

# Living to Win

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Personal from. . .  
*Ronald L. Dart*

## A New World Order?

**“Behold, their valiant ones shall cry without: the ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly. The highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth: he hath broken the covenant, he hath despised the cities, he regardeth no man. The earth mourneth and languisheth: Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down: Sharon is like a wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits. Now will I rise, saith the LORD; now will I be exalted; now will I lift up myself” (Isaiah 33:7-10).**

Just when we thought that peace was breaking out in the world, just when we thought we had won the cold war, just when nations seemed ready to communicate, and just when a new world order seemed possible, Saddam Hussein shattered all illusions with the rape of Kuwait.

Well, perhaps not all illusions. President Bush I was able to convince the United Nations to array virtually the whole world against Saddam Hussein and Iraq. Hussein was the last great barrier to peace. If his aggression could be rolled back, it would send a message to petty tyrants everywhere — aggression against peaceful neighbors would not be tolerated in “the new world order.”

Would God that it were so. But as I sat and watched Gulf War I on television with commercials for dog food and new cars, I was left with the growing feeling that in the end nothing would be resolved. Iraq’s military machine might be destroyed. Kuwait might be liberated (for the time being). But nothing will be done to alleviate the pernicious hatred that festers in the Middle East. There might even be a new world order, as the president often termed it, but it would be just as corrupt as the old. We finally smashed Hitler’s war machine in World War II, but we did not eradicate the evil that became the Third Reich. We only scattered it. We finally broke the economy of the Soviet Union, but the spirit remains. We will have defeated the military complex of Saddam Hussein, but we will do nothing to the spirit of greed or the lust for power. They will move on until we’ve faced them yet again.

Such cynicism is painful for me, but it should be plain to anyone that the destruction of Saddam Hussein that is now envisioned will only shift the focal point of evil in the world. It may postpone the spread of nuclear weapons, but no one supposes it will stop it for long. The profit motive will lead Germans, Russians, Ukrainians and others to provide chemical and nuclear capability to anyone who will pay enough for it. Unreasoned hatred

will see to it that there is always someone willing to pay the price. An abundance of oil will see to it that the money is there.

It is not that I have no hope. I have just lost faith in mankind. Not only are we powerless to stop new tyrants from replacing old ones, there are forces at work in the world that we cannot touch. In the words of the Apostle Paul, “We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (Ephesians 6:12).

We can destroy military hardware. We can blow up refineries and power plants. We can decimate Iraq’s Republican Guard and try Saddam Hussein as a war criminal, but we cannot touch the “wicked spirits in high places.” We will not overcome evil or defeat the spirits of this world with cruise missiles, bombers, or M1 tanks.

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# Joyful Celebration!

More than 1140 faithful and dedicated Christians from several different countries made their way to Niceville, Florida to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles 2002. Excitement filled the Fine Arts Auditorium at the Okaloosa-Walton Community College on Friday evening, September 20<sup>th</sup> as the Feast began. God the Father and Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior were exalted and praised through joyful songs selected by young and old alike. Ronald L. Dart's short sermon pointed out that Jesus came in the flesh to *tabernacle* among us and He is very much in this Feast.

## *Uplifting Sermons*

Again on the first morning of the Feast, Ronald Dart spoke about "A Personal Journey." Ron Smith followed that afternoon with a sermon titled, "God's Gifts to the Church." "Your Family and Mine" was the topic covered by John Reedy. Larry Watkins spoke on "The Heart of Marriage" on Monday. Tuesday morning, Ron Dart spoke to a packed house on "One Person at a Time." The next day, Steve Sander's sermon, "Fear and Hope" tied in beautifully with the previous sermon. Because the remnant of Hurricane Isidore was moving on shore, the auditorium closed its doors on Thursday and services were cancelled. Youth Day was on Friday.

A spiritually rejuvenated crowd heard Ron Dart close the Feast with a sermon titled, "The Choice." Everyone is calling 9/11 the *day America changed*. But how, he asked? It is harder to get on a plane. Some people even started praying and attending church. But those spiritual efforts are already sliding. America is in the midst of a hundred year decline. Mr. Dart pointed out that the real prophetic problem in this country is *moral*.

## *Meaningful Seminars*

All eight days were jammed packed with meaningful things to do. Seminars were offered at 9:30 every morning except on the holy days. These included a variety of subjects directed toward personal, spiritual and church growth. Those who attended the Vacation Bible School seminar learned how to plan and run a VBS and make it an effective outreach ministry to their community. Singles learned how to live a fulfilled life. Others learned how to share their faith, answer questions and be effective in evangelistic efforts in the seminars titled "Finding Common Ground," and "Understanding Spiritual Hunger." A slide presentation of the universe was presented to facilitate a biblical discussion about "Our Awesome Universe is for Life!"

Those wishing to improve their spiritual and personal lives attended workshops titled, "Steps to Surrender: Bringing People to Christ," or "Simplify Your Life" and make it more interesting and exciting. Parents learned how to make the Sabbath and holy days an enjoyable time of celebration for the entire family.

## *Awesome Activities*

The Feast is a time to celebrate, a time to meet new people, a time to renew friendships, and a time to bond with God and brethren. CEM provides every opportunity for this to happen. Activities were designed to create a joyful atmosphere and make the Feast friendly and special. This year's activities included such things as laser tag, teen and young adult beach party, family dance, seniors and singles luncheons, summer camp reunion, family fun night, mini golf, pie and ice cream social, and a variety show. The family picnic and golf scramble were cancelled because of the storm.

### ***Exciting Youth Classes***

All attendance records were broken as eager kids excitedly packed five classrooms to learn about God and His Son in a fun and effective way. Wide eyed Beginners (3-5) entered a “train depot” every day to get “All Aboard” and learn interesting Bible lessons. As many as 38 desirous Primaries (6-8) boarded their “airplane” and were “Ready for Takeoff!” each morning at 9:30. This is a class that will likely be split in two next year. Our Juniors enjoyed an Olympic theme as they learned what it takes to “Be A Winner!” About 35 Intermediates (12-15) anxiously packed their classroom to “Zero-In” on relevant lessons about God. Senior Teens (16-19) learned the importance of planning every aspect of their lives and not just letting things happen. Their theme for the week was “Plan-it on Planet Earth.”

For the first time special classes were offered for our young adults 20 and over. Interactive classes were held Sunday and Tuesday discussing germane subjects in an interesting way.

Kids like to be where kids are. So bring your kids to Niceville next year where the turned-on kids will be. Kids and teens in Niceville learn about God. They learn morals. They learn how to live to win! YEA kids celebrate the Feast in a *big way!*

### ***Great Youth Day***

Youth Day was an enormous success! YEA makes every effort to develop and use the God given talents of our children and teens. Ashley Seaman and Chelsea De Shazer are in early elementary school. Yet they treated us with *Amazing Grace*, *Jesus Loves Me*, and the Chorus from *Judas Macabeus* on their violins. Patrick, Daniel, and Bonnie Monahan sang a spirited trio. Katherine McCommon thrilled the audience with her beautiful voice. Through Josh Hamilton’s and Chad Davis’ testimonials, everyone was enlightened about the difficulties Christian teens face today. Aaron Quinn encouraged and exhorted us with his sermonette. Congregational singing was masterfully led by Teri Osborn. Virtually every student was involved in one of the three youth choirs. Nothing is cuter, nothing thrills you more than seeing three to five year old tots sing about God. The Primaries and Juniors waved their flags as they marched onto the stage singing *Stand Up*, *Stand Up for Jesus* and *Onward Christian Soldiers*. After missing a year of hearing from our teens, everyone was thrilled to hear such a large group of beautiful voices singing *Morning Has Broken*.

Skits on Youth Day provided the perfect opportunity for everyone to better understand what YEA offers their kids and their church. Little “bored” kids became energized in the first skit with the idea of having a Vacation Bible School in their church. Churches in our tradition have long offered summer camp. But in the second skit YEA felt it was time that we all know how exciting it can be to attend summer camp. The last skit was a mini Intermediate YEA class in action. They saw how through active and interactive learning the lesson is driven more deeply into the minds and hearts of every youth.

### ***Feast Plans for 2003***

Yes, plans are already underway for an *even greater Feast in 2003*. The Okaloosa-Walton Fine Arts Auditorium has already been reserved from October 11<sup>th</sup> through the 18<sup>th</sup> next year. Better planning, better organization, better sermons, better classes, better activities and better everything are in the works. Information should start showing up on our website at [www.cemnetwork.com](http://www.cemnetwork.com) in November. Check out the housing information, make your reservations, and plan to join us for the 2003 Feast that will renew and enliven your spiritual and physical life.

# ***See you in 2003!***

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One of the striking contrasts of the war in the Gulf was the difference between the Iraqi people and their leaders. Journalists covering the war were unanimous in citing the kindness and hospitality of the Iraqi people. But their country had been taken over by a band of paranoid thugs who shot their way to power. Hasn't anyone noticed that the same thing was true of the people of Vietnam, North Korea, Germany, Japan, and Russia?

If the problem is not with the people of the world, then we ought to look elsewhere. Paul spoke of a "prince of the power of the air," and said that it is at work in the world (Ephesians 2:2). Jesus observed that when an unclean spirit is cast out of a man, it doesn't cease to exist. Rather it wanders about looking for another host (Matthew 12:43-45). There is a spirit world that exists in parallel with our own; it is the source of much of the evil in this world.

Someone asked me if I supported the war in Iraq. Speaking as a minister, I could never be in favor of war. But if I were President of the United States, I might not have that luxury. We may have no choice. We live in a dangerous world and it is the business of governments to defend their people as best they can. But as individuals, we need to understand that we are not going to win the *spiritual* war that way. Paul said elsewhere, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds" (2 Corinthians 10:3-4).

We are not defenseless against the spirit world, but our weapons are prayer, the Word of God, faith, and hope. And our hope is in a "new world order" – not one created by the United Nations, but by a returning Christ.

We wish the President well and pray for guidance for our leaders. We hope for freedom for the Iraqi people. We wish for a resolution of the Palestinian problem and for peace in the Middle East. But we expect no permanent resolution to the wars and heartaches of the world until God Himself smashes the *spiritual* infrastructure that infests this world. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

*Ronald L. Dart*

### **"The Signs of the Times" Free Tape Offer**

The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus on an occasion and asked Him to show them a sign from heaven. Mind you, Jesus had been up and down their land healing the sick and casting out demons. But they still wanted a sign. Jesus replied: "When it is evening, ye say, *It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?*" (Matthew 16:2b-3).

It is odd when you think about it. They had seen all the signs anyone should ever need. Why could they not "discern" them? What was missing?

In one of his most important and insightful messages, Ronald Dart makes it clear where the gap in their understanding lay. If you are only going to order one tape from us this year, make sure you get "The Signs of the Times." With the help of God's Spirit, it could save you a lot of grief. The tape is free, so don't hesitate. Check the box on the enclosed card and send it back today.



**Tune in for the latest  
weekly broadcast.**

**October 12 - October 18**  
*Christian Origins 69*

**October 19 - October 25**  
*Christian Origins 70*

**October 26 - November 1**  
*Christian Origins 71*

**November 2 - November 8**  
*Christian Origins 72*

**November 9 - November 15**  
*Christian Origins 73*

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*That the man of God may be proficient and equipped for every good work.*