

History and the Healing of the Nations



...On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

Rev 22:2 NIV

Reconciliation Press





History and the Healing of the Nations
www.reconciliation.com
publisher@reconciliation.com

Copyright © 2002 Mark W. Weaver and John Jenkins

Published by Reconciliation Press
10925 Milburn Street
Fairfax, VA 22030

All Rights Reserved. Written permission must be obtained from the publisher before any portion of this book may be legally duplicated in any form, except as allowed by the Copyright Act of 1976 (Title 17, U.S. Code). Such permission is not required when quoting brief portions of this book within critical essays, articles or reviews, if standard bibliographic credits pertaining to this book are therein displayed.

Printed & bound by Reconciliation Press.

Table of Contents

	Page No.
The Purpose of this Publication	4
How to Use These Materials	4
Section 1: Tools for Understanding History	5
♦ Matrix, Mindset, and Worldview	6
♦ The Christian's Belief System	7
♦ Flow Chart – The Forces of History	8
♦ Relating to History	9
♦ Musings on the Mind	10
♦ Extracting Wisdom from History	11
♦ God's Sovereignty over the Nations	12
Section 2: Learning Through Music	13
The Covenant and the Dance of Nations	
♦ Healing a Wounded and Divided Nation	14
♦ Quotes on Learning Through History	15
♦ A Musical Journey Into God	16
♦ That the World May Know	17
♦ Part I: Reexamination	18
• Reexamining Our Past	18
• Song No. 1: The Truth	20
• Song No. 2: Dance of Nations	22
• Song No. 3: The Dawn	24
• Song No. 4: The Dream	26
• Song No. 5: The Breach	28
• Song No. 6: The Divide	30
• Song No. 7: The Ruin	32
• Song No. 8: The Hope	34
♦ Part II: Reconciliation	36
• Reconciling Our Hearts	36
• Song No. 9: The Call	38
• Song No. 10: The Way	40
• Song No. 11: Holy God	42
♦ Kick These Ideas Around	44
Section 3: The Road to Healing our Nation	45
♦ Three Steps to Healing	46
• Step 1: Reexamination	47
• Step 2: Reconciliation	48
• Step 3: Rehabilitation	49
♦ Character Traits of a Reconciler	50
♦ Becoming a Reconciler	51
Acknowledgments	52

The Purpose of this Publication

History and the Healing of the Nations

This publication is provided to help teachers and students think critically about history and history's impact upon current and future generations. Through written materials and accompanying music, readers will be challenged to humbly **reexamine** our nation's history and our individual hearts. In addition, these materials are provided to inspire us to work to **reconcile** the long standing wounds which have divided the Church and our nation.

Both **reexamination** and **reconciliation** are initiated with the prefix *re*. *Re* means again. Reexamination means to examine again, suggesting a need to review the facts to obtain a clearer understanding. The word reconciliation is built from the prefix *re* and the

word *conciliation*. Conciliation means to try to regain, or gain again, friendship or goodwill. Reconciliation implies multiple efforts at restoring a broken relationship.

The scriptures call for Christians to be actively involved in both reexamination and reconciliation. As noted in 2 Cor. 5:19, the nature of the gospel is the ministry of reconciliation.

In these pages, and through the accompanying music, we will peel back layers of American history and expose the core values, good and evil, which shape our culture today.

The ideas presented here will challenge most students. Take on this project with soberness and prayer.

We hope to peel back the layers of our nation's own history and expose the core values, good and evil, which shape our culture today.

How to Use These Materials

The materials in *History and the Healing of the Nations* are divided into three sections.

Section 1 is offered primarily to activate the student's muse. Peruse these pages at your leisure and contemplate how our ideas about history shape our larger view of the world in which we live today. The scriptures remind us: "Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did." (I Cor. 10:6) If you feel comfortable handling history, you may wish to go directly to Section 2. (Pages 5-12)

Section 2 requires listening to the accompanying *The Covenant and the Dance of Nations* CD. We recommend that you listen to the entire CD once through to become acclimated to the music, then go back through the songs one at a time and work through the study guide material. (Pages 13-44)

Section 3 challenges us to become actively involved in the process of reconciliation, first by examining our own lives and attitudes and secondly by becoming engaged in new relationships. (Pages 45-52)

Section 1:

Tools for Understanding History

What's in This Section?

Pages 6-12 provide the student with some basic tools to aid in understanding history and the study of history.

- ◆ **Matrix, Mindset, and Worldview.** From what sources do your thoughts and views originate? The way that we think and the reasons we think the way we do are critical to clear-headed understanding. (Page 6)
- ◆ **The Christian's Belief System.** What grids or filters do you sift your ideas through? (Page 7)
- ◆ **The Forces of History.** History is propelled forward by people with ideas. (Page 8)
- ◆ **Relating to History.** Do you view your generation as the "end all and be all" of history? What can we learn from the past? (Page 9)
- ◆ **Musings on the Mind.** A collection of random thoughts from a variety of sources about the importance of the mind. (Page 10)
- ◆ **Extracting Wisdom from History.** How do you learn most effectively? Some basic tools and ideas for learning. (Page 11)
- ◆ **God's Sovereignty over the Nations.** Do time and history move forward independently of God and His purposes? A few scriptures about the sovereignty of God to consider. (Page 12)

Matrix, Mindset, and Worldview

Matrix

Ma*trix (noun), plural ma*tri*ces or ma*trix*es

The word matrix first appeared in 1555 [Latin, female animal used for breeding, parent plant, from matr-, mater] WOMB

1. something within or from which something else originates, develops, or takes form

Source: Merriam Webster Dictionary

Our life views, our views of history, spring from an ideological framework or matrix.

I·de·o·log·i·cal (adj) concerned with or suggestive of ideas;

"an ideological argument"; ideological application of a theory"; "the drama's symbolism was very ideological"

Source: WordNet ® 1.6, © 1997 Princeton University

Another way of defining the word matrix is to liken it to a womb, a place where something is formed, nurtured and given life.

What is the ideological matrix, the collection of ideas, or the "womb" from which you spring? Listed below are some examples of Biblical Matrix Points. Do you believe in:

- The Inerrancy of Scripture?
- A Creational View of Earth's Origins?
- The Trinitarian Nature of God?
- The Moral Depravity of the Human Race?
- The Covenantal and Sacrificial Love of God?
- The Providential Sovereignty of God?
- The Holiness and Perfections of God?

When you read and study history, it is important to do so from a Biblical frame of reference or matrix.

Mindset

Mind-set (noun)

The word first appeared in 1926 and speaks of:

1. a mental attitude or inclination
2. a fixed state of mind

Source: Merriam Webster Dictionary

The Greek word for mind-set is phronema (pronounced fron'-ay-mah). Here is a scripture where that word is used.

*For the **mind set** on the flesh is death, but the **mind set** on the Spirit is life and peace, because the **mind set** on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so,*

Romans 8:6-7 (NAS)

What are the origins of our mind-set? Can our minds be re-set? Here are some common mindsets:

- Racial, ethnic, and national prejudices
- Political views
- Theological bents

Were you raised in a part of the country that fostered a prejudice toward people who looked differently than you? Did you grow up in a family that supported a political party or held to a particular set of political viewpoints? Were you raised in a particular denomination that held on to certain pet doctrines or theological ideas?

Worldview

Worldview: a set of presuppositions (or assumptions) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously) about the basic makeup of our world."

James W. Sire,
The Universe Next Door
(Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1988), 17.

"A worldview is, first of all, an explanation and interpretation of the world and second, an application of this view to life. In simpler terms, our worldview is a view of the world and a view for the world."

W. Gary Phillips and William E. Brown,
Making Sense of Your World
(Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 29.

Why do we need a worldview?

- to bring unity to our thoughts and our lives
- to find hope and meaning for life
- to guide our actions

Adapted from: Arthur F. Holmes,
Contours of a World View
(Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 5

Listed below are six telling questions that will help us to understand our own personal worldview:

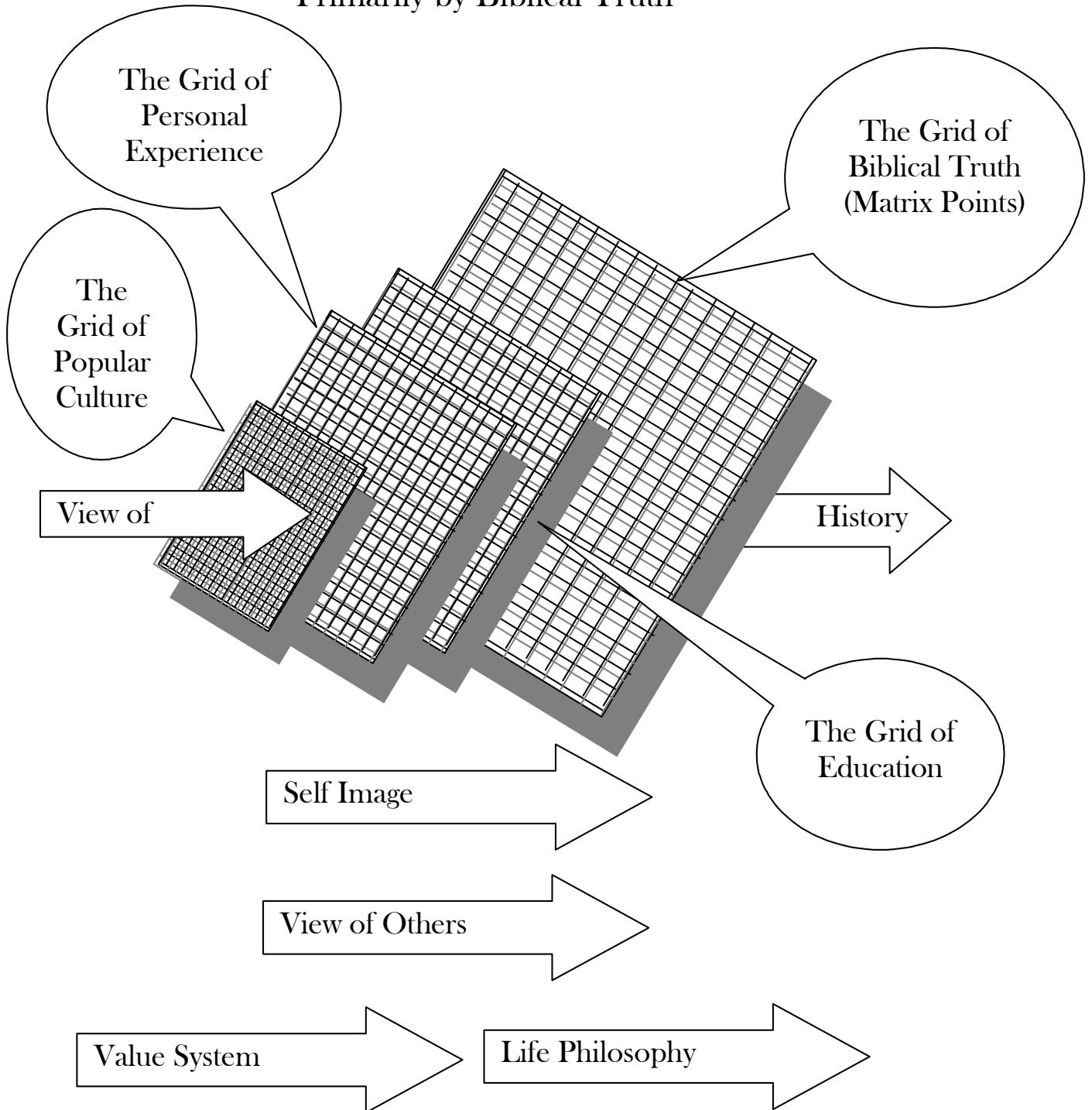
- Why is there something rather than nothing?
- How do you explain human nature?
- What happens to a person at death?
- How do you determine what is right and wrong?
- How do you know that you know?
- What is the meaning of history?

Source: James W. Sire

What kinds of  grids do you use to filter your views of history?

The Christian's Belief System And our View of History

The Christian's Belief System Should be Shaped Primarily by Biblical Truth



The Forces of History

Ideas are, in truth, forces. Infinite, too, is the power of personality. A union of the two always makes history.
--Henry James

The
Quest
for
Power

The
Quest
for
Wealth

Negative Motivations =
Negative Forces
Propelling History

Ideas, Mingled with Motivated People,
Propel History Forward

Positive Motivations =
Positive Forces
Propelling History

The
Quest
for
Know-
ledge

The
Quest
for a
Better
Life

By Reading, Studying,
Musing, Writing, and
Speaking, we can Extract
Wisdom from History

Learning = Extracting Wisdom from Stories of the Past

Relating to History

Every generation makes the mistake of thinking that history begins and ends with them. Where does your understanding of history begin?

Although the Jews of Jesus' time did not recognize the Messiah when He arrived, most had a fairly good understanding of their nation's history. Every Jew knew the stories of Abraham, Moses, and King David. Most Jews had a knowledge of the scriptures and knew that Israel was a special people, chosen by God.

In contrast, the Greeks in Athens suffered from disconnectedness. In spite of their own rich history in philosophy and government, they found themselves clueless when it came to God. They even erected a statue to an "unknown God" on Mars Hill, the center of their community.

When we come to Christ, we begin to relate to history differently. We become familiar with the significant events surrounding Christ's life and ministry. As we mature, we learn more about God from the Old Testament.

Where do you begin to relate to history?

† Are we like the Jews?

On the day of Pentecost, Peter stood up and spoke to his fellow Jews:

For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is {only} the third hour of the day; but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel:

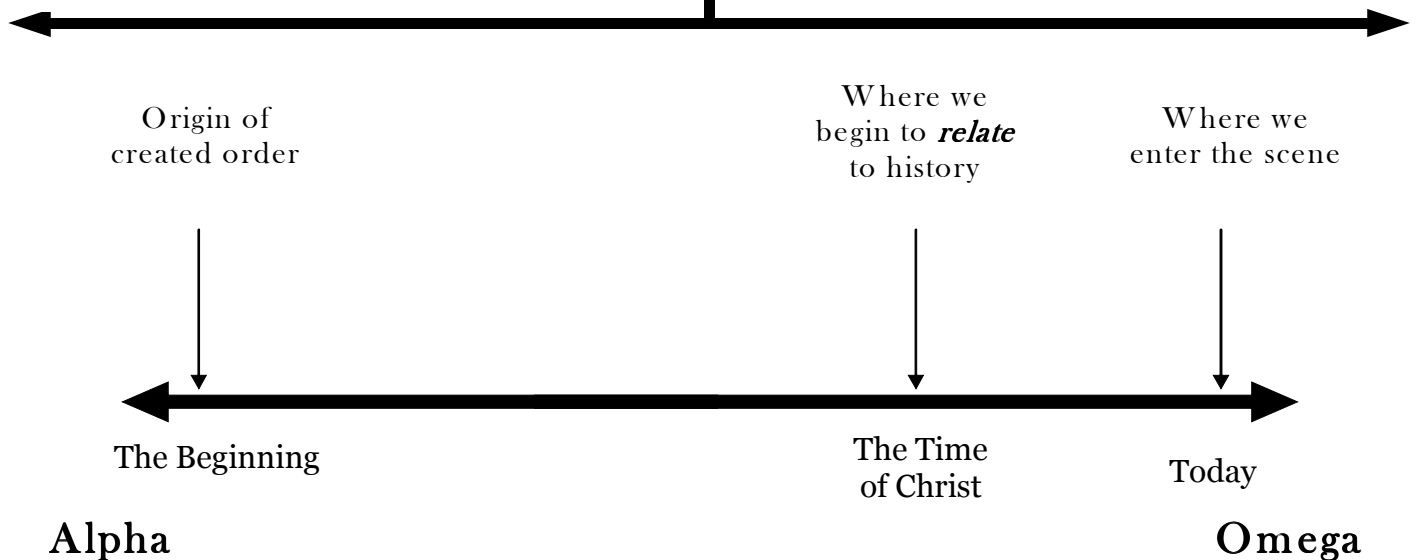
Acts 2:15-16 (NAS)

† Or are we like the Gentiles?

While in Athens, at Mars Hill, Paul spoke of the unknown God:

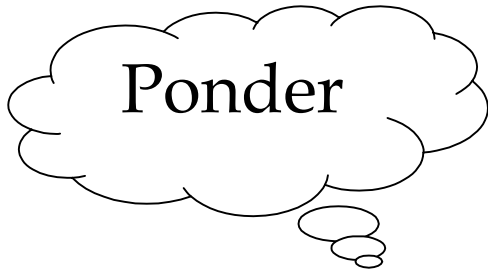
"For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you.

Acts 17:23 (NAS)



History is Linear

Musings on the Mind

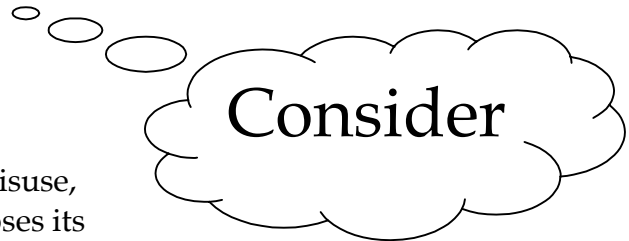


A man's mind stretched by a new idea can never go back to its original dimensions.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.

"A man who does not think for himself does not think at all."

Oscar Wilde



Iron rusts from disuse, stagnant water loses its purity and in cold weather becomes frozen; even so does inaction sap the vigors of the mind.

Leonardo Da Vinci

The mind is not a vessel to be filled but a fire to be kindled.

Plutarch



The empires of the future are the empires of the mind.

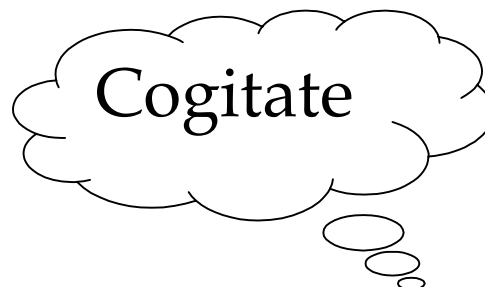
Winston Churchill

Just as our eyes need light in order to see, our minds need ideas in order to conceive.

Napoleon Hill

The primary sign of a well-ordered mind is a man's ability to remain in one place and linger in his own company.

Seneca



Extracting Wisdom from History

The Traditional Way to Learn About History

1. Develop a personal framework, a grid of discernment, based upon a carefully thought out, well defined system of values. (We suggest the Bible)
2. Read the stories of history. Read them as stories of impassioned, motivated people – not as facts, figures, and dates.
3. Weigh the ideas and motivations of history's characters and stories against your carefully developed, personal framework.
4. Write or speak about your new insights.



Non-Traditional Ways to Learn About History (Alternate Learning Styles)



Hands On

- ◆ Museums
- ◆ Living History Exhibits
- ◆ Special Event Reenactments
- ◆ Visit Historical Sites

Auditory

- ◆ Recorded History
- ◆ Songs from the Past
- ◆ Songs About the Past

Visual

- ◆ Live Theatrical Productions
- ◆ Film & Video
- ◆ Art
- ◆ Photography



God's Sovereignty over the Nations

Take time to read, ponder, and prayerfully reflect upon the passages below as you consider God's sovereignty over the nations.

God favors some nations over others. And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.
(Genesis 25:23)

God rejects some nations. For I will cast out the nations before thee, and enlarge thy borders: neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the LORD thy God thrice in the year.
(Exodus 34:24)

Nations have manners and customs. And ye shall not walk in the manners of the nation, which I cast out before you: for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred them.
(Leviticus 20:23)

God divides the nations. Or hath God assayed to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?
(Deuteronomy 4:34)

God judges the nations. Let me alone, that I may destroy them, and blot out their name from under heaven: and I will make of thee a nation mightier and greater than they.
(Deuteronomy 9:14)

God divides the nations. Moreover thou gavest them kingdoms and nations, and didst divide them into corners: so they possessed the land of Sihon, and the land of the king of Heshbon, and the land of Og king of Bashan.
(Nehemiah 9:22)

Nations conspire with one another to do evil. They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.
(Psalms 83:4)

God rebukes the nations. They flee and are chased. The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters: but God shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a rolling thing before the whirlwind.
(Isaiah 17:13)

Nations can be keepers of the truth. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.
(Isaiah 26:2)

God directs vain nations into error. And his breath, as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity: and there shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing them to err.
(Isaiah 30:28)

Section 2: Learning Through Music



What's in This Section?

Pages 14-44 constitute the primary learning material in the *History and the Healing of the Nations* package. In this section, we will use eight songs to take us on a musical journey, essentially transporting us back in time, followed by three songs to properly focus us in the present. Read the introductory materials, then begin listening to the CD.

- ◆ **Healing the Nation.** First, we will set the stage for our musical journey. Is our nation truly divided? If so, why? What role has the Church played, if any, in this division? How can the Church speak with credibility when it, too, is divided? (Pages 14-17)
- ◆ **Part I: Reexamination.** Our journey begins with eight songs, ordered chronologically, for a brief yet ponderous visit into the past. Words to the songs are on the left-hand page, study materials are on the right. (Pages 18-35)
- ◆ **Part II: Reconciliation.** Our journey concludes with three songs leading us into the presence of God. As before, words to the songs are on the left-hand page, study materials are on the right. (Pages 36-43)
- ◆ **Ideas for Consideration.** A table with some thoughts about the Church and American history for your ponderance and reflection. (Page 44)

Healing a Wounded and Divided Nation

If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

Mark 3:24

From the dawn of our nation's Christian beginnings to the unfolding of the Founding Fathers' vision in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, our desire to be *One Nation Under God* could not be reconciled with a deep rooted and tragic self interest.

God's Word and the liberating truth that "all men are created equal" competed with *Manifest Destiny* for a place in our nation's hearts. The hunger for land and gold would ultimately win out, sweeping westward all the way to the Pacific Ocean.

The 200 year old subjugation of races of color grew into sectional and political divisions that violently separated us North and South. And as the nation divided, so did denominations and churches.

Jesus said that a house divided cannot stand. Within just four years, over 600,000 men died

and hundreds of thousands more were crippled and scarred for life. And despite the final laying down of arms in 1865, our nation's hearts were still not healed of the self interest that divides.

One hundred years would pass, but conflicts over freedom, race and prejudice remained divisive and unresolved. The turbulence of the 1960s reminded us that many still yearned to experience the biblical truth that all men were created equal.

Now, thirty years later, our generation is experiencing fresh and healing winds of racial reconciliation. The Church has awakened to her role as reconciler.

The Covenant and the Dance of Nations is a musical journey that encourages Christians to reexamine their past, humble their hearts and answer God's call for reconciliation.

Quotes on Learning through History

“Histories make men wise; poets, witty; the mathematics, subtle; natural philosophy, deep; moral, grave; logic and rhetoric, able to contend.”

Francis Bacon, 1561-1626,
English philosopher, essayist, and statesman

“Since history has no properly scientific value, its only purpose is educative. And if historians neglect to educate the public, if they fail to interest it intelligently in the past, then all their historical learning is valueless except in so far as it educates themselves.”

George M. Trevelyan, 1876-1962, British historian

“The charm of history and its enigmatic lesson consist in the fact that, from age to age, nothing changes and yet everything is completely different.”

Aldous Huxley, 1894-1963, British writer, "The Devils of Loudun"

“What experience and history teach is this—that people and governments never have learned anything from history, or acted on principles deduced from it.”

Georg Hegel, 1770-1831, German philosopher

“The study of history is the best medicine for a sick mind; for in history you have a record of the infinite variety of human experience plainly set out for all to see; and in that record you can find yourself and your country both examples and warnings; fine things to take as models, base things rotten through and through, to avoid.”

Livy, 59 B.C.E.-C.E.17, Roman historian

“History is *for* human self-knowledge. Knowing yourself means knowing, first, what it is to be a person; secondly, knowing what it is to be the kind of person you are; and thirdly, knowing what it is to be the person *you* are and nobody else is. Knowing yourself means knowing what you can do; and since nobody knows what they can do until they try, the only clue to what man can do is what man has done. The value of history, then, is that it teaches us what man has done and thus what man is.”

Robin G. Collingwood, 1889-1943, British philosopher

A Musical Journey into God

Like a man, our nation has strayed from God's path.

Like a man, our nation needs renewal. And like a man, our nation must repent to bring about that renewal.

Within the four short years of the Civil War, over 600,000 men died and hundreds of thousands more were crippled and scarred for life.

History is a drama and God is the playwright. Nations are like men, dancing with one another across the stage of time. Man's role in history is to journey into the purposes of God.

While eastern religions view time as cyclical, Christians believe that history is progressive, moving toward a goal. The Bible is the story of God and his people on a journey toward a destiny which he has ordained. Genesis is the book of beginnings; Revelation reveals things to come.

Jesus is called the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. In between, men and nations wrestle with each other and with God. If only men could see that Jesus is the Lord over *all* of history.

The Covenant and the Dance of Nations, is the story of a nation's growing up into God. Though the history of the United States is only five hundred years old, millions upon millions of immigrants have journeyed to America's shores in search of a fresh start and a better life.

Our nation is radically different from all other nations. The United States consists of a multitude of people groups from nations all around the world. And within these diverse nationalities are members from yet another nation, a holy nation, a nation belonging to God—the Church, the Body of Christ. (1 Pet. 2:9)

The story of the American nation is but one more installment in the history of men and God. However, since its beginning nearly four hundred years ago, our nation, like a man, has struggled

with sin. Like all nations, we have been engaged in a bitter war between the flesh and the Spirit. Our journey through history is a tangled, two-fold cord of good and evil.

Our nation is much like a man. We had a moment of conception, a time when the seed of lasting freedom was but a vision yet to be realized. After 150 years of gestation the nation experienced birth. Through the years, our nation has struggled to choose its course. Like a man, our nation has strayed from God's path. Like a man, our nation needs renewal. And like a man, our nation must repent to bring about that renewal.

Whatever is has already been, and what will be has been before; and God will call the past to account.
(Eccl. 3:15 NIV)

The Covenant and the Dance of Nations explores this biblical theme of history repeating itself and God's concern for the past. The listener is encouraged to keep this booklet in hand and contemplate the historical themes woven into the music. The first seven songs reexamine our nation's history. The last three songs speak of God's call for reconciliation.

We hope that God will use *The Covenant and the Dance of Nations* to foster within every listener a desire to learn more about our past and the things which still hinder us. May God challenge each of us to consider what steps we can personally take toward healing the long standing wounds which still divide our nation and the Church.

That the World May Know

I pray father, that they may be one even as you and I are one **that the world may know** that you have sent me.

John 17:21

God's people are coming together. Christians of different races and denominations are allowing God to tear down the barriers that have long divided us. Many have fresh hope that Christ's prayer will be fulfilled in our generation. This is the spirit in which *The Covenant and the Dance of Nations* is offered.

The core tenets of our common Christian faith bind us together — one body, one Spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all. (Eph 4:4-6) But the varied expressions around the core reflect God's unique work within each of us. We are finally learning to celebrate rather than despise our differences.

One key to the Church's emerging unity is the celebration of our spiritual common ground despite our cultural or denominational diversities.

Few deny that the most racially segregated hour of the week is 11:00 a.m. on Sunday. Taking this cultural truism head-on, thirty three churches in Prince William County, Virginia, recently canceled their regular Sunday morning services. Over 4,000 people attended the event which planners labeled *A Taste of Heaven*.. Sharing communion were a diverse group of Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Episcopalians and many others including five African American congregations.

Fundamental to God's call for unity in the Church is racial reconciliation, a movement that is bringing people together nationwide. *Breaking Down Walls*, a book recently published by Moody Press, illumi-

nates the challenges of two men, one black and one white, serving Christ together in inner city Chicago. *He's My Brother*, written by a former member of the KKK, unfolds an account of the author's KKK activities and his subsequent conversion to Christianity. The author now pastors a racially mixed church in inner city Washington, DC. *Promise Keepers*, the national Christian men's movement has, as one of its key tenets, a call to racial reconciliation. Add to this list the work of the *Reconciliation Coalition* in Colorado with its focus on healing the deep wounds of the native American community. There are many others.

Like Jesus, God wants our love for others to be greater than our concern for our own reputation.

Even as a sinless Christ identified himself with *our sin*, so Christ calls us to identify with and repent of *those sins of our forefathers* which have alienated people within our own nation and Church.

For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Cor 5:21)

God is cultivating a deep humility within his saints. Choosing to love others more than we love our own reputation breaks down walls and gives those distanced from God and others opportunity to receive forgiveness and to forgive. Through forgiveness, relationships are restored and Jesus' desire for oneness in his Church is more fully realized.

Choosing to love others more than we love our own reputation breaks down walls and gives those distanced from God and others opportunity to receive forgiveness and to forgive.

Few deny that the most racially segregated hour of the week is 11:00 a.m. on Sunday morning.

Part I: Reexamination

Reexamining Our Past

Reexamination means to examine again. Scripture is clear that the past repeats itself. (Eccl. 1:9-10) Scripture is equally clear that "God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil." (Eccl. 12:14 NIV)

We need the Holy Spirit to aid us in reexamining the history of our nation and the Church. When we look back in the light of truth, we discover that there are no convenient villains.

Reexamining the links between past and present furnishes fresh insight into our nation's and the Church's current state of affairs. Historically, reexaminations have preceded revivals. Why? Because honest reexaminations of the past bring humility. God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. (1 Pet. 5:5-6)

Pride tempts every generation to think of themselves as superior to their predecessors. Forgetfulness tempts

every generation to lose perspective about the truth. Our selective memories, chosen and learned, can blind us to the reality of what really happened--good and bad.

History is full of heroes and villains. Through careful study, one discovers that these heroes and villains do not always fit the stereotypes our memories hold. What we do discover is that those who shaped the history of our nation and Church were part of a two-fold cord of good and evil.

☒ Two-Fold Cord ☒

As you listen to the following eight songs and read the adjoining pages, please re-examine history with us. In the song descriptions which follow, the above symbol highlights the two-fold cord woven into our nation's past.

What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun.
Ecclesiastes 1:9

"The study of history is the best medicine for a sick mind; for in history you have a record of the infinite variety of human experience plainly set out for all to see; and in that record you can find yourself and your country both examples and warnings; fine things to take as models, base things rotten through and through, to avoid."

Livy



Songs to Help us Reexamine our Nation's Past

1. THE TRUTH: A modern day bard reflects upon his parents' view of history, and questions how darkness came into his world.

2. DANCE OF NATIONS: North America, a continent of hope and promise, also holds many unknowns for those brave souls who venture across the sea in search of a new life.

3. THE DAWN: A husband and wife, standing on the bow of the Mayflower, consider their future and the sovereign hand of God in this new land that will soon be their home.

4. THE DREAM: Two men, a patriot and a slave, contemplate freedom and its meaning for a new nation born.

5. THE BREACH: In spite of the great hope and promise of our new nation, darkness entered our land through a tear in the fabric of our culture.

6. THE DIVIDE: On the brink of Civil War, one man, John Brown, epitomized the divide in a Church that could not hold the nation together.

7. THE RUIN: North and South collide and 600,000 men lose their lives in a bloody war over states' rights, slavery, and the preservation of the Union.

8. THE HOPE: A husband and wife ponder the words of Abraham Lincoln and the sacrifice of 50,000 lives on the battlefields of Gettysburg.

Song No. 1: The Truth

❖ Two-Fold Cord: God's View or Our View? ❖

Truth seekers are rare. We want the truth because it sets us free. But often, the truth is elusive, hiding in the shadows of our past. Truth often comes with a steep price, keeping true seekers a small minority.

Like every nation, ours has a history. Some elements of our past are praiseworthy. Other elements are not.

As Christians, we are engaged in a struggle over how our nation's history will be remembered. The freedoms we enjoy are protected by a Constitution and a form of government created by our nation's founders. For generations, America's school children studied about those whose ideas and sacrifices brought our nation into existence.

But a careful study of history shows that even our founders had flaws. While promoting that all men were "created equal," some of them kept slaves.

History has always been a mixture of good and evil. Often, we see both at work in the same individual at the same time.

Some American Christians are reluctant to see the dark side of our nation's history. We hold our historical heroes in high esteem and struggle to accept their weaknesses. But can we truly be a free people

without facing the whole truth?

So very difficult a matter is it to trace and find out the truth of anything by history.

Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*

You shall know
the truth and the
truth shall set
you free.
(John 8:32)



Mama and Daddy didn't tell me
Cause Mama and Daddy didn't know
That the way out of the darkness
Was a long, long way to go.
Mama and daddy couldn't help me
Cause Mama and Daddy couldn't see
That the root of sin in their heart of hearts
Was the root inside of me.

It is not that hard to explain
It's not hard to understand
I will make it simple and plain
How darkness took over our land

Trace back through six lifetimes
You will see a different sight
You will see a time
In which the Word of God
Burned strong and bold and bright
But a little turn here,
A little turn there
Yes a little turn every day
And after several generations
Our light just slipped away.

Jamestown and Plymouth,
Were colonies of old
Plymouth loved the Bible,
Jamestown worshipped gold
Down the years together,
First a mixture then a two-fold cord
God's truth is clear, we cannot serve
Both Mammon and the Lord

It is not that hard to explain
It's not hard to understand
I will make it simple and plain
How darkness took over our land

A little turn here, and a little turn there
Yes a little turn every day
And after several generations
The light just slipped away.

Mama and Daddy didn't tell me
Cause Mama and Daddy didn't know
That the hope they placed
In the god called Mammon
Was the wrong, wrong way to go.

The Truth: Study Guide

The Scripture: Knowing the Truth Sets us Free.

Read John 8: 32 and then read 2 Kings Chapter 22-23.

- Why did King Josiah tear his clothes when the book of the law was read to him?
- What kind of response did he demonstrate when he commissioned his priests and scribes to go and inquire of the Lord (22:12-13)?
- What did God say regarding Israel's neglect of His law (22:16-17)?
- What did God say regarding King Josiah's response to the truth (22:18-20)?
- How did Josiah respond to God's Word to him (23:1-3)?
- How did Josiah follow up on his commitment to God (23:4-24)?
- How does sin blind us to the truth? (Isaiah 6:10, John 12:40)
- How do the sins of our forefathers affect us? (see Exodus 20:4-6)

The Song: Coming to understand the Truth for Ourselves

- *"Mama and Daddy didn't know."* Sometimes our parents fail us, not because they are bad parents, but simply because they are ignorant of certain things. As much as we love our parents, we must also recognize that as we grow, we become increasingly accountable to God to know the truth for ourselves. Are you a truth seeker?
- *"A little turn here, and a little turn there, yes a little turn every day. And after several generations, our light just slipped away."* Have you ever ignored the nudgings of God? Have you noticed that each time you do, His still, small voice grows fainter and fainter?
- *"That the hope they placed in the god called Mammon, was the wrong, wrong way to go."* Have you ever placed too much of your trust in money? What other kinds of things, besides God, do you put your trust in? Your hopes? What can you do to break free?

The Two-fold Cord: The Struggle to Yield to Truth

- What is it that sets our nation apart from all others in history? Why, after 225 years, are we still enjoying most of the freedoms fought for and won in the American Revolution?
- Why do you think that some within our nation are trying to obliterate the truth about our nation's beginnings?
- As Christians who are struggling to preserve our nation's Biblically-rooted beginnings, do we sometimes gloss over the dark things about our nation's past?
- Most of our historical American heroes have dark sides to them. Can we celebrate the good things that our heroes have done while acknowledging that they did some bad things as well? Does the fact that some of our founding fathers owned slaves disqualify them as heroes?
- What colors your view of history?

Song No. 2: Dance of Nations (1606)

☒ Two-Fold Cord: Hopes and Fears ☒

European, African and Native American cultures are about to collide as the seeds of a new nation are planted.

In April of 1968, Martin Luther King, Jr. gave a speech in Memphis, Tennessee. "...I just want to do God's will and He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land..." The next day, Dr. King fell victim to an assassin's bullet which ended his life.

What do you feel about Dr. King's words? Can you identify with Dr. King's joyous emotions and hope for freedom? Our

perceptions of freedom vary widely based on our nationalities and cultural backgrounds.

That's because our nation's history has always been a dance of nations. We came from far distances, from every corner of

Your eyes will see the
King in His beauty;
They will see the land
of far distances.
(Is. 33:17)

God's earth, voluntarily from England, Northern and Eastern Europe, the Middle and Far East. Others came because their ancestors were slaves brought from Africa. Still others made their homes here in North America long,

long before the rest of us arrived.

We need to understand God's dance of nations. Our journey into understanding begins nearly 400 years ago.

There was a land of far distance
A land across the sea
Where the dreams and the hopes
and the fears of many
Became reality.

They built their homes on the vast wide prairie
And from sea to sea so bold
Ne'er understood God's dance of nations
And so their love turned cold.

Dance of Nations: Study Guide

The Scripture: A Land of Promise

Read John 33: 17 and then read Genesis 12: 1-3, Exodus 3:16-18; 12:25, 13:10-12

- What is the land of “far distances?” Why does the “good life” often seem so far away?
- How are our hopes and dreams associated with a king?
- Abraham was promised a land. What did he have to give up to obtain that land?
- The captive children of Israel were also promised a land of “milk and honey.” What obstacles did they face on their way to that land?
- Why are God’s promises often associated with land? (read Genesis 15:18; 17:8; 28:15; Exodus 3:8; Deuteronomy 28:1-13; Isaiah 1:19; 26:1; Jeremiah 3:19)
- How is the land affected when we turn away from God? (See Deuteronomy 28:14-68; Jeremiah 2:7; Amos 7:4)

The Song: Hope for a Better Life

- *“A land across the sea.”* Our European forbears had to cross the sea to come to the “new world.” The sea is sometimes associated with death and sin (see Micah 7:19; Matthew 18:6; Mark 9:42; I Cor. 10:1). What emotions do you think our forbears experienced?
- *“Where the dreams and the hopes and the fears of many, became reality.”* The land of promise is also the land of risk. What sacrifices did our forbears make to travel to this land and begin a new life?
- *“Ne'er understood God's dance of nations. And so their love turned cold.”* Does God have a purpose for this land we call America? The English are generally credited with beginning this new nation, but we have grown to become a “melting pot” of many nations and cultures. What is the “dance of nations?” How have we grown cold?

The Two-fold Cord: Harmony in a Land of Diversity

- Almost every people group is represented in America. We have come from across the globe to live together and enjoy freedom.
- Is it realistic to expect that people from so many diverse nations and cultures can live together in harmony?
- Why was the work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and other civil rights leaders in the '50's and '60's so necessary? Was it also long overdue?
- Have we as Christians in America (both present and past) failed in our role as ambassadors of Christ to people and people groups who look and live differently than ourselves?
- What is it about our land that has held such appeal for so many for so long?
- What obstacles do we yet face in bringing peace and harmony to our own land between peoples of all races, colors, tribes, and creeds within our borders?

Song No. 3: The Dawn (1620)

☒ Two-Fold Cord: God or Mammon? ☒

A husband and wife crossing the Atlantic share their dreams about the future of the new world.

Nearly four hundred years have passed since the first English settlers conceived of a new world. For generations, the colonies of Jamestown, Virginia, (1607) and Plymouth, Massachusetts (1620) have been viewed as the seeds of our nation. Each colony possessed a distinctive vision. The Pilgrims left Europe yearning for religious freedom. The James-

town colonists were chartered to find gold, silver and the Northwest passage.

No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.
(Luke 16:13)

This early conflict between faith and gold grew. Some were not satisfied with the wealth they could work with their own two hands. Soon, tall ships sailed out of the east where mammon could buy the hands of others.

[W]e do grant and agree . . . the said several colonies, shall and lawfully may . . . dig, mine, and search for all manner of mines of gold, silver and copper . . .

First Charter of VA 1606

I'm standing with you on the Mayflower's bow
Wondering why our God would allow
The wind and weather to take us off course
And turn us far north of Virginia's fair shores.
There must be a purpose, a divine master plan
A design, an intention, for this bounteous land
A hope for the nations, where men might be free
I'm wondering Lord, could it really be?

My love there's a reason,
Why He's brought us here
And in the right season, things will become clear
It's a humble beginning but with you at my side
We'll face the first winter with God as our guide
So into this world we bring promise and prayer
And faith that He'll keep us under His care
We don't know the future
But we know why we've come
To honor His name, to make this place our home.

When the gray morning mist
On this virgin land lifts
What will this new world be?
Will the shoreline abound with cities and towns?
Will ships bring more souls 'cross the sea?



Will our dream stay pure?
Will our vision endure?
Will our hearts be always toward Thee?
When the gray morning mist on this virgin land lifts
What will this new world be?

Gray haired and rocking on our front porch with you
Musing the fifty years we've been through
Now who'd have believed us if we'd said it back then
That our cities and towns would be so touched by sin
My love, it's so true, it's the nature of man
To take what God gives him into his own hand
Then to twist it and shape it 'til he forms his own way
And carves out a lie that he lives every day.

As the gray morning mist on this virgin land lifts
What do our eyes now see?
Our shorelines abound with cities and towns
Tall ships now bring slaves 'cross the sea
Will our dream stay pure?
Will our vision endure?
Will our hearts be turned back toward Thee?
As the gray morning mist on this virgin land lifts
What will the future see?

The Dawn: Study Guide

The Scripture: Serving False Gods

Read Luke 16:13 and then read Exodus 20: 1-5; Deut. 7:1-6; Joshua 1:6-8

- Read the story of the rich young ruler (Mark 10:17-30). What could the young man not part with that kept him from a relationship with God? Why does Jesus warn us against the lure of mammon (money)?
- I Timothy 6:10 tells us that the love of money is the root of all evil. How does money draw us away from God?
- Why do you think that the first of the Ten Commandments is about not having other gods before Him?
- Why did God command the Israelites to destroy the false gods in their new land?
- Read Luke 8:4-15. Why are seeds and beginnings so significant?

The Song: An Uncertain Future

- *“When the gray morning mist on this virgin land lifts, what will this new world be?”* Compare the stories of Jamestown and Plymouth. What two opposing seeds were sown by these different groups of founders? Can our nation succeed serving two masters? Why was the future uncertain for those early settlers?
- *“Will our dream stay pure? Will our vision endure? Will our hearts be always toward Thee?”* As our nation progressed, we faced many obstacles and pitfalls. Why is it such a struggle to keep a pure heart? To maintain a holy vision? To keep focused on God?
- *“That our cities and towns would be so touched by sin.”* Although the Pilgrims and the Puritans possessed such a high and holy vision for this land, today, sin abounds. What went wrong?

The Two-fold Cord: Internal Forces Wage War

- In his first inaugural address on March 4th, 1861, Abraham Lincoln spoke these words: “The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.” Every human heart is engaged in internal conflict. There exists a war within our souls. How do Lincoln’s words, spoken nearly 250 years after our forbears arrived, encapsulate the conflict that was already brewing, in seed form, in our land?
- Read the accounts of both Jamestown’s and Plymouth’s settlers (*The Virginia Charter and the many writings of Captain John Smith; The Mayflower Compact, Of Plymouth Plantation;*). In what ways can the conflict to come (the war between God and Mammon) be seen in these early stages of American history?

Song No. 4: The Dream (1781)

✦ Two-Fold Cord: Selflessness or Self-Serving? ✦

While the former colonists rejoiced in their newly won freedom and nation, African slaves remained in chains.

What is the American dream? The dream of owning a home, of driving a nice car and having money in the bank?

To the first New England settlers the dream was the freedom to worship God according to their own conscience. But even in the beginning, warning signs of division and a two-fold cord of good and evil were present.

When the founders signed the Declaration of Independence and later, the Constitution, they gave birth to a new nation founded on a biblical vi-

sion of freedom, a freedom with responsibility.

Even so, their struggle with slavery ended in compromise. A slave now counted three-fifths of a vote, for the slave's owner but not for the slave. Men, women and children would still be bought and sold on the trading block. And some seventy years later in 1861 at Fort Sumter, when the sins of selfishness became full grown, they would give birth to

For you brethren,
have been called
to liberty; only do
not use liberty as
an opportunity for
the flesh, but
through love serve
one another.
(Galatians 5:13)

death. (James 1:15)

[T]hat all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights. That among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Declaration of Independence



The Scripture: Called to Liberty

Read Galatians 5:13 and then read Leviticus 25:9-11

- Why does God grant us liberty? What is the difference between liberty and license (Galatians 5:13)?
- The Israelites set aside every fiftieth year as the "Year of Jubilee." In that year, debts were forgiven, the land was rested from farming, and liberty was proclaimed. What kinds of things do we need to be liberated from and what keeps us in bondage?
- Read Psalm 119:45. Is there a link between a love for God's Word and freedom?
- Read Luke 4:18. What did Jesus mean when He said He had come to proclaim freedom to the captives?
- Is there a connection between spiritual bondage and political bondage? What is it?

The Dream: Study Guide

The Song: The American Dream

- “... *Freedom from England’s crown.*” What was England’s crown and what did it represent to American colonists of the mid-1750’s? From America’s steps toward political freedom, a new nation emerged, “conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.” (Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address—1863) How does self-government preserve our freedom?
- “*Thankful for freedom, oh freedom, oh freedom, the American Dream.*” Today’s version of the American Dream has, for some, degenerated into the acquisition of wealth and/or fame. What happened along the way that we lost our original vision?
- “*Freedom, a desire in the breast of every man.*” What is true freedom? Why is it so often difficult to come by? Why do so many misunderstand the nature of true freedom?

The Two-fold Cord: God and Mammon Still at Odds

- Some of our forbears came to this New World for the unselfish reason that they desired to worship God according to their conscience, and not according to the dictates of a king or an ecclesiastical body. Others came solely for selfish profit. How did these two motivations compete for the soul of our new nation? Are they still competing today?
- By the time our Founders met to draft a new Constitution, some states had outlawed slavery. But some had not. The idea of slavery flew directly in the face of our Declaration’s first and most fundamental principle: “... all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights.” Our Founders faced a dilemma. Slavery existed for economic gain, and the higher, godly, Biblical principle of “all men created equal” clashed with this ungodly, economic principle. What would they do? How did they resolve this crisis? Read the Three-Fifths Compromise in the U.S. Constitution.

Along the quiet cobbled streets
Of Atlantic seaboard towns,
A new day dawned with jubilee,
Freedom from England’s crown,
From Boston to Savannah,
Up and down the Eastern strand
Cheers of victory filled the air
Steepled churches, saints in prayer
Thankful hearts were everywhere
In the land.

Thankful for freedom, oh freedom
Oh freedom, the American Dream
Freedom, oh freedom
Oh freedom, the American Dream

Yet while the festive crowds rejoiced,
The tall ships anchored in,
With scores of people in their holds,
No liberty for them,
They heard the bells of freedom ring,
But they knew only fear,

While the world took hope
In a nation born,
A promise for the weary and the tired
And worn,
The hearts of the fettered
Could only mourn and dream,

Dream of freedom, oh freedom
Oh freedom, the American Dream
Freedom, oh freedom
Oh freedom, the American Dream

Freedom,
A desire in the breast of every man
Freedom,
A yearning e’re since time began
A cry so deep, a cry so long
The cry of every human heart gone
wrong . . .
Freedom

Southern men sowed cotton fields
That spread out far and wide
While wagons crossed
The Allegheny range
To reach the other side
And flatboats carried pioneers
In the Ohio’s mighty flow
Their destiny seemed manifest
Down every trail that led them west
Every hundred miles they pressed
They cried oh westward ho!

They wanted freedom, oh freedom
Oh freedom, the American Dream
Freedom, oh freedom
They wanted freedom, the American
Dream

Along the quiet cobbled streets
As the day drew to a close
At last a place where a man could be
Whatever it was he chose.

Song No. 5: The Breach (1820-1858)

✠ Two-Fold Cord: Truth or Deception? ✠

The enslavement of many from the African race, and the taking of land from Native Americans, opened a door for the devil.

American racism can be traced, in part, to a conflict over ideals in the Declaration of Independence. If "all men are created equal" then why were some slaves? Some Christian leaders cultivated the seeds of racism when they labeled the African as "sub-human" and employed the Bible to defend the institution of slavery.

Manifest Destiny—the belief that God ordained European Christians to possess the land from sea to sea—quickly took hold in American thinking. While wagon trains surged westward, the gov-

ernment broke treaty after treaty with the American Indian. "Resettled" tribes were forcibly marched from their homelands to make room for new farms and spreading plantations. Even fully Christianized tribes were driven west and their homes and property taken.

Knowing that ideas have consequences, the devil, the father of lies and a murderer from the beginning, did not miss the opportunity and rushed in. Many Christian pulpits continued to justify slavery and Manifest Destiny.

God...hath ordained different degrees and orders of men, some to be High and Honourable, some to be Low and Despicable; some to be...Masters...others to be subjects...yea some to be born Slaves..."

First Known Recorded
Biblical Defense of Slavery – 1701

For such are false
apostles, deceitful
workers...And no
wonder! For Satan
himself transforms
himself into an an-
gel of light.
(2 Corinthians
11:12-13)

Where bronze, sinewy legs ran hard
On America's forest floor
Where hearts of darkness ruled the day,
Where woodlands met the shore
Where rich earth nurtured life itself,
Where arrows felled the game
Where in these cold tenebrous woods,
The white man's rifle came.

Where Dutch men's ships first set ashore,
Black cargo in their holds
Where auctioneers made trade in flesh,
Where lives were bought and sold
Where chains of slavery bound a race,
Where cries of grief were heard
Where Mammon ruled the hearts of men,
It was there the breach occurred.

It was there the breach was opened wide
In that place where dark and light collide
Yes at these points of compromise
Where evil rushes in

Where frontier families
Built their homes,
On land that wasn't theirs
Where ground was seized
From native tribes,
And white men said "who cares?"
When Christian men made promises
Then broke their solemn word
And exchanged the gospel for the sword,
It was there the breach occurred

Where preachers
From their pulpits spoke,
Defending slavery's laws
And invoked the name of Jesus Christ
To justify their cause
Where northern factories labored long,
Spun cotton into gold
Or cried "ship them back to Africa,"
Their hypocrisy was bold

It was there that darkness took a hold
Of a nation that had sold its soul
To the gods of self
And for the love of gold
Where the devil rushes in

The Breach: Study Guide

The Scripture: The Devil's Whispers

Read 2 Corinthians 11:12-13 and then read Genesis 3:1-5; John 8:44; I Peter 5:8

- The devil often appears to us as an angel of light. The words he speaks softly into our ears seem to be harmless, but in the end, are deadly. How can we protect ourselves?
- In Satan's first words to mankind, he raised the question of the trustworthiness of God's Word (Genesis 3:1-5). Have his ways or methods changed?
- Jesus called the devil a liar (John 8:44). Peter likened him to a roaring lion (I Peter 5:8). Where does his power lie? Why is he called the Deceiver?
- Read Isaiah 14:6 and Revelation 20:7-8. How does the devil, God's arch-enemy, deal with the nations? Are nations subject to his wily ways? (See also Leviticus 18:24; Deuteronomy 32:28; Joshua 23:12; II Kings 17:26; Micah 7:16)

The Song: The Devil Rushes In

- *"Where Mammon ruled the hearts of men, it was there the breach occurred."* Can you point to the moment in our nation's past when Mammon superceded God as the lord of our land? Was it one specific moment or a series of moments? What happened to the fabric of our nation's culture at those moments when Mammon ascended to the throne?
- *"Yes at these points of compromise where evil rushes in."* What happens when we as individuals compromise our values to the devil and his lies? What happens to a nation when its people collectively compromise?
- *"It was there that darkness took a hold of a nation that had sold its soul."* What does darkness look like? Is it always recognizable? How does darkness take a hold? How does a nation sell its soul? How did ours? Do nations have souls? Can ours be redeemed?

The Two-fold Cord: Twisting the Truth

- America suffers under the malediction of racism. When Southern preachers used their pulpits and their Bibles to validate slavery, they fell into the devil's trap. While the Bible acknowledges slavery's existence, it does not promote or justify slavery. Nearly 150 years after slavery's demise in America, we still struggle with racism. Why?
- Manifest Destiny came into vogue just before the Civil War and the rush to people our continent began in earnest. Many tribes of indigenous people who had called this land their home for centuries, stood in the way. What happened to them? Was it just?
- Read Rudyard Kipling's poem titled *White Man's Burden*. Research the theme. In the late 1800s, the notion arose that the white man was called to lead the rest of the world into progress and civilization. What do you think of this idea?
- Among the devil's many deceptions are the pride of race, and the false notion that one race of people is superior to all others. Is it a race or a set of ideas that is superior?

Song No. 6: The Divide (1859)

☒ Two-Fold Cord: Union or Disunion? ☒

As the nation stood on the brink of war, the Church divided, failing in her role as the nation's spiritual guide.

Two distinct cultures developed in our new nation. The agricultural South built their world around evangelical Christianity, a fierce cultural pride and an economy with plantation owners on top and slaves on the bottom. While the industrial North drifted into Unitarianism, a belief in the goodness of man, and mysticism, it also brought forth a groundswell of abolitionists, Christian and non-Christian.

Despite the revivals of the Second Great Awakening, the Church divided North and South along with the nation. "Already three great evangelical churches have been torn asunder," lamented John C. Calhoun before the Senate in

1850, referring to the Presbyterians, the Methodists and the Baptists who had split over slavery.

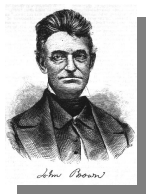
Into the growing divide stepped a fiery abolitionist, John Brown. To the North, he was an angel sent from God. To the South, he was the devil incarnate. With blazing eyes and Bible in hand, he led a raid on Harper's Ferry to secure weapons and ignite a slave uprising that would cleanse the South of its slave owners in a night of bloodshed.

Foiled, captured and convicted of treason, John Brown, a two-fold cord of good and evil, was sentenced to death.

*A house divided
against itself
will come to
ruin.*

I, John Brown, am now quite certain that the crimes of this guilty land will never be purged away but with blood.

Brown's last words
Penned on his way
to the gallows



Footfalls on the gallows steps
The angel and the devil
The two-fold cord within himself
Light and darkness fully meshed
A madman at the precipice
He ascended

Footfalls on plantation soil
He dreamed of masters murdered
An insurrection he professed
A bloody bludgeoning he thought best
Now a tug of rope around his neck
He descended

Church of the North, Church of the South
His note spoke from the grave
Inflaming hearts to lift the sword
And go to battle for the Lord
And prophesied the crimson flood
That would stain the nation's soil in blood

Trap door opened he fell through
He swung there in the daylight
And the noose around the nation's heart
Pulled tighter 'til it split apart
The dream the fathers had dared to start
And it ended

God's holy Church throughout the land
She teetered at the canyon
She had failed to be the nation's guide
Was swept into the rushing tide
While politicians preached fratricide
She descended

Down, down, down, Down, down, down,
down, down, down,
Now her words held little power over the
hearts of men and her lamp grew dim
And as the nation wandered into the night
Soon to enter a bloody fight
Her soul was rent so deep in two
No more a guide for wrong or right

Church of the North, Church of the South
His note spoke from the grave
Each had their views which they preferred
But on this one thing they both concurred
From John Brown's words a war would grow
And very soon the blood would flow

Sumter's cannons lit the night
O'er the ships in Charleston's harbor
And rebel hearts both North and South
Would soon march straight into hell's mouth

The Divide: Study Guide

The Scripture: A House Divided

Read Luke 11:17 and then read 2 Kings 18:-23.

- Jesus spoke of a house divided. His words came in response to the accusation that He was casting out demons by the power of the devil. But His thoughts on this topic can be applied in many areas. What can you think of that is dangerous to divide?
- When King Solomon died, the kingdom of Israel divided because of political and religious differences. The northern kingdom called Israel, which included all but the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, split from Solomon's son. The remaining two tribes, who continued David's line, called themselves Judah. Why did the nations split? What did Solomon's sin have to do with the split? (See I Kings 11:11-13)
- What can we learn about God's view of division from these two passages?

The Song: A Muted Voice

- *"... And the noose around the nation's, heart pulled tighter 'til it split apart, the dream the fathers had dared to start, and it ended."* Our Founding fathers created a Republic, a strong alliance of individual, self-governed states. Read the 14th Amendment to the Constitution. How did the divide ultimately consolidate power? Was it a good thing?
- *"She had failed to be the nation's guide, was swept into the rushing tide ..."* The Church in our nation succumbed to the pressures of the culture it was meant to influence. Instead of setting the standard, the Church followed the world. Are we different today?
- *"Now her words held little power over the hearts of men and her lamp grew dim ..."* Does a Church have a "prophetic mantle" to the nations of the world? What is a prophetic mantle? Has the Church lost respect in our nation? What are the consequences?

The Two-fold Cord: Church of North and South

- Some Southerners called John Brown the devil incarnate. Some Northerners called him an angel sent from God. Could darkness and light both be embodied in one man? How did the light and the darkness, seeming to both co-exist in John Brown, symbolize the divide in our nation?
- On March 4th, 1865, in his second Inaugural address, Lincoln said of our divided nation: "Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other." How can it be that God's people are divided? How can both be so certain that they are right? How did the Church divided affect the nation as a whole?
- Just prior to the war's beginning, the Methodists, the Baptists, and the Presbyterians each divided along the Mason-Dixon line. Other denominations held together. Did the split in these denominational bodies weaken the Church as a whole?

Song No. 7: The Ruin (1859)

☒ Two-Fold Cord: Life or Death? ☒

Armies of blue and gray assembled, turning their plowshares into swords. Slaves gained their freedom.

The breach quickly became a divide. The divide erupted into a ruinous tear in the body and soul of the nation.

Farmers, shop keepers, doctors and even pastors fired muskets and cannon, brandished swords and drew blood on battlefields North and South. In four short years 600,000 husbands, sons and fathers lost their lives.

After one battle in Manassas, Virginia, Confederate Army doctors used a church's communion table to perform amputations on soldiers from both armies, a grim picture of what had become of the body of Christ in America.

Following the end of the war and Lincoln's assassination, the North brought swift retribution against the South. A cruel reconstruction fostered deep bitterness and resentment in the hearts of the defeated. Though Lincoln freed the slaves two years earlier, most of freedom's benefits would elude the average black man, woman and child for generations to come.

Over one hundred and thirty years later, we continue to be a house divided. White and black, liberal and conservative and other painful divisions reflect the yet unreconciled hearts of a once ruined nation and its many cultures.

**A house divided
against itself *will*
come to ruin.
(Luke 11:17)**

Both [North and South] read the same Bible, pray to the same God; and each invokes His name against the other.

Abraham Lincoln,
2nd Inaugural Address,
March 4, 1865

The divide has come. The house will fall. There's no



(Northern fighting song)

Mine eyes have seen
the glory
Of the coming of the

Lord
He is trampling out the vintage
Where the grapes of wrath
Are stored
He has loosed the fateful lightning
Of his terrible swift sword
And his truth is marching on

love in the land. And now Satan will march to and

(Southern fighting song)

When Johnny comes
marching home again
hurrah, hurrah
When Johnny comes marching
home again hurrah, hurrah
All the men will cheer
And the boys will shout
And everybody there
Will all come out
And we'll all feel gay when
Johnny comes marching home



fro, North and South, harvesting the souls of men.

(Traditional Negro spiritual)

Soon we'll be done
With the troubles of this world
Troubles of this world
Troubles of this world
Soon we'll be done
With the troubles of this world
Going home to live with God
Going home to live with God

The Ruin: Study Guide

The Scripture: A Ruined House

Read Luke 11:17 and then read Leviticus 26; Nehemiah 2:3,17; Job 30:13-15

- Jesus said that a divided house would come to ruin. The Jews had certainly seen the judgment of the Lord prior to Jesus' day. Israel had been conquered by the Assyrians and Judah had been captive of Babylon. Forty years after Jesus (70AD), Jerusalem would be laid waste by Rome. What lessons can we learn from wayward Israel?
- Before the Israelites entered the promised land, God gave them many warnings of judgment if they did not obey His commands. And when they didn't obey, He carried out His Word, bringing judgment and ruin. Is the judgment of God real or is it simply an empty threat?

The Song: A Cacophony of Voices

- *"And now Satan will march to and fro, North and South, harvesting the souls of men."* Did the sins of the fathers unleash the devil's wrath upon our nation's soil? Does God use Satan to bring judgment?
- *"He has loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword, and his truth is marching on."* What do the words to this historical song seem to imply that some of the Northerners believed about their armies and the judgment of God?
- *"And we'll all feel gay when Johnny comes marching home."* The word gay here, means happy and carefree. What does this song imply about Southern hopes and longings?
- *"Soon we'll be done with the troubles of this world ..."* What do the words to this classic Negro spiritual say to us about the longings of the slave in captivity?

The Two-fold Cord: Let the Judgment Begin

- Four years of bloody fighting left 600,000 dead. The North's Reconstruction efforts in the South left most Southerners bitter for generations to come. To this day, Confederate flags still fly in defiance. Has our nation ever recovered from this ruinous divide?
- Though legally and Constitutionally free, Jim Crow laws and Ku Klux Klan lynchings kept Southern blacks in fear and terror for another 100 years after the war ended. To this day, blacks still struggle in select cities for fair treatment from white police. How has the historic mistreatment of blacks and other minorities opened yet another door for more ruin to come into our land? Could it be said that the sometimes oppressive federal and state laws, most enacted since the 1960s and initially put in place to right the many wrongs of the past, have become and continue to become, an ever tightening noose around our treasured freedoms? Is this more of the judgment of God?

Song No. 8: The Hope (1863-1899)

☒ Two-Fold Cord: His Blood or Our Blood? ☒

A husband and wife reflect upon the war, the words of Lincoln and his untimely death, and question what the sacrifice of so many lives really accomplished.

Can the shedding of men's blood bring healing and purge away sin?
Can our own sacrifices redeem us?

Though the bloodshed of over 600,000 men did resolve our political conflicts and purge the land of slavery it could never resolve the deeper issues of the heart. The power of racism could not be removed with swords of steel.



We stood on the field
Where fifty thousand had died
And the grass was all covered
with dew
We held hands and prayed
Where the soldiers were laid
That their deaths would make
our land new

And later that day
As the crowds gathered round
To hear speeches and words from a few
All attention was paid
To the words that were said
When Mr. Lincoln offered his view

"We cannot dedicate
We cannot consecrate
We cannot hallow this ground
But the brave men who died here
Who gave up their lives here
Bring a new birth of freedom around."

Within a year and a half
From when we stood on that field
Where so many had died for their cause

For if you live according to the flesh
you will die...
(Romans 8:13)

On a Gettysburg battlefield in November of 1863, Lincoln's most famous words would move thousands of hearts with a new passion and hope. But did his words imply a hope

and a promise that another year of war and the work of soldier's blood could never fulfill?

But in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract...that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom...

Abraham Lincoln
Gettysburg Address, November, 1863

We stood by the grave
Of our leader, so brave
And his sudden death
Gave our hearts pause
Why oh why,
Did this man have to die?
He had done so much good for us all
He freed every slave and to the Union he gave
A new hope, a new life, a new call

We could not dedicate
We could not consecrate
We could not hallow that ground
But through the brave men who died there
And all those who cried there
We thought a new hope
For freedom was found

Why did we fail to understand the truth?
What did we think our sacrifice would do?
How can men's blood
Cause anything but pain?
But after oh so many deaths
Our sinful hearts remain!

Twenty-five years have passed
Since we stood on that field
And our nation continues to mend
Our Union looks strong but not all belong
When will we be one again?

Only when hearts draw near to our God
And seek him as never before
Our hope in future where all men stand free
We commit to the God we adore

Now we must dedicate
Now we must consecrate
Now we must offer our lives
We must bow down in meekness
And acknowledge our weakness
And pray that our nation revives

The Hope: Study Guide

The Scripture: The Wrong Kind of Sacrifice

Read Romans 8:13 and then read I Sam. 13:8-14; 15:22; Is. 1:11; Heb. 10:3-5

- Living according to our own rules, standards, and ideas leads to death. Sometimes we think something is the right thing to do, but it proves to be wrong. Why are we so reluctant to seek God's counsel? (Read Proverbs 16:25)
- Read I Samuel 15:22. God says that it is better to obey than to sacrifice. How did Saul ruin his chance to have his family line be perpetually on the throne of Israel?
- Why is the blood of bulls and goats no longer an acceptable sacrifice to God for our sins? Why is the blood of Jesus a perfect sacrifice? In what other ways do we try to right wrongs in our own way and with our own sacrifices and thus ignore the sacrificial blood of Jesus?

The Song: Misplaced Expectations

- *"All attention was paid to the words that were said, when Mr. Lincoln offered his view."* Abraham Lincoln is remembered today as one of our nation's greatest presidents. So many of his words possess deep and profound meaning. Read the Gettysburg Address. Do you agree with everything he said?
- *"And his sudden death gave our hearts pause."* Lincoln's death came as a horrific shock to a nation just beginning to heal from a devastating war. Lincoln believed in treating the South with kindness. Had he not died, how would history have been different?
- *"Twenty-five years have passed since we stood on that field, and our nation continues to mend."* Outwardly, by the year of this last verse, our nation appeared to be thriving. But inwardly, many forces sought to undermine our freedom. Can you identify them?

The Two-fold Cord: Unresolved Conflict

- Although many soldiers on both sides fought valiantly and sacrificed their lives, little changed in the hearts of Americans on both sides of the Mason-Dixon line. Lincoln's Gettysburg address seems, on the face of things, to capture the meaning of the soldiers' sacrifice, but a closer look reveals a flaw in his thinking. Lincoln said, "The brave men, living and dead, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract...that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom..." From a Biblical perspective, what is wrong with this statement?
- America's Civil War is distinct from all other wars in our history. In a war of brother against brother, no side could truly be victorious. Consider other wars that Americans have fought in—The Revolutionary War, WWI, WWII, Vietnam, The War on Terrorism—how do these wars differ from the Civil War?

Part II: Reconciliation

Reconciling Our Hearts

The previous eight songs re-examined key events and ideas from our nation's history. We explored the two-fold cord, the idea that men and nations are a mixture of both good and evil, and how conflict, violence, and death result when individuals cannot be reconciled to God and one another.

Even a casual look at today's headlines reminds us that the sins of the past are yet present with us. Daily, we witness the pain of men and women separated from God and their fellow man. Human life is often disjointed, disconnected and splintered.

No matter how hard we try, the sacrifice of our own blood cannot cleanse us of the past and our sin. Only the blood of Christ can reconcile men to God.

God does not will that any relationship remain broken. Whether child to parent, husband to wife, friend to friend, denomination to denomination, race to race, or nation to nation, God desires reconciled relationships.

The blood of Christ also gives men the power to be reconciled to one another. His grace, working in our hearts by the power of the Holy Spirit, persuades us and gives us the strength to seek forgiveness and to forgive.

Reconciliation is one of the most powerful themes in Scripture. When we reconcile with God and

man, we are actually realigning our lives with the truth.

First, we must believe that God has called us to be reconciled. Then we must take the necessary steps toward reconciliation. Following the next three songs, you will find additional information and tools designed to aid in your study of re-examination and reconciliation.

Contemplating the broad themes of humanity, nations, history, and sin, we recognize how desperately the world needs reconciliation. Who but the Church can show the way?

Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. (2 Cor. 5:18-19)

✠ Two-Fold Cord ✠

As you listen to the following three songs and read the adjoining pages, please consider how you can personally respond to God's call for reconciliation. In the song descriptions which follow, the above symbol highlights the two-fold cord we all face in choosing our answer to God.

The blood of Christ gives men the power to be reconciled to one another.

Songs to Help Us Reconcile our Hearts

1. THE CALL: A modern day bard sings about the call of discipleship, reflecting upon those who have gone before, the price they paid to answer God's call, and the cost we will face in serving and following Him.

2. THE WAY: Is there another way to healing of the nations besides the prayers and intercessions of the saints?

3. HOLY GOD: Ultimately, if we are to ever hope to become one body, we must focus our affections upon Him. Only in His presence can we find unity in our diversity.

Song No. 9: The Call

✠ Two-Fold Cord: Commitment or Complacency? ✠

God is looking for men and women to be modern day Isaiahs. He wants to use our interests, skills, talents and spiritual gifts to touch the world with his love.

He wants our interests, our skills and our talents because they provide him with easy and natural ways for us to be used in serving others and developing friendships. He wants our spiritual gifts because they are his tools for ministering to and transforming lives.

Have you heard the call of God? If you have, are you walking in that call and following after him? If you are walking in your call, are you committed to continue following him and fulfilling his purposes for your life?

Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: Whom shall I send and who will go for Us? Then I said, "Here I am! Send me."

(Isaiah 6:8)

The course of our nation's future, a history yet to be written, will be determined, in part, by your response!

Be it so . . . If it be the pleasure of heaven that my country shall require the poor offering of my life, the victim shall be ready at the appointed hour of sacrifice, come when that hour may.

Daniel Webster, American Statesman

Throughout the ages in God's plan,
He's chosen for His own
The ones He's called to serve Him,
To kneel before His throne
They've been prophets sawn
asunder,
Martyrs with blood spent
Upon the soil of sorrows,
Their weeping hearts lament
They've walked the trail of solitude,
Which so few comprehend
They've heard the whispered call of God
As it thunders in the wind

Oh, listen to the wind blow
Oh, hear the Spirit call
Oh, when you hear the stories told
About the saints of old
And their faith so bold
Can you see they gave their all?

The word of God is faithful,
Good tidings to the meek
To bind and mend broken hearts,
And give strength to the weak
To open up imprisoned hearts,

Wherever they are bound
By pride and fear and bitterness,
Wherever they are found
Consider how God chose the weak,
To shame those who are strong
He chose the lowly and despised,
To prove the wise were wrong

Oh, listen to the wind blow
Oh, hear the Spirit call
Oh, feel their ache of loneliness
And their great distress
Their pain's our test
Christ wants to rescue all

We're called to reconcile all men,
No matter what the cost
Collect our petty preferences
And lay them at the cross
There's no more room for pride of race,
No place for doctrines small
We must now live
Before His face

And answer full
His call
To be the generation, repairers of the breach
Repenting of our
Vain conceit,
His mercy we beseech

Oh, listen to the
Wind blow
Oh, hear His
Spirit's call
Oh, let His grace
Empower you
In all you say and do
Like Him be true
Will you relinquish all?

Oh, listen how the wind blows
Oh, hear His Spirit's call
Oh, let His grace empower you
In all you say and do
Like Him be true
Now let's relinquish all!

The Call: Study Guide

The Scripture: Hearing the Call

Read Isaiah 6:8 and then read Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 3:1-6; Acts 9:1-6

- Every servant of God must hear His call. Isaiah heard the call of God and was transformed. He responded with the words, “Here I am, send me.” How will you respond?
- Abraham, the father of all who believe, heard the call of God. He left his home and country and followed God to the land of promise. What will you sacrifice to follow Him?
- Moses and Paul also heard the call of God. Moses is the one who delivered God’s law. Paul gave us New Testament Christian doctrine. How has their response shaped you?
- After reading Genesis 12:3, read Acts 7:23. Abraham saw the glory of God. And if you review the passages above, you will note that Isaiah, Moses, and Paul, also saw the glory of God. Seeing God’s glory enables us to respond to His call. Have you seen His glory?

The Song: The Cost of Discipleship

- *“They’ve been prophets sawn asunder, martyrs with blood spent, upon the soil of sorrows, their weeping hearts lament.”* The cost of discipleship is oftentimes high. Many have lost their lives. Many more have lived life with sacrifice. Have you paid the price?
- *“To open up imprisoned hearts, wherever they are bound, by pride and fear and bitterness, wherever they are found.”* God’s call always involves a focus on people. God cares deeply about all the ones He made in His image. Are you a servant?
- *“There’s no more room for pride of race ...”* Although humans come in many skin shades, God does not view us in terms of race. Do you let race divide?
- *“... No place for doctrines small ...”* Christian doctrine is essential. Classic Christian creeds unite us in a common faith. Petty doctrines divide. Where do you stand?

The Two-fold Cord: Servant of All

- Do you have skills? Talents? Gifts? Abilities? Do you have interests? Are you putting them to use for God? Or are you using them to please yourself?
- The call of God is upon you. Jesus said, “... many are called, but few are chosen.” (Matthew 22:14) Have you sensed the call of God upon your life?
- We have been called to the ministry of reconciliation (I Corinthians 5:18). Our mission is to work toward helping people to become reconciled to God and then to one another. Can one be reconciled to God and not reconciled to his brothers and sisters in Christ?
- Jesus said that the first among us must be the last and the servant of all (Mark 9:35). Are you willing to place the needs of others above your own? Will you look out for others more than you look out for yourself? (see also Phil. 2:3-4)
- Although He was God, Jesus made Himself of no reputation (Phil. 2:7). Are you willing to be a nobody in this world in order for Christ to be glorified and others to be blessed?

Song No. 10: The Way

✠ Two-Fold Cord: Victory or Defeat? ✠

Ours is the generation of the Church that needs to stand in unity and pull down the strongholds of darkness over our land.

Only an interceding Church has the power to stand in the breach that has divided our nation spiritually and culturally for nearly 400 years.

Only a humble Church can successfully appeal for the grace and mercy to stay the judgments

Take...the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

(Eph 6:17-18)

that racism, self interest and the love of money bring to men, women and children of all colors.

Only a unified Church, wielding the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God, can be used by God to call the past into account and defeat the devil in this current day.

We are the community that shows the world what heaven will be like!

Charles Colson, *The Body*

Only from her seat of worship,
Can the Church fulfill God's purpose,
To reflect His grace and glory,
Be His praise in all the earth. . .
Only from His highest towers,
Can the Church receive His power,
To defeat this present darkness,
Be His praise in all the earth!

We alone!
Can kneel before His throne.
We alone! Are called His very own!
We alone!
Can pass beyond the veil. . .
We alone can intercede and prevail.

Only when the Bride is one,
A single voice raised to the Son,
Will the world behold His glory,
Be His praise in all the earth.
Only when she bends her knee,
And speaks the truth in humility,
Will the nation's tongues confess,
Be His praise in all the earth!

We alone!
Can kneel before His throne.
We alone! Are called His very own!
We alone!
Can pass beyond the veil. . .
We alone can intercede and prevail.

The Way: Study Guide

The Scripture: Standing in the Gap

Read Ephesians 6:17-18 and then read Exodus 32:11-14; Ezekiel 22:29-31

- We are called to pray without ceasing (Romans 1:19; I Thessalonians 5:17; 2 Timothy 2:13). God has given us the ministry of intercession, which closely relates to the ministry of reconciliation. Are you an intercessor?
- When God became frustrated with the children of Israel, Moses interceded on their behalf and averted God's judgment (Exodus 32:11-14). Have you ever plead for God's mercy on behalf of someone else?
- God explained through the prophet Ezekiel as to how He had searched for an intercessor to stand in the gap for His people. He said He looked for someone, but found no one. Thus His wrath could not be avoided. Are you standing in the gap as an intercessor?

The Song: The Power of Unity

- *"Only from her seat of worship, can the Church fulfill God's purpose..."* Worship is a fundamental component of our Christian faith. Without a worshipping heart, Christ cannot be the center of our lives. How closely is the fulfillment of God's purpose connected to a worshipping Church?
- *"Only when the Bride is one, a single voice raised to the Son, will the world behold His glory, be His praise in all the earth."* Read John 17:21. Jesus prayed for the unity of His followers. He linked our collective oneness with Himself and the Father to the world being able to see the glory of God. What obstacles prevent the Church from being one?
- *"We alone! Can pass beyond the veil ... We alone can intercede and prevail."* Christ has interceded for us. But He has also made us intercessors. If not the Church, who?

The Two-fold Cord: God is Waiting for His Church

- An Interceding Church. In October of 1997, hundreds of thousands of men came together at the Promise Keepers "Stand in the Gap" event on the Mall in Washington, D.C. (see page 42 for further information). Their primary purpose centered on interceding for God's mercy upon our nation. Did you or another family member participate? Did you watch it on television? How did the events of that day impact you?
- A Humble Church. What role does pride play in our division? Peter said that judgment must begin with God's house (I Peter 4:17). What will prevent God's purifying discipline on His people?
- A Unified Church. Read I Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4:1-6. Why do the Scriptures place so much emphasis on unity and oneness for His people?

Song No. 11: Holy God

✠ In the Presence of a Holy God ✠

In the presence of our Holy God, there is no two-fold cord or division. His holiness burns away human imperfection. His glory humbles pride and his love casts out fear.

In his presence, the power of the past can be broken by the power of his love.

In his presence, as one holy body, we can celebrate forgiveness granted and received.

I looked and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb!"

(Revelation 7:9-10)

In his presence, we can find incomparable joy as we learn to worship him together in the midst of our different cultures or denominations.

In his presence, the dance of nations brings to each one a taste of heaven and what is yet to come. . .

Holy God!
We worship, adore
Bow down and implore
Your name.

Holy God!
Heaven and earth
All of creation proclaim.

That You are a holy God,
Worthy of glory and praise.

A holy God,
Perfect in all of Your ways.

Holy God!
We worship You now
We come to exalt Your name!

Holy God: Study Guide

The Scripture: Worshipping Together

Read Revelation 7:9-10 and then read Acts 2

- All nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues will one day gather at God's throne to worship together and glorify Him. Have you ever worshipped in a large group with others from various races and cultures? What was your experience? If you haven't, would you consider going out of your way to do so?
- In Jerusalem, shortly after Jesus' resurrection, Jews from all over the globe gathered to celebrate the feast of Pentecost. On that morning, the Holy Spirit fell upon those gathered, causing the observers to question what was happening. Peter stood up to explain and launched into an anointed sermon. Three thousand came to salvation that day. How would you describe that moment?

The Song: God's Praiseworthiness

- *"Heaven and earth, all of creation proclaim ..."* The Trinitarian mystery of God's nature is revealed in creation. The sun, moon, and stars of heaven, the three states of matter, spatial reality (height, width, depth), time (past, present, future), basic mathematics ($1+1=2$), all speak of God's Trinitarian signature upon His creative handiwork. Can you think of others?
- *"That You are a Holy God, worthy of glory and praise."* God's holiness cannot be fully known while we remain in our human temples. We can study it, ponder it, and proclaim it, and yet barely understand it. Have you ever contemplated God's holiness?
- *"Holy God, we worship you now, we come to exalt Your name."* What higher purpose do any of us have in life than to worship and exalt our Lord?

The Two-fold Cord: The Healing Presence of God

- We yearn for the presence of God and yet we fear to experience it. When the Philistines captured the ark of the covenant, the Israelites lamented that "the glory had departed." (I Samuel 4) In another somewhat related story, when Uzzah recklessly stuck out his hand to steady the ark which was about to topple from an ox cart, God struck him dead. (II Samuel 6:1-6) How can the presence of God be so desired and yet so deadly? Read the passages provided and contemplate their meaning.
- As God's people, our best hope for unity is the presence of God. As with the unfortunate Uzzah, the presence of a Holy God levels and equalizes us in our humanity. In God's presence, pride, divisive doctrine, and all things which separate us in an unrighteous manner, fall away into insignificance.
- Have you ever had a "falling out" with a friend or family member? What would happen if the two of you decided to worship God together?



Kick These Ideas Around

Reexamining Our Past
Topics and Issues
for Contemplation and Discussion

Reconciling Our Relationships
Topics and Issues
for Contemplation and Discussion

Would you be
willing to
identify with the
sins of your
nation's history
and culture in
order to help
someone
forgive?

1. The Church's Role in History and Culture.

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS placed the testimony of God's word alongside the testimony of history and called the past into account. The Church must take the lead in reconciliation by reexamining the past. What role can you play in helping our culture to come to grips with its dark side?

2. Why Reconcilers Must Shine a Bright Light on the Old Deeds of the Past.

THE RECONCILIATION MOVEMENT must look to the past as well as to the future. Sins of the fathers are visited upon the generations. How will God use you to upturn the soil of history and culture in your own sphere?

3. The Two Faces of the Devil: Liar and Murderer.

JESUS CHARACTERIZED THE DEVIL as a liar and a murderer. (John 8:44) The Devil has deceived us and moved us to shed blood in our nation's and church's past. What is the impact of past violence upon our current-day culture?

4. God and Mammon: America's two Religious Roots.

JESUS TAUGHT about the difficulty of serving two masters. Jamestown and Plymouth are America's two religious roots. Mammon influenced the institution of slavery and the taking of land from native Americans. Can you serve God without serving Mammon?

5. Manifest Destiny

ROOTED IN BOTH TRUE CHRISTIANITY AND RACIAL PRIDE, Manifest Destiny is based in covenantal confusion - a misapplication of Old Covenant ideas. Where can we see Manifest Destiny's affects still today?

6. Unde Malum: Whence Comes Evil?

EARLY CHURCH FATHER TERTULLIAN raised the timeless question - unde malum - Whence comes evil? Evil is a mixture of the Devil's treachery and the sinful hearts of men. Where does evil come from?

7. Our Christian Heritage.

AMERICA ENJOYS A RICH CHRISTIAN HERITAGE. Despite the presence of evil and the inconsistent and unfair treatment of certain individuals and groups, our nation on the whole is built upon sound Biblical principles. What role will you play in restoration?

1. The Beauty of Diversity in God's Creative Design.

GOD'S CREATION IS DIVERSE. He demonstrates His glory through many unique denominations, races and cultures. All deserve honor and respect. Are you open to others?

2. The Imperative of Christian Relationships.

JESUS PRAYED for His Church to be one so that the world would know that He is the Christ. God is calling His people into genuine, effective, working relationships with one another. What are you doing?

3. The Holy Scriptures are our Foundation for Unity.

FOR CHRISTIANS TO TRULY BECOME ONE, we must acknowledge a higher authority. The scriptures provide not only inspiration but even more importantly, an authoritative model for unity. What do you believe?

4. The Trinity: Our Example for Unity and Diversity.

THE FATHER, SON AND HOLY SPIRIT demonstrate perfect unity, function and diversity. Studying the relationship of the Godhead brings inspiration and insight for Christian unity. What can we learn?

5. I Believe: An Overview and History of the Christian Creeds.

OUR CHURCH FATHERS wrote the Christian Creeds. What is the historical context and what was their rationale? Modern Christians have much in common but still need a biblical and historical foundation for the process of reconciliation. Do you know the creeds?

6. The Root of Bitterness

UNRESOLVED ANGER Destroys families, churches and nations. Jesus calls us not only to repent from sin and love one another, He also calls to forgive. Can you forgive?

7. The Principle of Identification

"HE HATH MADE HIM who knew no sin to become sin for us ..." (2 COR. 5:21) Some of us still wrestle with bitterness because of past sins committed against our race or culture. The Bible makes no distinctive of race, only culture. Would you be willing to identify with the sins of your own culture in order to help someone forgive?



Section 3: The Road to Healing Our Nation

What's in This Section?

We conclude our study in pages 46-50 with some final thoughts on reconciliation and healing. After equipping ourselves with a few tools for understanding history (Section 1), taking a brief musical journey through American history and working through the study guide materials (Section 2), we are now prepared to put what we have learned into practice.

- ◆ **Three Steps Toward Healing.** Are we willing and ready to follow in the footsteps of Christ and become true reconcilers? (Page 46)
- ◆ **Step 1: Reexamination.** Once again we will enter a reexamination process. But this time, we will ask God to reexamine our own hearts. (Page 47)
- ◆ **Step 2: Reconciliation.** Learning is fun and rewarding, but reconciling relationships is costly and requires effort. (Page 48)
- ◆ **Step 3: Rehabilitation.** When true reconciliation occurs on a grand scale with God's people, God's testimony is restored in the land. (Page 49)
- ◆ **Character Traits of a Reconciler.** Talk is cheap. Following Christ's example requires a change in attitude and character. (Page 50)
- ◆ **Mission Based Friendships.** Have you ever considered building a friendship with another believer across racial or ethnic lines? (Pages 51-52)

Three Steps Toward Healing

“Accept
complete
responsibility
both for
understanding
and for being
understood.”
Brian Tracy

*“...I will build my church;
and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”*
(Matt 16:18 KJV)

How can the nation be healed, if the Church remains divided? In the songs and accompanying study guide materials presented in the previous pages, readers were asked to revisit events and themes from our nation’s past and to consider and ponder upon the ways in which God’s people, His Church, fell short in their duties as salt and light in our culture.

In the pages which follow, you will find three words which represent three steps toward healing the Church’s testimony in the land.

FIRST, Christians are asked to humbly **reexamine** our nation’s history and our own personal views of race, culture and denominationalism in light of scripture. We believe God is giving his Church a fresh perspective on how our past shapes both our present and our future.

SECOND, Christians are challenged to **reconcile** with one another. Today, in many places throughout our land, God is directing His Church to take leadership in healing the long standing wounds which have divided us for so many generations.

THIRD, because the Church struggles to have its testimony heard, and its message understood there remains a work to be done in the realm of credibility. The process of reexamination naturally leads to reconciliation. And the fruit of reconciliation, restored relationships within the Church, will help to **rehabilitate** the Church’s testimony in the land.

These three steps will restore respect and genuine credibility for the Church’s testimony and the gospel message will go forth.

The blood of
Christ gives men
the power to be
reconciled to one
another.

Step I: Reexamination

King Josiah's Lament

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

(Psalms 139:23-24 NIV)

King Josiah paced back and forth, pensive and reflective, his hands clasped behind his back. Standing in front of him, lips quivering, a scribe prepared to read from the book of the law. During temple renovations, one of the priests had found a forgotten scroll and brought it to the king's attention. Josiah had asked for its contents to be revealed.

As the terrified scribe read the scroll, Josiah contemplated his nation's history, comparing it with God's law (His written word). The king quickly realized that he and his people had fallen short of God's standards. As the scribe finished reading, the king cried aloud, tore his clothes in anguish and repented before the Lord.

"What shall we do?" he said. "For we have not been following the instructions of this book: you must be very angry with us, for neither we nor our ancestors have followed your commands."

(2 Ki 22:12 TLB)

THE FIRST STEP in any healing process is examination. For the Christian in search of a right relationship with God, examination must be continuous. To **re**examine means to examine again and suggests a need to review the truth about our own lives in light of scripture over and over again in order to obtain a clearer understanding and a purer heart..

As reconcilers, God calls us toward reexamination in two ways: first to humbly reexamine our own individual hearts - to look at our own personal histories in light of God's word and to make the necessary adjustments in our thinking and behavior

and to apologize or ask forgiveness if required; second to be like King Josiah - to reexamine our views of history itself - to look at our own national history in light of God's word, to seek God for forgiveness where appropriate and to work toward mending the damage done by our own and previous generations.

"The word of God is the plumbline of history."

King Josiah was not the only Hebrew leader who had to face the reality of his nation forgetting God's word. Old Testament prophets sometimes brought the testimony of God's law, laid it alongside the testimony of history, and called for Israel's and Judah's reexamination and repentance. Sometimes God even sent his prophets to heathen nations.

The word of God is the plumbline of history. The Holy Scriptures are that against which all is to be measured and judged. The truths, precepts and principles revealed in the Bible are to guide us not only in all of our relationships, but in every area of our lives.

Before the Church can be effective in helping the nation to heal, the Church itself must be healed. And the first step toward healing is reexamination.

**"For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God ...
(1 Pet 4:17 NAS)**

Step II: Reconciliation

A Gathering of Reconcilers

"All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation."

(2 Corinthians 5:18 NIV)

"In the 1950's, God presented the American, white, evangelical church with a marvelous opportunity."

On Saturday, October 4, 1997 between noon and 6:00pm, hundreds of thousands of men gathered on the nation's front lawn in Washington, DC, for the Promise Keepers (PK) event called Stand in the Gap. Ten Jumbotrons set up between the Capitol steps and the Washington Monument delivered images of the Promise Keepers' leaders and guest speakers.

At approximately 4:00 pm, the throngs attending the event witnessed, on the screens, what many believe was a spiritual turning point in American history. At center stage, PK leaders gathered to publicly repent of racism in the Church and ask God for forgiveness and mercy. As humble prayers ascended, the leaders extended their hands toward one another. A white hand, a black hand, a Native American hand, a Jewish hand, an Asian hand - all joined together with hearts of humility and repentance for the racism of our nation's past. And as they prayed, the multitudes joined in, some standing together holding hands, some kneeling alone, others lying prostrate on the ground.

RACIAL RECONCILIATION is essential to the health of Christ's body. As we begin this new millennium, the Church can not afford to be divided over skin color and cultural dissimilarity.

The Church had at least two opportunities in the 20th century. The first one came in the early 1900's at the Azusa Street revivals. For several years, blacks and whites met together following the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. These events birthed the modern Pentecostal movement. But after a time, black believers formed one denomination and white believers formed another. Today, scant evidence remains of God's reconciliatory work from those years.

A second opportunity arose during the 1950's. After generations of racial oppression and degradation, after years of "Jim Crow" laws and "back of the bus" treatment, Southern blacks, then called Negroes, grew tired of being oppressed. Sparked by Rosa Parks' refusal to yield her bus seat to a white man and led by a Baptist preacher named Martin Luther King, Jr., a series of protests unfolded which catapulted the oppressed and their cause to center-stage America. At that critical juncture in our nation's history, God presented the white, American, evangelical church with a marvelous opportunity. "Come stand with your black Christian brothers and sisters and fight with them to recover their lost dignity."

God's sovereign hand could be seen. More than once, prayers supernaturally turned back water hoses and armed police. God had intervened. But the white, evangelical church remained silent, just as they had done before. Today, a generation later, we still struggle to bridge the divide between black Christians and white Christians.

Before the Church can be effective in helping the nation to heal, the Church itself must be healed. The first step toward healing is reexamination. The second step is reconciliation.

"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?"

(Isa 58:6 NIV)

Step III: Rehabilitation

Witness for the Defense

"Whoever heard me spoke well of me, and those who saw me commended me, because I rescued the poor who cried for help, and the fatherless who had none to assist him."

(Job 29:11-12 NIV)

A defense attorney, his defense team and their client sat around a conference table in a small side room at the county courthouse. The defendant shifted uncomfortably in his chair. Legal documents littered the table. The attorney collected his thoughts, shook his head in frustration, took a deep breath, and spoke.

"Things are not going well. I wish we'd done a more thorough job interviewing your brother before we put him on the stand. The prosecution did a lot of damage to his testimony during cross examination. Blew some holes in it I'd say. I'm not sure the jury believes his story. Why didn't you tell us about his psychological problems?"

The client hung his head. "I didn't know he'd been to three different psychiatrists."

The attorney sighed and sat back in his chair. "Unfortunately at this point, he's all we've got. We have no choice but to put him back on the stand and try to rehabilitate his testimony."

REHABILITATION is an interesting word. We think of an injured person working hard to regain the use of an arm or a leg, or learning how to speak again. We think of rebuilding the inner life of a convicted criminal, rendering him useful to society. Sin has devastated our race. A person crippled by injury or disease, a convicted criminal - neither reflect God's original intent for the human race.

But rehabilitate the Church? Is this an apt use of the word? More accurately we should say, "rehabilitate the *testimony* of the Church."

What is God's intent for the Church? Christ created his Church to embody

his fullness in the earth - to reveal His glory, to testify of His goodness and display His many attributes.

"As we pro-actively build affirming relationships across racial lines, we help to rehabilitate the testimony of the Church in the land."

Jesus calls us "the salt of the earth." We help preserve the world against the ravages of sin. What happens when we fail? Don't others - false prophets or witnesses - step into the vacuum and offer alternative answers to the world's problems?

Who stepped in when the white, evangelical Church failed to come the aid of their black brothers and sisters fighting for freedom in the 1950's and 60's? How are we perceived by the unredeemed in our land today? Are we respected? Is our counsel followed?

Every nation throughout history has been guided by a philosophy. Every nation takes counsel from some source (Psalms 2:2). At one time in our history we were guided by the Judeo-Christian ethic. But through the years, as the Church weakened, so did our testimony in the land. Today, if we can work to repair the damage done by generations of racism and other failures in the Church, our testimony can be rehabilitated. And we will once again be able to return to our historical role as the nation's counselor.

"... and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."
(Matthew 28:19)

Character Traits of a Reconciler

GOD HAS CALLED EACH OF US TO BECOME A RECONCILER. Have you ever wondered what it would take to fulfill this high calling? Below are four character qualities which are considered earmarks for the Christian reconciler. Read each section, look up the scripture references, and prayerfully consider how God might use you in this important ministry of reconciliation.

HUMILITY. The sin of pride separated man from God in the garden. Gen 3:5 To this day, pride keeps men from God. Pride also separates men from each other, causing strife, conflict and even wars. Why do we think that our own culture is better than our neighbors'? Rom 12:3 To become a reconciler, one must be willing to re-think his perspective--to become a learner - maybe even place himself in the shoes of others. I Peter 5:5

ENDURANCE. Undoing hundreds of years of racial and denominational prejudice will not happen in a week, a month or even a year. Healing may take several generations. Don't give up if your initial attempt at friendship is rejected. How long has God endured with us? Ex. 34:6 Likewise, if you have been repeatedly offended, remember that Jesus taught us that we should repeatedly continue to forgive. Matt 18:21-22

AFFIRMATION. God created every person who has ever lived. All of us are made in his image. Try to find something of God in everyone you meet. Then, give respect to those who are different from you, cheerfully and openly. Does God expect any less of you? (I Tim. 5:11)

LOVE. Think of others more highly than you think of yourself. Try to understand the lessons of history from another's point of view. Then, use what you've learned for their benefit rather than your own. How can you be a Christian if you don't practice love? (I Cor. 13)

Becoming a Reconciler

BUILDING MISSION BASED FRIENDSHIPS

Friendships Happen Naturally.

Most missionaries called to bring the gospel to people who have never heard of Christ, are called to travel abroad. Mission workers temporarily forsake their own natural friendships and travel across the globe to create new friendships with people who look, speak and behave differently. The idea behind such purposeful effort is that as new friendships are formed, the gospel is received, and lives are changed forever. With foreign missionaries, friendships are formed with purpose.

Such is not the way for most Christians who live, work, and attend school and church in their own communities. For us, friendships happen naturally.

Today, in the spirit of reconciliation, God is challenging His people to actively build friendships out of a mission orientation. In some Christian circles, joint meetings and gatherings are held on occasion, to help foster the vision of reconciliation. And as wonderful as these gatherings are, genuine cross-racial, cross-cultural, and cross-denominational friendships are key to permanent healing within the Church.

Becoming a Missionary of Reconciliation

Is God calling you to build mission-based friendships across racial, denominational, and even cultural lines? Most committed Christians give little thought to extending themselves to non-believers in the school and workplace. We understand that we must be pro-active in building friendships in order to communicate the love of Christ to the lost.

But have you ever considered building a mission-based friendship with another Christian of a different race or ethnic background in your own local community? Unlike foreign missionaries, missionaries of Christian reconciliation are able to stay within their present homes, their existing, natural friendships and the comfort of their own congregations. (Some may have a call to become members of a different Church for a season). Those building new friendships will find that they have far more in common than not. The most common element is of course a mutual love for God and commitment to Jesus Christ.

How will you respond?

Acknowledgements

Thanks:

Thanks to Matt and Jean Watson who have labored with us, lending their time, talent and personal resources to help forward this project. Thanks to all the performers listed below, some who have endured with us for over two years. Thanks to Jeff Ling and the New Covenant Fellowship Praise Band and to Rev. Bob Yarbrough, Senior Pastor of New Covenant Fellowship. Thanks to Jerry Smith for his contribution to *The Ruin*. And thanks to Robin Sturm, Carrie Rodriguez and Karen Watkins who performed interpretive dance on the evening of the recording.

The Recording:

Songs for this CD were recorded in various places. **The Truth** and **The Breach** were recorded in the studio of Matt Watson. **The Dawn**, **The Hope**, and **The Way** were recorded at Hylton High School on May 7th, 1994 for the Prince William Co., VA National Day of Prayer Service. All other songs were recorded live at New Covenant Fellowship on May 4th, 1996 with assistance from the New Covenant Fellowship Praise Band under the direction of Rev. Jeffrey Ling who also assisted in arranging several songs.

The New Covenant Fellowship Praise Band:

Acoustic guitar - Jeff Ling; Keyboard - Jack Moffatt; Bass guitar - Mike Henry; Drums - Marie Juliano; Trumpets - Donald Lee and Gerry Bowles; Vocalists - Linda Edwards, Judy Raze, Kevin and Debbie Cyrus.

The Performers:

Vocalists: Jennifer Rutherford, Richard Baker, Mark Longhelt, Mark Weaver, Curtis Jones and Joy Carter. Instrumentalists: Jean Watson on violin and Mark Weaver on harmonica.

The Songs

All songs written by Mark Weaver and John Jenkins except the portions of **The Ruin** which are adaptations of three traditional songs. All songs copyright 1995 by Three Minstrels Music.

1. **The Truth:** guitar and vocal by Mark Weaver / percussion by Matt Watson
2. **Dance of Nations:** arrangement and vocal background by Matt Watson / lead vocal by Jennifer Rutherford.
3. **The Dawn:** lead vocals by Jean Watson and Mark Longhelt / guitar by Mark Weaver / intro by Matt Watson / violin by Jean Watson.
4. **The Dream:** lead vocal and harmonica by Mark Weaver / background vocal by Curtis Jones.
5. **The Breach:** arrangement by Matt Watson / vocals by Mark Weaver and Joy Carter / violin solo by Jean Watson / acoustic guitar by Mark Weaver.
6. **The Divide:** Acoustic guitar and vocal by Richard Baker.
7. **The Ruin:** vocals by Curtis Jones, Richard Baker, and Mark Weaver.
8. **The Hope:** lead vocals by Jean Watson and Mark Longhelt / guitar by Mark Weaver / violin by Jean Watson.
9. **The Call:** lead vocal and harmonica by Mark Weaver.
10. **The Way:** lead vocals by Jean and Matt Watson / arrangement by Matt Watson.
11. **Holy God:** lead vocal by Curtis Jones / trumpet solo by Gerry Bowles.

