

# Born to Win

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Personal from. . .

**Ronald L. Dart**

Dear Friends,

In England, a couple of centuries ago, it was the custom when a person in a village died, that the church bell would be rung. They had a peal that indicated that someone had died, and tolled the bell for him. It is from this custom that John Donne wrote the well know meditation: "No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a premonitory were, as well as if a manor of thy friend's or thine own were. Any man's death diminishes me because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee."

On Tuesday, September 11, 2001, I came to understand this in a way I never had before. More than 6000 people who were complete strangers to me died in the most spectacular act of terrorism the world has ever seen. It isn't that there hasn't been greater loss of life. There has been. In London, in Dresden, in Tokyo, in Hiroshima, in Nagasaki. But this is the first time in history that so many people have watched in real time as so many people died.

I couldn't help thinking as I

watched the images of people running for their lives, then of people running in to rescue lives, of what the people of London went through in the Blitz. They did not merely have one or two buildings collapse. Night after night their city was bombed flat and their firemen had to fight fires and the Germans at the same time.

I have been profoundly moved by the courage of those who have gone into danger to save the lives of others. And I thought a contrary thought. It is *natural* to be moved to acts of courage to save lives. We may think we would be cowards in the face of danger but we are wrong. These were ordinary people who risked their lives and did unspeakably courageous things. Because it is *natural* to save lives.

Then came the corollary of this contrary thought: It is *unnatural* to take life. Being a country boy by birth, and optimistic by nature, there are some things that take a while to register on me. But not long ago, I watched in stunned disbelief as the story of Andrea Yates played out on television. How could a *mother* remorselessly drown her own five little children in a bathtub? I couldn't keep the images out of my mind of her

holding them under the water and then taking them one by one and laying their little wet bodies out on the bed.

I didn't say much about this at first, because I didn't know what to say. And while I was thinking and wondering what our nation was coming to, Nikolay Soltys, a Russian immigrant, stabbed his wife to death, killed an aunt and uncle and their two beautiful grandchildren and made off with his little three year old boy. The whole country held its breath in fear for the little boy and then he was found, beaten and with his little throat cut, in a cardboard box. When that last news broke, so did the hearts of the American people. At the same time, my question of what our nation was coming to

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came into focus.

While it is true that America has its internal problems, it is also true that there is a nameless evil afoot in the world, and it has come upon us. The world at large has a hard time with evil. Either we deny its existence altogether or put an ugly, slathering face on it. But the face of evil is lot like the face of Andrea Yates, bland, remorseless, uncaring, without love. And now the tragic destruction of the World Trade Center by a force that is bland, remorseless and uncaring. There is no organization even taking credit for it. No cause being advanced. No statements of vengeance. In fact, we are seeing perhaps the greatest and most widespread *denials* of responsibility in the history of terrorism. Historically, acts of terrorism have a cause. Everyone knows the IRA has a cause. Everyone knows Hezbollah has a cause.

But neither before nor after the WTC bombing were there any demands or statements of vengeance. It leaves one wondering if there was any motive for what happened beyond the act of destruction and murder itself. And that leads naturally to the conclusion that there is great evil in the world, that it is a spiritual evil, and that it is beyond our power to stop it.

We were utterly powerless to stop what happened at the World Trade Center. Even the warnings that it was coming couldn't be believed. The act was completely irrational from a human point of view. And that is the nature of perfect evil. It is perfectly irrational.

We may be able to stop airplane hijackings, but we probably can't imagine what this evil has in mind for us next. Without divine protection, we are helpless.

Then this line of thought took me to the ninth chapter of the Book of Revelation. This is the description of the fifth trumpet of the very last days leading up to the return of Christ. I do not think we have arrived at this point in history yet, but there is a riveting description of an event here that made me think. The account begins with the sounding of a trumpet: "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit." It is all symbolic, of course, and filled with imagery but it evokes an image of releasing a surge of great evil that has been locked up and restrained hitherto.

The forces that are released here "had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is *Abaddon*, but in the Greek tongue hath his name *Apollyon*" (verse 11). The name *Apollyon* means "Destroyer." That is what he does. That is who he is. It almost made me wonder if there is a destroying evil spirit that has been bound through eons past who is even worse than Satan. We are not at the time of the fifth trumpet yet. I cite this passage to identify the enemy.

So if we are not at the fifth trumpet, where are we? And should we be afraid? I don't know. It is tempting to say that we have nothing to fear but fear itself. And that may be true. There

is a chance, however small, that we will go another 10 years without a hijacking.

There are two great temptations here. One is the temptation to try to scare people into repentance and obedience, a temptation a lot of preachers are already giving in to. The other temptation is to reassure you that things will be just fine, that tomorrow will be as this day and much more abundant.

I see preachers taking two tacks on this. One group says that we are a sinful people and God is punishing us. The other says that we are sinners and God has taken His protective hand off us. I know we are sinners, but it seems to me that both these tacks are overly simplistic.

Nevertheless, of these two alternatives, the idea that God has forsaken us is much more frightening than that He is chastising us. When God chastises, it is always with a purpose and is never utterly destructive. It is *Abaddon* that is the destroyer, not God. If God has chastised us, there will be a respite in which we have time to repent and come around. If He has taken his hand off us, the end is in sight. We have no protection and the destroyer is loose.

I agree with Billy Graham's assessment that the nation needs to repent. But if we need to repent, what is our sin? Where did we go wrong? Space won't permit me to develop this theme here, but I have developed it in depth in a recent sermon. The sermon is titled, "While We Can," and you can have a free

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# Youth Ministry in Small Churches

Author: Rick Chromey  
A Book Review by Allie Dart

Have you assumed that your church is too small to have Sabbath School classes, or an effective youth program? If only a handful of kids attend your church each week, you may feel making the effort to do these things just isn't worth it. Consider this: One-quarter of *all* churches in this country have fewer than 35 in attendance, and one-half have fewer than 75 in attendance. Yet, many of these churches have effective youth programs.

*Youth Ministry in Small churches* is a "how to" book answering numerous questions that small churches have. This book addresses to following questions:

- ▶ What should you do if only one or two kids show up?
- ▶ What can you do if there is no good meeting space?
- ▶ How do you deal with siblings in the same class or youth group?
- ▶ How can you have a youth group if you don't have any kids.
- ▶ With such small numbers in attendance, should you combine classes?

There is no need to get discouraged because your youth attendance is small. The smallest church *can and should* have effective youth programs. Relationships make small churches different. People know and meet each other's needs. Close relationships are a key benefit of small church youth ministry.

The small church is a volunteer organization often with little or no youth ministry training. Volunteer leaders develop long-term, and often better relationships with young people than a paid staff. Kids know that volunteers participate because they want to – not because they're paid to.

The small church is also intergenerational. They have all-church picnics, family retreats, softball games which include all age groups, and potlucks for the entire church. Young people are more actively involved in church life in the small church.

Small churches that discover creative ways to include teenagers in the church will see young people blossom in leadership skills and Christian commitment. Involved kids are much more likely to be faithful in attendance and remain in the faith. A six-step process for giving kids responsibilities in the church is given.

Young people are a vital part of a congregation. Our kids are not only the church of tomorrow, *they are the church today!* A small church can have an enormous impact on the lives of children and young people. Kids can also be an immense asset to the church. Instead of waiting for the youth in your church to grow up, remember that we're called to help them become *active parts* of the church *today*. Only then will they mature into church leaders for tomorrow.

Youth Ministry isn't a solo act. Recruiting quality volunteers in a small church is a must. This book discusses the "hows" of recruiting. Regardless of how small a youth group might be, it provides an ideal setting for the development of a team ministry – a group of willing adults who do together what none of them can do alone."

"The best youth leaders are people who – regardless of age – are willing to listen to and support young people." Recruiting and training a solid core of volunteers is a long term process. You rarely get the desired results quickly; instead the training is an investment in the future. Materials and ways to educate youth leaders to meet the particular challenges they will face in Youth Ministry are laid out in this book.

In small churches money is often limited. This book tells you how to present and promote your budget proposal to your church board and how to keep track of expenses. If your church decides not to include Youth Ministry in its budget, alternative funding methods are given. A small church doesn't have to always go it alone. Ways to benefit from cooperative ministry are outlined through networking opportunities.

This book is truly a wealth of information every small church needs. It can serve as a spark plug to get you excited about the possibilities in your youth group – even if you just have one group member. To paraphrase a line out of the movie, *Field of Dreams*, "If you will build a Sabbath School and youth ministry, they will come." The sooner you read this book the sooner you can make an eternal difference in the lives of your kids. It will not only make a difference in their lives, it can energize your church, give it real purpose, and help it grow spiritually, if not in numbers. Call 1-888-BIBLE 44 today to order this book through CEM's bookstore.

## Daily Radio

The *Born to Win* broadcast can be heard daily on these stations:

- Huntsville, Alabama**  
3:30 p.m. daily - WBXR 1140 AM
- Montgomery, AL**  
8:30 a.m. daily - WAPZ 1250 AM
- Jonesboro, Arkansas**  
6:30 p.m. daily - KBTM 1230 AM
- Little Rock, Arkansas**  
5:30 p.m. daily - KAAV 1090 AM
- Denver, Colorado**  
5:00 a.m. daily - KLT 670 AM
- Pensacola, Florida**  
7:00 a.m. daily - WASG 550 AM
- Atlanta, Georgia**  
7:00 a.m. daily - WZNO 1230 AM
- Atlanta, Georgia**  
10:30 a.m. daily - WGKA 1190 AM
- Augusta, Georgia**  
5:30 p.m. daily - WFAM 1050 AM
- Morrow, Georgia**  
7:30 a.m. & 7 p.m. daily  
WSSA 1570 AM
- Kansas City, Kansas**  
4:00 p.m. daily - KCNW 1380 AM
- Richmond, Kentucky**  
12:30 p.m. daily - WCBR 1110 AM
- Gretna, Louisiana**  
4:30 a.m. daily - WNO 1060 AM
- Denton, Maryland**  
10:00 a.m. daily - WKDI 840 AM
- Jackson, Mississippi**  
7:00 a.m. daily - WTWZ 1120 AM
- Omaha, Nebraska**  
3:30 p.m. daily - KLNG 1560 AM
- Asheville, North Carolina**  
4:00 p.m. daily - WSKY 1230 AM
- Mount Olive, North Carolina**  
11:00 a.m. daily - WDJS 1430 AM
- Anderson, South Carolina**  
9:00 a.m. daily - WRIX 1020 AM
- Charleston, South Carolina**  
4:30 p.m. & 7:30 p.m. daily  
WZJY 1480 AM
- Greenville, South Carolina**  
4:30 p.m. daily - WELP 1360 AM
- Chattanooga, Tennessee**  
5:00 p.m. daily - WLMR 1450 AM
- Beaumont, Texas**  
8:30 a.m. daily - KQHN 1510 AM
- Dallas, Texas**  
6:30 a.m. daily - KSKY 660 AM
- Jacksonville, Texas**  
5:30 p.m. daily - KLJT 102.3 FM
- Ephrata, Washington**  
6:00 a.m. Monday - Saturday  
KTRW 970 AM



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

- October 20 - October 26**  
*All About the New Testament 3*
- October 27 - November 2**  
*Halloween*
- November 3 - November 9**  
*All About the New Testament 4*
- November 10 - November 16**  
*The Enemy of Children*

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cassette tape of the sermon by simply checking the box on the enclosed card and returning it to us. Don't miss this important message. It is apparent that this assault on innocent people has caused many to turn to God. We need to understand from the Bible where we go from here.

Meanwhile, join us in praying for those who are going in harms way to protect us from the destroyer. They are going to need more than guns and shields in this war.

With love in Christ's service,  
**Ronald L. Dart**

## Daily Radio

The *Born to Win* broadcast can be heard daily on these stations:

**The following stations broadcast daily at 2:30 p.m.**

- Ephrata, Washington**  
KTAC 93.9 FM
- Moses Lake, Washington**  
KGER 95.9 FM
- Pasco, Washington**  
KGDN 101.3 FM
- Spokane, Washington**  
KSPO 106.5 FM
- Wenatchee, Washington**  
KTBI 810 AM
- Yakima, Washington**  
KYAK 930 AM

## Radio Update

**Please note the following new station:**

- Montgomery, AL**  
WAPZ 1250 AM  
Sunday - Friday 8:30 a.m.

## Calendar Of Events

### Meet the Teacher

- Saturday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>  
1:30 - 5:00 p.m.  
Hilton Palm Beach Airport Hotel  
150 Australian Avenue  
West Palm Beach, Florida  
For more information, please call  
(561) 585-4580 or (903) 509-2999

## Christian Educational Ministries



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