an established mind set on a matter, to know what you believe in your heart.
- How we set our mind and heart establishes our stance – how we see something and how we process what is going on in the earth and in our city.
- A mind that is not set on things above is scattered and easily influenced, open to confusion, chaos and fragmentation.
- A heart that is not set on things above is easily offended and open to discouragement and wrong influence.
- We are instructed by the Lord to set and fix our heart and mind on things ABOVE where Christ is seated, not on earthly things.

### Hebrews 12.1-2

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also **lay aside every encumbrance** and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup>**fixing our eyes on Jesus**, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

- What we look at is what influences us; it is what we think about. When we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus our heart and mind are set on things above.
- What we think about – where we set our heart and mind – governs our life and what we speak.
- Great authority comes from the place of setting our mind and heart.
- When our heart and mind are set on things above we are able to more easily lay hold of the government of God in our lives.
- It is the place of ruling and reigning with Christ on the earth and in Detroit.
- We live and speak from being above the works of the enemy and not under them.

Discouragement is a common way that Satan will try to entrap believers. Discouragement comes from expectation that was not fulfilled. The promises of God are yes and amen – meaning that those promises are a sure thing. The Lord goes on to say that His hand is not too short to accomplish. He watches over His word to perform it. We do believe this because it is in the Bible, and we believe God.



So how does discouragement come? The door to discouragement opens when our mind and heart are NOT SET on things above. We are no longer positioned to see God's hand moving. Our faith is not being strengthened by what we are looking at. Our mind and heart become inadvertently reset. Not on things above but on circumstances and obstacles. We become a prisoner of our environment and the voice of discouragement floods our soul. The voice of our soul feeds our emotions – then we start to feel specific emotions such as anger, resentment, jealousy. We feel slighted and victimized. The voice of accusation rises up, either in the form of self-accusation or blaming others.

These emotions block our view of heaven. We no longer have an unhindered connection to heaven and the power of God who says nothing is impossible with Him. Our emotions begin saying, "What happened? How did I get here?" A stronghold starts to form that blocks access to the blessings and provision of heaven.

The meaning we attach to what we see in our mind and heart feeds our emotions. It determines how we "feel" about something. It determines how we see our future. The meaning we attach to what we see either opens or closes the door to discouragement. Discouragement is a gate of hell.



#### **Proverbs 4.23** NIV

**Above all else, guard your heart,  
for everything you do flows from it.**

- Satan targets our heart. From our heart is where life flows.
- Satan wants to stop the flow of life in our heart – stopping us or at the least hindering us in living in the promises of God.

#### **Matthew 16.18** KJV

And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock **I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.**

- Doors are gates. There are many gates to hell. Discouragement is a gate of hell.
- We can close the gate of discouragement. It is a gate of hell, a place that the enemy can come into our mind and heart, controlling us by lies and distortion.

#### **Philippians 4.7-8** NIV

<sup>7</sup> And **the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds** in Christ Jesus.

<sup>8</sup> Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if **anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.**

- The peace of God will guard your heart and your mind.
  - Guard means that heart and mind will be protected through the peace of God.
- Set your mind and heart on things above. Think about and look at what is truth, what is right. How does this look and work in God's kingdom.



### Colossians 3.15

**Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,** to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.

- The peace of God guards or establishes a guard of protection over your heart and mind.
- The key is in the word "rule".
  - The word rule means arbiter or umpire.
  - Let the peace of God rule what is going on in your heart and your mind. An umpire calls what is fair and what is foul.
  - When the peace of God is in your heart you will not be troubled. Hell will not have access to your mind or heart.
  - When you are troubled in your heart, exam your focus and the meaning you are attaching to your focus. Has your focus shifted to a natural earthly explanation of what is going on? Are you attaching meaning such as this will never happen, I am not able, it is too hard, it is not my fault? This is a gate of hell. We can shut the gates of hell because Jesus took the keys!
  - Set your heart and mind on things above!

### John 14.1

Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.

- John 14.1 reworded:
  - Do not let your focus be controlled by the environment. Do not allow the gates of hell to be formed over your mind and heart. You determine your focus by the meaning you attach to what is going on. Define your circumstances by setting your mind and heart on what is above, shutting tight the gates of hell that want to prevail against you.
  - The meaning you attach to your circumstances feeds your emotions.
  - Your emotions will be fed by the truth or by the lie – where are you looking?
  - You have the ability to refocus and attach meaning.
  - When your focus is set on things above you will feel righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.
  - Our emotions are to be anchored in truth so that our feelings are not subject to the gates of hell.
  - Joy and peace are emotions that are anchored in the kingdom of God. Even in tribulation our emotions can be joy and peace because our heart and mind are set on things above. We see God. We here clearly His voice. We are able to fully enter worship. We have hearts that are thankful and filled with hope.
  - Righteousness is a conscious understanding and knowing that we are not under condemnation because we are in Christ Jesus. This shuts the gates of hell!

### Psalm 127.3-5 Suzi version

Sons are a heritage of God...they are like arrows in a warrior's hands...Sons will not be put to shame when they contend with the enemy at the gate...they will shut the gates of hell.

- How do we contend at the gate? By using the word of God to rule or umpire every thought, guarding our heart and letting the peace of God permeate our being.
- When we set our mind and heart on the things above and not on earthly things, then we know what to bind and loose according to what is in heaven – bringing every thought captive so we do not become captive to the gates of hell.
- This is a divine strategy and an equipping that shatters strongholds where the gates of hell are open into our thoughts, feelings and emotions.

When the gates of hell are shut in us, we can in turn shut the gates of hell in our city and in our nation. Stand firm and strong in the place of the peace of God ruling (umpiring) our focus and the meaning we give to what we see. We determine what gets our attention and what kind of attention by the meaning we attach. We become strong in faith. We are then strong in our spirit man and in spiritual stature when we feed our spirit revelation knowledge and bring every thought into the obedience of Christ. Set your mind and heart on things above.

