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## **STRATEGIES TO COMBAT THE NERO SPIRIT**

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Last year I wrote an article, *The Nero Spirit*, based on a visitation I had from the Lord. The Nero spirit is assigned to go after anything apostolic – anyone who has accepted the mandate to disciple a nation through the reformation of society. Briefly put, Nero arose against the first apostolic age because he understood that the early ecclesia (people of government) were led by a military group called apostles whose purpose was not only to get people to heaven but also to get heaven into earth until the “kingdoms of the earth became the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ”. In other words, he recognized that the apostolically led ecclesia was there to change society and the nation that it resided in and represented. This greatly threatened Nero and his society and government. His resulting strategy was to *persecute* the apostles and the ecclesia into silence and even oblivion. The Lord told me that as the first apostolic age, with its heart set on reformation, suffered the onslaught of this spirit and its agenda, our present apostolic age and the apostles that lead this movement will also encounter and do battle against this spirit.

This spirit basically has at least six characteristics. It is first and foremost anti-christ in its nature and operation. It is against the agenda of Christ through the apostles and apostolic companies they represent. It will seek to do damage to anything that is apostolic from this anti-christ viewpoint and perspective.

It is secondly a spirit of murder. It is very malicious, methodical and manipulative in its operation. We must be aware that it not only seeks to murder *reputations*, but we must be on guard and protect everything and everyone that is dear to us from the literal murder of this spirit. This is why we must actively apply the blood to ourselves and all that is close to us.

The Nero spirit is a spirit of slander. I have learned in dealing with this spirit that it seeks to use slander to neutralize the effects of apostles and that which is apostolic by destroying reputation. It will propagate and send forth lies and untruths that bring into question the integrity, motive and agenda of true apostolic people. This particular aspect of the Nero spirit is very aggressive.

Betrayal is another operation of this spirit. It knows how to put into the hearts of even long time associates betrayal that will cause them to set aside years of relationships for supposed personal promotion and gain. This is a very devastating and hurtful aspect to this spirit as it finds people who are willing to come into agreement with it.

A fifth expression of this spirit is it is given over to sexual perversions. Nero was a man driven by unrestrained sexual appetite. This spirit will work with this as well to try and bring down the apostolic and its influence in the world and society through tempting with compromise of the standard of holiness in this area.

A sixth and final display of this spirit is that it will go after the finances of the apostolic to seek to hamstring, discourage and hinder our apostolic purpose in the earth. One of the quickest ways to stop the desire of the Lord through the apostolic is to hinder and even destroy it through the “stealing” of finances. This was one that I did not put in the original article, but learned that Nero actually confiscated the property of the early believers initially to seek to stop their efforts. I have personally experienced this diabolical plan as have many others.

*(If you want more information on the operation of the Nero spirit you can see my article at [www.roberthenderson.org](http://www.roberthenderson.org). We will encounter if we are going to be used to bring reformation and disciple a nation.)*

I have learned some approaches to deal with this very aggressive and persecuting spirit. As there have been those who have asked for help when they recognized this was what they have *locked horns with*. I want to try and bring some strategies to undo and bring down this spirit and its operation.

As this spirit is assigned to stop the apostolic, one of the first things we must do is be on guard and not fall prey to being naïve. I realize that we are exhorted to “believe all things” in love, but there is also another side of the coin. Paul spoke of catching them through craftiness in II Corinthians 12:16:

***But be that as it may, I did not burden you.  
Nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you by cunning!***

Do not underestimate the deception and under handedness of this spirit. This is the mistake I have made. We must be on guard and protect ourselves where we can - by **not** giving this spirit opportunity through unwarranted trust of others. I am not saying that we become suspicious but rather on guard while we are dealing with this thing. Our simplicity, as Proverbs calls it, can work against us and into the hands of this spirit to do us harm. My wife points out to me that because I am honest - I think everyone else is honest as well. This is true. I have learned we must temper ourselves with an unusually high dimension of discernment or we will unwittingly find ourselves empowering this spirit against us and the agendas of God through the apostolic.

Another piece of the strategy we can employ against this spirit is the gathering of warriors and intercessors on our behalf. I believe that a lack of a proper intercession base worked against me in dealing with this Nero Spirit. The intercessors I had for years were some of the first targeted by this spirit. They began to believe the lies this thing was releasing and became my enemies rather than my friends in the spirit. This was a double whammy. Not only was there a vacuum created by the lack of intercession, but they begin to empower principalities against me by the words they spoke concerning me which were negative rather than positive. Let me be very clear, any lack of intercession was not on my personal part. I have very aggressively stood in the gap on a personal level. The lack was in losing an intercession base that is needed to combat this spirit. This intercessory base must be created as much as possible to break the back of this spirit. This is what the Apostle Paul referred to in Philippians 1:19.

***For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of  
the Spirit of Jesus Christ***

Paul was consistently recruiting the churches to pray for him. It was through the prayer base and intercession of the saints that the spirit of Nero that sought to destroy Paul and his influence was dismantled. I am convinced that we can at the least shorten the engagement with this spirit if we can get the right intercessors operating in our behalf over this issue.

Another piece of wisdom in dealing with this spirit is to labor to walk in forgiveness toward those who have been used by this spirit against you. This has been an ongoing process for me. There were times when I wanted to react in the flesh and still other times when I have wept in brokenness over those used by this spirit and over their families. I have sought to allow the Lord access to my heart in these areas. I believe that we are to forgive. When we forgive we receive empowerment in the spirit realm. I cannot successfully resist the devil and his forces if the Lord is resisting me. James 4:6 shows us that it is the humble that God responds to.

***But He gives more grace. Therefore He says:  
“God resists the proud,  
But gives grace to the humble.”***

There is more grace available for the humble if we can stay forgiving. I do not want the Lord resisting me. I must have as much grace or the empowerment of God that I can get. From a place of forgiveness there is an empowering in the spirit realm. Isn't it interesting that from the place of forgiveness on the cross when Jesus said, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do" that resurrection power was released in the tomb to bring Him and all things concerning him back to life? I believe that resurrection is connected to forgiveness. This is why Jesus spoke of not taking up offense in Luke 17:1-4. The Nero spirit not only wants to attack us through persecution but also wants us to get trapped in offense and bitterness so that we are neutralized in our effect in the spirit.

*Then He said to the disciples, "It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come! It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones. Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him."*

The word *offense* in the Greek is *skandalon* and is the idea of a trap with a piece of bait on it. When we reach for the bait of anger, bitterness, self-justification or revenge, we will be caught in this trap and forfeit the power of the kingdom through the taking of offense. This Nero spirit will use offense to emasculate us in our spiritual virtues and power and therefore we will be no threat to him. But when we forgive, we align ourselves with the powers of the kingdom and have at our access all that we need to bring this thing down. But we must first pass the test of forgiveness.

The power to begin the forgiveness process started for me when I heard the Lord say, "They do not determine your future, I do." At the point that I heard this, I was really struggling with things. I felt that they had stolen away years of reputation being built that was blameless, a financial base that I had built to live and minister from and other things that my family and I considered precious. But when the Lord said He was the one that held my future and that He could deal with any and every setback that had been thrust on me the power to forgive entered my spirit. I chose to forgive and receive more grace from the Lord. Now every time I have to make a decision concerning these situations, I evaluate it from the viewpoint of whether I am being vindictive or just guarding myself out of wisdom. The Lord helps us discern our hearts in these moments and places.

Connected to this issue of the forgiveness of individuals is the next piece of strategy. Even though we have the responsibility to forgive people, we should release judgment against the powers of darkness using these people. We must - in the spirit - render judgments against the Nero spirit that is driving the things that are touching us. We have a perfect right and responsibility to attack this spiritual dimension. This is what Paul communicated in Ephesians 6:12 when he said we were not wrestling against the flesh but against principalities and powers:

***For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.***

One of the key words here is *wrestle*. A wrestling match is different than a boxing match. In boxing, blows delivered are designed to knock the opponent out. But a wrestling match involves *holds, grips, and leverage* to *pin* the opponent. There is a referee that determines when an opponent has been *pinned*. We need to know that there is a judge of all the earth who will do what is right. There is a court of heaven that will render decisions on our behalf when we are faithful to use the authority that has been granted to us. This is what Daniel saw in Daniel 7:25-27 when he witnessed that which was against God and His purposes from being accomplished. Notice the court being seated and judgments being rendered:

***He shall speak pompous words against the Most High,  
Shall persecute the saints of the Most High,  
And shall intend to change times and law.  
Then the saints shall be given into his hand  
For a time and times and half a time.  
'But the court shall be seated,  
And they shall take away his dominion,  
To consume and destroy it forever.  
Then the kingdom and dominion,  
And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven,  
Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High.  
His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,  
And all dominions shall serve and obey Him.'***

As we wrestle with the powers, we must know that when enough is enough that a court will be seated and decisions on our behalf will be rendered. But these are done in accordance with what we are doing in earth. We must engage in the wrestling match with these powers.

As I have said, a wrestling match is primarily about the holds and leverage to pin our opponent. I believe our holds are the result of prophetic understanding that God brings. Ephesians 3:10 tells us that principalities and powers will be taught by the church:

***to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places,***

As the church, we manifest the manifold wisdom of God to the principalities and powers when we through prophetic insight grab holds on them and render them incapacitated. God shows us how to maneuver so that we are able to pin the opponent and end the match. We must have these strategies from the mouth of the Lord as we render judgments against this wicked and vile spirit of Nero. Decrees, declarations, repentance, judgments and other things at the leading of the Lord will slowly but surely erode away the effects of this spirit and win the victory for us. It is our job to deal with these and allow the judgment of heaven to declare the match over and our victory.

As we battle with this spirit, I have learned that it is very helpful to have places of refreshing to run to. Because this battle is so intense if at all possible when you can remove yourself from that oppressive place for just a season it helps immensely. This is what is communicated in Revelation 12:13-14. As the battle raged the Lord gave the woman in these verses eagle's wings to fly to a place of refuge:

***Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.***

It is good to go to places of nourishment, refreshing and even recreation. It is amazing how geographical places have become polluted with this Nero spirit because of the agreement of people. This agreement or alignment with this spirit serves to empower it. In the process of pulling it down, it helps to move away for a season of time on a vacation, retreat or some other getaway to get refreshed and then go back at it again until the battle is won. Times of refreshing actually serve to enhance our discernment and renew us in our ability and strength to fight. If we don't learn how to find a sabbath's rest during this battle we will run the risk of wearing out or at least have the law of diminished returns operate in our lives because of a depleted spirit. We must have those

places of rest and refreshing to stay quick, empowered and alive during the fight with this thing. Do not allow it to wear you out in the process of the conflict. Draw away as often as you can to regain perspective and spiritual vitality for the next round of the fight.

Another critical part to this point of refreshing is to surround yourself with those who can encourage you in the fight. This is very important, as they will bring fresh insight and counsel to the process. It is good to have the brothers and sisters echo a belief in you as you fight your way through this issue. Proverbs 17:17 shows us how important people are who believe in you during the war:

***A friend loves at all times,  
And a brother is born for adversity.***

During adversity you will discover who your real friends and brothers are. Bonds will be created in these times that will long outlast the battle. From these relationships will flow the power to prevail against this spirit called Nero. These practical suggestion worked wonders for me as the conquest with this spirit raged.

A final thought concerning this Nero spirit and its destruction is that I have found this isn't necessarily a quick fight. I do not say this to discourage but to instruct. This thing is so vicious and determined to turn aside the apostolic and the apostolic companies that it will stop at nothing. It knows that if we aren't stopped we will establish the kingdom rule of God in nations and in society. As a result of this, it is very aggressive and set to detour, destroy and defeat us if it can. This means that we must be filled with perseverance. This is what Paul said was a sign of the apostolic. II Corinthians 12:12 tells us there are some signs of that which is apostolic:

***Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.***

The apostolic knows how to outlast the enemies of the kingdom. We just keep putting in place kingdom rule until perfect kingdom order is seen. We, with perseverance, fight until the victory is secured. We are not prone to discouragement because God keeps us busy with the joy of our hearts. Colossians 1:11 tells us how we walk in this persevering spirit until the victory is established:

***strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy***

Only through the strength of the Lord that flows from His glorious place of power in the spirit can we walk in patience and longsuffering with an attitude of joy until the war is over. In other words, we have a secret place of empowerment in the presence of the Lord to draw from to combat the enemy. The devil has no such place. Therefore, we have the ability to continue and even outlast him perpetually. We must know where that place of strength and might is, because from that place we war until victory is secured.

As surely as the early apostolic ecclesia won the victory over Nero and the spirit that drove him, so will we. We will win the fight and establish the apostolic kingdom of the Lord in all of society until nations are disciplined. May there be a kingdom anger and indignation against this spirit until it is destroyed and dismantled completely. Always remember- we win.



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