

X-CHANGED LIFE PUBLISHING PRESS RELEASE

Judge Mark T. Boonstra

Stephen Phinney is one of the most accomplished and prophetic spiritual visionaries of our time. His incredible life story serves as a testament to what has become his life's work—sharing and extolling the redemptive powers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Dr. Phinney's latest work, "Kingdoms At War," encapsulates that mission in a call to spiritual arms, a beckoning for another Great Awakening, and an appeal to find the true meaning of life through the indwelling life of Yeshua. That is, adopting a God-centric worldview in which every aspect of our own lives reflects the life of Jesus within us.

But extolling the written work first requires a description of the man, the person who honored me by welcoming me into his IM Christian Writers Association and inviting me to join him as the co-writer of our acclaimed "Identity Politics" series. Through it we have worked to restore faith in God and country, to reawaken America to its Christian roots, and to apply those foundational values to the cultural issues facing us today.

Dr. Phinney's extraordinary life literally began in an environmental allergy-induced oxygen tent, a cocoon that entrapped him for the first five years of life. But when the "Bubble Boy" was finally able to emerge from behind its walls, he remained a captive. A captive of a seemingly cruel outside world. A world of continued childhood health issues. Of undiagnosed learning difficulties (later determined to be dyslexia or "word blindness"). Difficulties that masked the truly high-processing nature of his brain function. Bullied. Labeled as "borderline mentally retarded." Unable to read or write.

Worse still, his early home life was dysfunctional and void of spiritual meaning. Although his grandfather had been a man of God, a preacher in the Society of Friends (Quaker) church, his own father charted a much different course and, as a result, any discussion of Christianity was taboo in the home.

Is it any wonder that young Stephen Phinney found himself living a life unmoored from the Christ-like values that an older, born-again Dr. Stephen Phinney came to epitomize? Hardly.

In those early years, Dr. Phinney was divorced from the ancestral values that he later came to rediscover. A rediscovery that became his life's devotion. A devotion to values like those of his ancestor, Thomas Rogers, whose signature on the Mayflower Compact in 1620

imbued upon that first governing document of the Plymouth Colony the goal of preserving and furthering “the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian Faith.” Or of another ancestral grandfather, Samuel Chase, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Appointed by President George Washington to the United States Supreme Court, Justice Chase offered the following to one John Fries, upon sentencing him for the crime of treason:

Let me, therefore, earnestly recommend to you most seriously to consider your situation—to take a review of your past life and to employ the very little time you are to continue in this world in endeavors to make your peace with that God whose mercy is equal to his justice. I suppose that you are a Christian; and as such I address you. Be assured, my guilty and unhappy fellow-citizen, that without serious repentance of all your sins, you cannot expect happiness in the world to come; and to your repentance you must add faith and hope in the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ. These are the only terms on which pardon and forgiveness are promised to those who profess the Christian religion. Let me, therefore, again entreat you to apply every moment you have left in contrition, sorrow and repentance. Your day of life is almost spent; and the night of death fast approaches. Look up to the Father of Mercies, and God of Comfort. You have a great and immense work to perform, and but little time in which you must finish it. There is no repentance in the grave, for after death comes judgment; and as you die, so you must be judged. By repentance and faith, you are the object of God’s mercy; but if you will not repent, and have faith and dependence upon the merits of the death of Christ, but die a hardened and impenitent sinner, you will be the object of God’s justice and vengeance. If you will sincerely repent and believe, God has pronounced [his] forgiveness; and there is no crime too great for his mercy and pardon. . . . I pray God Almighty to be merciful to your soul!

Dr. Phinney reencountered those ancestral values as a teen, becoming a believer in the risen Lord after witnessing an apparition of Jesus during a school recess. His faith was bolstered upon meeting his wife Jane, who helped him overcome his learning challenges by reading and studying the Bible. Forty-eight years later, Dr. and Mrs. Phinney continue to be devoted partners in both life and faith.

With Jane’s (and God’s) help, Dr. Phinney overcame many life challenges. Today, he holds multiple degrees, is an accomplished author (of more than 20 books), and serves as the President and Founder of IOM (Institute of Ministry) America. The overriding mission of all of his work is the promotion of a Biblical worldview, one focused on the 3 C’s of Christ, Culture, and Creator.

“Kingdoms At War” is the culmination of Dr. Phinney’s mission. It unveils the spiritual battle raging today between two opposing worldviews: the human-centric gospel of

liberalism and the God-centric truths of authentic conservative Christianity. It is not just one man's political expression, however. It rises much higher and digs much deeper than that. It is a systematic theological review that reaches into the annals of human history and traces the roots of modern spiritual warfare. From the age of the Apostles to the Greek philosophers, to the Roman Empire, to the entanglement of imperial governments and the Roman Catholic Church, and to the Reformation that followed. It examines the development of competing ideologies, including Gnosticism, Syncretism, Western liberalism, Eastern orthodoxy, and modern pluralism. Universalism vs. monotheism. The development of theological liberalism in post-Enlightenment Europe and of Freemasonry in colonial America.

And it examines the impact of all of these phenomena not only on the politics and culture of today, but on the foundation of our great country and on the greater Church itself. America's founding fathers, for example, were demonstrably men of God, and their Christian principles form the bedrock of our "One Nation, Under God." Yet these men were not immune to the influences of these competing philosophies. Indeed, the very Thomas Jefferson who, in authoring the Declaration of Independence proclaimed that our unalienable rights were endowed to us by our Creator, also was a man of the Enlightenment. As Dr. Phinney describes in "Kingdoms At War," the liberal Enlightenment "elevated human reason as the supreme arbiter of truth." And as I have elsewhere described, Jefferson was "the intellectual of his time," in both its positive and negative senses. Indeed, Jefferson in some sense seems to have been at war with himself. Seeking to intellectualize what was meant to be indwelt, Jefferson was a Christian who came to doubt aspects of his faith. In extolling reason above all else, he struggled to accept the inherent limitations of the human capacity to determine divine truth. In "Kingdoms At War," Dr. Phinney reveals how Jefferson's internal battles continue to permeate every aspect of our own society. Indeed, at the same time that we revere our individual liberties, excessive individualism can result in a resistance to absolute truth, the absolute truth found in only the divine revelation of the Word of God.

At its core, the battle being waged is one of worldview. God-centric vs. human-centric. Divine authority vs. human self-determination. Absolute truth as defined by the Creator vs. relative truth as redefined by the created creature to fit the times. Divine revelation vs. earthly arrogance.

Just as our founding fathers were not immune to these influences, neither is the Church. As Dr. Phinney describes, we are in a battle for the soul of the Church and the integrity of the Gospel. The development of Christian liberal theology reflects a misguided appeal to cultural relevance. It compromises God's absolute truth to secure its own relevance in

today's increasingly secular and conforming society. In doing so, it has lost its anchor, the authority of God's Word. At the same time, even in conservative Christian circles, true Christian doctrine can be lost amidst a drive toward moralism or activism. In "Kingdoms At War," Dr. Phinney explains how those worthy pursuits can lose their essence if the charted course is not centered around the redemptive power of Yeshua. It reduces Christianity to behavior rather than identity in Christ.

Dr. Phinney reveals the path by which we must navigate today's world of spiritual, cultural, and doctrinal confusion. Look upward, rather than inward. Reject moral relativism, spiritual compromise, and institutional apostasy. Seek out the absolute and foundational truths preserved in the Scriptures, and resist all efforts to dilute or distort them for the sake of conformity or compromise. Instead, choose life, the life of Yeshua within you.

In "Kingdoms At War," Dr. Phinney describes the "remnant" of indwelt Christians who persevered during the age of the Apostles, endured the catacombs of Rome, and preserved the Gospel through oral tradition, sacrificial love, and Spirit-led discernment. And he calls for a reawakening of a modern-day remnant that will reinvigorate the battle for an enduring and redeeming truth, by holding fast to sound doctrine, restoring reverence for Scripture as the final authority, standing firm for the eternal and absolute truth found in the life of Yeshua, and acting as an ambassador for Christ rather than an assimilator to today's compromising culture of moral relativism and subjective, individual "truths." Only by following this Third Way can we achieve true global unity, not through compromise disguised as toleration, but through Spirit-led surrender to the absolute truths of the undiluted Gospel.

In an era of cultural compromise and moral relativism, "Kingdoms At War" is a battlefield manual for a spiritual war. A war of renewal waged with the sword of truth, courageously carried out with faithful endurance, strengthened by the indwelling Spirit, and anchored in the Word of God. Its remnant warriors are militant with mercy, welcoming yet resolute, hospitable yet holy, ever discerning of God's direction, imbued with a holy boldness that will not flinch in the face of cultural hostility, and sustained by a Spirit-infused authenticity moored in the uncompromising, indwelling life of Yeshua within us.

"Kingdoms At War" is a work that should be read by all. But more than that, its message is one that should be absorbed into our very beings, where it will find good company in the indwelling life of Yeshua. **-Mark T. Boonstra**

* Mark T. Boonstra is a Judge on the Michigan Court of Appeals, the author of "In Their Own Words: Today's God-less America . . . What Would Our Founding Fathers Think?," and the co-writer (with Dr. Stephen R. Phinney) of their "Identity Politics" series.