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MARIO MURILLO MINISTRIES NEWSLETTER

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**Striking at the heart
of evil and despair**



STRIKING AT THE HEART OF EVIL AND DESPAIR

When Josh and I drove to the tent, we passed a junkyard. We saw police with guns drawn. We knew then we were in the right place—our place. We are in Stockton, California—one of the nation's hardest hit cities for violence, poverty and addiction. We are partnering with Frank Saldana and Inner-City Action.

What God did in Stockton was astonishing. The crowds saw proof of the power of Jesus. The miracles were compelling. Many souls were saved and bodies healed. However, I must let the pictures tell the story of what happened because this letter is about something way beyond Stockton.

The real message of this letter is epitomized by this phrase: Striking at the heart of evil and despair. A great urgency grips me. I believe our nation teeters on the edge. Satan wants to blow out the flickering candle of the Gospel here at home. The Body of Christ is almost totally unprepared for a coming storm because they are feeding on fluff. The denial that most believers live in today is horrifying.

I thank God that this letter is going out to believers who do get it—who want to broom away religious cobwebs and obey God. The American church needs a dynamic reeducation.

American Christianity needs electrode paddles to the chest. But you cannot wait for that!

You, right where you are, need to become a weapon that strikes at the heart of evil. To strike at the heart of evil and despair, do these things:

1. Face reality! American Christians assume the problem will stay in the inner city. The fire that rages in our inner cities is not going to stay there. This fire is burning its way towards your house right now. Unchecked, this fire will burn down the whole nation.

A straight-A high school student—with no ties to gangs or drugs—walks out of a convenience store into a hail of bullets. When I found out about this senseless killing, I asked how it could happen. The answer was, "He was at the wrong place at the wrong time."

Then it hit me like a Mack truck: Satan is turning entire cities into THE WRONG PLACE AT THE WRONG TIME.

2. Wake up to the work: We are not doing a good work—we are doing the work. A well-meaning Christian said, “Mario, you are doing a good work.” I gently corrected him by showing him how other Christians misuse that phrase.

If someone says, “You are doing a good work,” it is often code for, “I am glad I don’t have to do what you are doing.” The connotation is: this is a special work and not for everyone. But it is for everyone. Saving America is every believer’s business. Getting filled with the Holy Ghost to serve is the mandate for every child of God. We are not doing a good work—we are doing THE WORK.

Years of bad teaching coaxed the church away from the real work. The self-entitlement gospel changed the focus to self-fulfillment instead of fulfilling the great commission. That is one big reason we woke up to an America we can’t recognize.



What do we have to show for this compromise? We gained a system that harmlessly herds thousands of Christians into impressive campuses but we lost an entire generation, our values and soon—without a miracle, our freedom.

Jesus said in John 9:4, “I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work.”

3. God is forging us—you and me—to be the people He has been looking for.

If Church history teaches us anything, it teaches us that God waits for someone to rise in

the Name of Jesus and thrust a spear into the heart of evil. God is always on the hunt for people who will heed His call to action:

Ezekiel 22:30 — So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one.

Isaiah 63:5 — I looked, but there was no one to help, I was appalled that no one gave support; so my own arm achieved salvation for me, and my own wrath sustained me.

1 Samuel 14: 6 — Then Jonathan said to the young man who bore his armor, “Come, let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised; it may be that the Lord will work for us. For nothing restrains the Lord from saving by many or by few.”

Too many servants of God are powerless—sitting out this great battle—because they refuse to pay the price for a miracle-working anointing. They circle around the problem but never strike it directly. They have no heart for war.



3. Paying the price means you don't stop no matter what.

Remember I told you we would target 10 cities? We targeted them alright, but we were shocked by the blow- back from the enemy.

In one city, we walked into a firestorm of divided churches, violent gangs, and massive apathy among the Christians. The result was a disappointing event.

This setback hit me hard, but it points out a reality of spiritual warfare: perseverance. Are we willing to learn from our errors, get back up and attack again with greater force than ever? Are we ready to keep going no matter what? The thought of backing off when a nation and lost souls hang in the balance is too terrible to consider.

Evangelists are supposed to give glowing reports filled with pictures that make donors feel their money is well invested. Are you also willing to weep with

us in our disappointments? Will you stay with me if the vision takes a little longer than we first imagined? Will you trust my honesty about our progress?

Are you willing to see how some important victories can't be quantified in numbers and pictures? After we work with a church, young pastors become permanent revivalists—our workshops jettison hundreds of Christians out of apathy and mediocrity—we mentor other outreach ministries to make them bolder and more effective.

I am not saying we won't see massive outreaches...those are in the works. What I am saying is that the battle is fierce—we must be fiercer than the battle. I never told you this would be easy...but I know it will be glorious.

Now I want to offer one last question. It is a question that means the world to me:

4. Are we doing what we say we do? Every ministry should continually ask itself, "Are we doing what we say we do?" If I write you a letter, can I say without hesitation, we are doing what we say we do?

A ministry must always manage itself toward an outcome. What is the outcome of our efforts? Why are we doing this? Do our actions take us to the goal God gave us? Are we willing to cast everything aside—even good things—if it does not take us to our goal?

When it comes to conviction—when it comes to dedication and hard work—I will put my staff ahead of anyone. Are we doing enough? We are desperate to do much, much more. Are we as effective as we want to be? Not nearly, but we will be. The answer is summed up this way: We will strike at the heart of evil and despair.

