

# Straight Talk #28 on Spiritual Warfare for Children

By William J. Schnobelen, © 2011

*Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels, do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. – Matthew 18:10*

The foremost thing in any parent's mind should be the protection of their children. This is (or should be<sup>1</sup>) the universal imperative, as the survival of mankind is involved. This is even truer for Christian parents. They understand that children are a precious gift from God.

However, this is becoming an increasing challenge. Our society here in the U.S. appears to be moving in a direction of greater chaos in regards to the protection of our children. Both spiritually and physically, it seems as though there are more predators out there after our children than ever before. The news headlines, especially since the summer of 2002, are filled with children who have been abducted or killed, sometimes by parents, but often by strangers.

We do not know if this is because of more coverage by the media of these tragedies than there used to be, or if there is a real increase in kidnapping. Whatever the cause, parents are really concerned, and they probably should be.

There are several sorts of perils out there:

1. Physical dangers (school shootings, kidnappings, accidents, sexual abuse, etc.)
2. Emotional and mental dangers (indoctrination with pagan and secular values through school, TV and other media; video game and commercial "programming,"<sup>2</sup> wounding of a child's spirit, rejection issues, etc.)
3. Spiritual dangers (constant exposure to either secular or occult values in school and through media; also exposure to other religions such as Wicca, Islam—showing them in a favorable light, in school and persecution of children with strong Biblical values)

## What is a Christian Parent to Do?

Spiritual issues are the primary focus of this booklet. There is plenty of good information out there about ways to protect your child physically, and how to train young children to be careful around strangers (or even family members) that might try to take indecent liberties. Your church or even your police department should have good information about that.

But in the spiritual arena, it goes without saying that we should be praying daily for the safety of our children, whatever their age. Even adolescents appear to be at risk for kidnapping, being picked by web-surfing perverts and other atrocities. People often say, "*At least we can pray.*"

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<sup>1</sup> The cruel and bizarre exception to this rule in most Western, "civilized" nations (as well as others like China) is abortion. At no time in the last millennia have human beings slain their unborn (or born) offspring with such macabre gusto. You would have to go back to the days of pagan societies like the Moabites or ancient Rome to find such slaughter

<sup>2</sup> In our ministry and work, we have become convinced that video games produce a kind of desensitization, not only to violence, but also to normal stimuli. By that, we mean that there is both a dissociation which happens in video games, and also a creation of an artificial kind of "stimulant-adrenaline rush" which makes normal events like family conversation, going to church or reading the Bibles seem **terminally boring** by comparison. Video games are the mental equivalent of "speed," and create an increasing desire for more and faster stimulation which "real-world" experiences cannot hope to match. This is further enhanced by the rapid-fire camera cuts seen in MTV, commercials aimed toward youth, and even in modern TV and movies generally. Most young people exposed to this sort of material for very long develop a very low threshold for boredom and seem to have the attention span of a small child.

Somehow that seems to *minimize* what can be accomplished with prayer. **Prayer is the first and most powerful thing we can do to protect our children.** Of course, prayer is a weapon that we must develop and use wisely.

The number one thing to realize is the authority you have as a believer AND as a parent. Remember that as a believer, you can come boldly before the throne of YHWH and make petition (**Hebrews 4:16**). No longer do we need an earthly high priest or intermediary. We can go directly to the throne! *Never forget that!*

Additionally, as parents, you have powerful headship authority over your children and this gives you the right to plead even more effectively before the throne of YHWH<sup>3</sup>. Your children are gifts from the Most High, and you have the right and duty to:

1. Ask YHWH to bless and protect your children in all ways, to put ministering angels around them and keep them safe.
2. Ask Him to keep the hands of the devil and his minions away from your children.
3. Ask Him for a special anointing of wisdom as to how to lead, direct and discipline (**disciple!**) your children, and how to best protect them from coming perils.
4. Ask Him to give you a full understanding of the mantle of authority you have been given as a parent, and how to best utilize it.
5. As they get older, ask YHWH for special insights into how to respond best to their emotional, intellectual and spiritual needs—so that they do not go out and try to get those needs met in the wrong places.
6. Finally, ask our Master, Yah'shua<sup>4</sup> the Messiah, to make Himself real to your children and to assume Lordship over their lives.

Prayers similar to this should be part of the daily prayer life of every parent. But there are some other things that can be done in terms of prayer.

### **A Patriarchal and Matriarchal Blessing**

**A** vital first step is to dedicate the child to the Lord. Most churches have little ceremonies that can be done for infants in front of the congregation with a pastor presiding, in lieu of the infant baptism or “Christening.” Those are fine, but there is something *even more powerful* that parents themselves can do.

**In the Bible, the father was the priest in the home.** This was true in both testaments, though we see more evidence of it in the Torah.<sup>5</sup> Without wishing to derogate authority from the pastor, **it is the ultimate authority of the father and mother to dedicate and bless their child.**

If possible, right after the child is born; she or he should be given to the mother to hold and then anointed and prayed over by the father and mother. At this time, the child should be formally

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<sup>3</sup> For a bit more on this topic, see our STRAIGHT TALK ON HEADSHIP, available for free download off our website, or as a small booklet from our ministry office.

<sup>4</sup> We come from a Messianic heritage (Hebrew) and have found that calling “Jesus” by His true, Hebrew name, Yah'shua, is not only more respectful, but more powerful as well. Realize that no one in Bible days ever called Him “Jesus.” In fact, the letter “J” did not even exist for hundreds of years after the death of the last apostle. Hence, we prefer the name Yah'shua which literally mean “Yah saves” or the “salvation of YHWH.”

<sup>5</sup> Literally, Torah means “teaching,” but it has come to refer especially to the five books of Moses, the core of the Hebrew Scriptures (Genesis – Deuteronomy)

declared to belong to the Master YHWH—on loan, as it were, to mom and dad. This would be a good time to formally name the child, if a name has been selected, although this is not essential.

Most hospitals now encourage the dad to be present at the birth, and should not have problems with the above procedure. Of course, if the health of the baby and mother permit, a home birth with a midwife would even be better<sup>6</sup>.

If you are reading this and you have older children and have never done this, it does not mean it cannot be done now. Kids, from ages one to twenty, can benefit from being anointed and consecrated as unto the Master YHWH. We believe this should be done in addition to whatever ecclesiastical “dedications” your church might or might not have. Those are also fine, and especially in churches where part of the ceremony is that the church at large promises to pray for the new baby and to look after its spiritual and physical well-being; almost being a vast, collective spiritual “god-parent.”<sup>7</sup>

As to the “how-to” of this, it does not have to be anything very “*high church*.” Something heartfelt is better. Whether at birth or later, the father (and the mother if the child is not a newborn resting on her) should simply lay hands on the child’s head and pray as the Spirit leads, basically . . .

1. Thanking YHWH God for the gift of this child;
2. Formally declaring that you (the parents) dedicate and consecrate this child to YHWH and set him or her apart for the Master’s service;
3. Declare before YHWH that the child belongs to Him;
4. Ask YHWH to give you wisdom and anointing in raising the child;
5. If a newborn or a young child not yet saved, ask YHWH to bless the child with the light of the Holy Spirit and lead him or her to a saving knowledge of Yah’shua the Messiah at the earliest time;
6. Ask YHWH to protect the child all of its days, both physically and spiritually and
7. Name the child formally.

This all could be done in less than a minute or two, and yet it will pay great spiritual dividends later; also, if you are expecting your first child or even if you have a family already, it goes without saying that you (both parents) should pray and break any possible generational curses coming down your family lines for you and for any offspring you may ever have (**Exodus 20:5**)<sup>8</sup>. This is an excellent idea for every believer anyway, but especially for parents.

### **Bless Early and Often!**

**W**hile we are on the subject of blessing children, you do not need to stop doing this after the birth or dedication. In Hebrew households, from time immemorial, there has been a tradition of blessing the children every Erev Shabbat (Sabbath eve – Friday night). The

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<sup>6</sup> The office of a midwife was a spiritual calling in Israel, and also in the primitive church. To be a midwife was an office, just like the pastor or elder. It may have been part of what the controversial office of “deaconess” referred to. There is not the space here to discuss this, but there are some wonderful and deep blessings to be had when a great woman of YHWH can assist at the birth and help “catch” the child with the father. Remember, that in terms of messianic prophecy, the Heavenly Father Himself was functioning as midwife at His Son’s birth (**Ps. 22:9**). A higher and holier calling could not be imagined. Of course, state laws, etc. may vary, but parents-to-be should pray about using a midwife, a Believer if at all possible. It is an all-around better experience than the typical institutional hospital birth

<sup>7</sup> Though godparents are identified with Catholicism (and some other “high church” denominations), there is a lot to be said for having a somewhat similar type of function in your family. It could be a trusted aunt or uncle or even a grandparent, someone who can covenant to pray for the child, to fellowship and mentor him or her, and to just be there as a resource if needed.

<sup>8</sup> If you are unfamiliar with how to break generational curses, a sample prayer to so can be found for free at our website at: [www.withoneaccord.com](http://www.withoneaccord.com) located under ‘Free Ministry Materials’ or you can write us for a free copy

classic film *Fiddler on the Roof*, has an example of this. It even has a lovely song which one could learn if you were so inclined. It is a practice that Christian parents could emulate, though it would not have to be on a set night nor in a ritualized way. Remember that children, especially young children, are fond of routines, and something could be said for doing it on the same evening.

For father and mother to lay their hands on the head of a small child and give it a blessing is **incredibly powerful and comforting** to the child as well. You can pray for protection, health and guidance for your child. You could do this whenever it seems appropriate, and especially when the child is ill, traveling somewhere, or is at some little milestone (first day of school, first haircut, etc.). These prayers should not be “canned” or by rote, but *heartfelt and Holy Spirit-led*.

Early on in my walk with Yah’shua, I heard a beloved pastor and friend say that parents should never let their child out of their home without a hug, and a quick prayer for the protection of the blood of Yah’shua to be over them. I think that also is excellent advice. Nowadays, most parents do not need to be reminded that the world is not a very safe place. The home should be a sanctuary, but whenever you allow your child out into “the world,” he or she should be covered in prayer, just as sure as you would not send them out into the world without their slicker on a rainy day!

### **Throne power!**

**P**art of praying for your child is understanding your right to go before the throne and intercede for him or her. You may be certain that if you are trying to live a good life and do something for Yah’shua, the devil is going to come after either you, your spouse and your children. Since neither you nor your children are perfect, you need to daily appropriate covering of the blood of Yah’shua the Messiah for the remission of your sins and theirs before the throne. This “THRONE POWER” is a truly awesome weapon in the arsenal of the parent and should never be overlooked.

Satan, functioning as **adversary**, is standing before the throne demanding the right to attack you and your kids because you are not sinless. In his Adversary position, he is functioning like a prosecuting attorney before the heavenly court. **But Yah’shua the Messiah, our Lord and Savior, is our defense attorney.**

You need to be aware of that, and daily counter-plead with the blood of Yah’shua. Your right before the throne (as a blood-bought child of the Almighty) is much greater than the devil’s, but the fact does you or your children no good if you do not use that right.

Again, without discussing “canned” prescribed prayers, it would be helpful for you to pray daily for your children<sup>9</sup> saying something like:

*Abba Father, I come before your throne in the name of the true Lord **Yah’shua the Messiah**, and I come against the pleadings of the devil over me and my family. I say, “YHWH rebuke thee, Satan” and command that the devil take his hands off my children. I declare that although we are not perfect, our righteousness is in The Messiah and my children are covered in His blood and belong to Yah’shua who bled on Calvary and is the resurrection and the life; we belong to Him body, soul and spirit. Protect us Master YHWH, and do not let the hand of the destroyer come against us this day, for we are covered in the full armour of God and the righteousness of Yah’shua the Messiah our LORD and Master.*

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<sup>9</sup> It goes without saying that in a single-parent home, either mother or the father can do these blessings with complete authority

## The Tragedy of Negative Headship

All that was just said can also be used against the family. YHWH designed the family to be in a certain order, with the father providing the covering (or the mother, if the father is deceased or absent). In turn, the whole family unit should be under the headship covering of a set-apart pastor in a Biblical church. In YHWH's order of things, the pastor is the defender of the flock, and he functions as the "lightening rod" and first line of defense for the families in his congregation. Simply put, in the best of situations, the devil should have to get "through" the pastor to get to you and your children.

There are two assumptions here that need to be met for the headship to be effective in terms of family authority. The **first** is that the father (and to a lesser degree the mother) needs to be living right. The **second** is that the pastor is a true man of YHWH and is not involved in any weird doctrines or immoral practices.

Now this does not mean that the mother and father (or pastor) must live in sinless perfection and total doctrinal purity. *Obviously*, no one can do either of those things to perfect completion. But what it does mean is that the pastor or parents should not be involved in any serious or besetting sins. Let me define those two things.

While all sin is serious, it is *generally* held that certain sins lay a family more open to attack than others. The main ones to avoid involve either parent involved in:

1. Masonic or other cultic groups
2. Occult practices, such as séances, witchcraft, channeling, etc.
3. Any addictive practices such as drunkenness, drugs, gambling, etc.
4. Perverse sexual practices (fornication, sodomy or adultery), *including* pornography
5. Gossiping, backbiting, attacking pastors, lying, cheating on their taxes, etc.

Now the last three need slight qualification. They would have to be besetting sins in order to create a significant open doorway in most cases. A besetting sin is one that we do *a lot*. It is a sin that has become a stronghold in our lives; for example, having a glass of wine with a meal not going to kick open the doorway for the devil to attack your kids, but if you are drinking *every day* and *not drinking wisely*, then this can be a huge problem<sup>10</sup>.

In like manner, if you stumble occasionally into porn or something similar, that is not enough to blow out your headship, unless your "stumble" was into something **pretty huge** like adultery, masturbation, child porn or sodomy or even spending hours a week looking at Internet smut. But if it even is happening a couple times a week, you need to repent and to get serious with the Almighty at the altar.

The bottom line is this: either major serious sins or lots of habitual smaller sins done frequently can both be a factor. Both parents should try and lead as clean and Godly lives as possible, and they will be the best possible covering for their children. When you sin, go immediately and sincerely to Yah'shua and ask His forgiveness. **(I John 1: 6-9)**

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<sup>10</sup> There are widely differing beliefs among Christians about alcohol. Some believe that you must never drink under any circumstances; others, that it is perfectly fine to have wine at the communion service (but that is the only time.) Still others think that moderate use of alcohol is permitted as long as there is no drunkenness or loss of control. Obviously your beliefs are going to set the limit here. If your fellowship teaches absolute abstinence, then you need to consider that. Remember, what Paul says about food applies here: *And he that doubteth is dammed if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.* **Romans 14:23.**

One important point does need to be stressed after all this. There are many instances of wonderful holy parents who have had children kidnapped, killed, etc. None of the above discussion is meant to imply that if something happens to your child, it is because you are a miserable sinner and it is all your fault. It is part of the mystery of YHWH's providence that occasionally bad things happen to good Believers. These headship guidelines are more designed to help parents prepare and protect. **They do not guarantee your child's safety.**

We know, for example that there are millions of holy, totally sold-out Believers in China who are beaten, tortured or have their children taken from them by the communist government. This is not happening because these brethren are slackers or sinners. It is happening because we live in a sinful, evil world often run by or at least inhabited by wicked people. (**I John 5:19**)

## **Is Your Shepherd Part of the Solution or Part of the Problem?**

**P**astoral covering should not be tainted with any bizarre beliefs or doctrines. We leave it to your prayerful consideration as to whether or not his beliefs or practices are out of alignment with the Bible. Obviously, if he is a Freemason or an occultist or a known philanderer, *you should probably be seeking a new congregation.*

No one is perfect, and that includes pastors. Nor are deacons or elder boards perfect. We all need to cut each other some slack. However, the New Testament tells us that church leaders need to come up to certain standards (see the Pastoral Epistles). If either the elders or deacons or the pastor are engaged in open sin, such as Masonry, it spells a grave danger for the congregation and especially for the children of the congregation.

If, in the past, you have belonged to a questionable fellowship (or denomination) like the Mormons, the United Pentecostal church or the Watchtower Society, etc., **you also need to renounce the false headship of that group and its leader or leaders.** These include some of the quasi-Christian cults that exist right on the fringes of orthodoxy. If you have questions, contact us. All of these precautions will give the devil just one less leg to stand on in trying to attack your little ones.

## **Little Warriors!**

When your child gets a bit older (and this will, of course, vary with the child), you can begin to broach spiritual subjects with him or her. While you do not want to rush the salvation experience, neither should the depth of our children's understanding be underestimated. Most children should be able to understand the plan of salvation by the time they are six or seven, perhaps earlier.

This is something between parent and child, and should not necessarily be left to the Sunday school teacher or youth minister. You should know your child better than anyone, and can best judge when he or she is ready for salvation.

Now, once the child is saved, you can also begin to give them some rudimentary lessons in spiritual warfare. Even little children can be surprisingly **powerful** in using the name and the blood of Yah'shua The Messiah, if they are taught how to do it. Because the faith of youngsters is usually so powerful, they seem able to function on the spiritual plane more readily than most believing adults.

Children (depending on their age) can be taught such basic concepts of prayer such as:

1. Yah'shua is powerful and we can ask Him to help us
2. If we are tempted to do bad things, we can resist the devil in the name of Yah'shua The Messiah

3. We can ask Yah'shua to put the armor of God on us every day
4. We can ask Yah'shua to protect us if we are scared
5. We can ask Yah'shua to guide us if we do not know what to do and there are no trustworthy grown-ups around

On more than one occasion, we have had reports of little children (under 7 years old) putting the devil or his human agents to wild flight by a simple prayer of faith. To be sure, you would not wish to knowingly place your child in any sort of spiritual warfare situation. But it does not hurt to let your little one know that they have power in Yah'shua if they need it.

## **Take Prayer Seriously**

Being a parent means that you need to be doubly committed to closeting yourself with YHWH daily; we recommend tithing your time in prayer and Bible study. If you are awake for 16 hours a day (which is typical), spend roughly 1.6 hours a day in Bible study, prayer and intercession. You need not get legalistic about this, but you get the general idea.

Many would say, *More than 90 minutes a day in prayer!! You have got to kidding!* Not really. Think about how we use our time. You would be amazed how many parents spend hours a week in front of the tube or watching sports, to the neglect of their prayer life. Imagine if Christians in this nation spent as much time in prayer and intercession as they did watching TV! We could transform this nation.

I have a brother in the Lord (who happens to be a father) that recently shared with me how the Lord convicted him about this. He said that he began getting up an hour or so earlier every day, just so he could spend more time in prayers and fellowship with God. He rose at five, instead of six. He told me that it had not only improved his own life his work situation and his marriage, but that he and his children were growing closer, too.

Family prayer (when the kids are old enough) and devotions are also helpful. When I suggest some of these things, Christians often ask, "I can see reading the Bible more, but how can anyone spend an hour a day praying? What could they talk about with God?"

It's amazing how little teaching there is on prayer in most churches. Prayer can be praise, it can be singing of hymns, it can be quietly meditating on the Word of YHWH. Prayer is listening as well as talking. Start by praying for your family and loved ones. Pray for your marriage. Pray for the children in your neighborhood or community. ***Pray for the children no else is praying for in your city!*** Here are some other suggestions to get you started. Pray for:

- Your spouse, children and extended family (if any)
- The "at-risk" children in your city
- Local, state and federal judges (get to know the names of these people and pray for them by name!)
- Teachers and school administrators
- Law Enforcement officers
- Your mayor (or whatever city leaders you have) and governor and state legislature
- Local politicians and school board members
- *Obviously*, the President of the US and Congress and members of the Supreme Court
- Doctors, nurses and other first responders such as EMT and fire-fighters
- People involved in abortion, that they might repent and get saved
- People involved in selling alcohol and drugs, for repentance, salvation and deliverance
- People involved in the porn industry, for their repentance, salvation and deliverance

- People trapped in addictions, such as alcohol, drugs, gambling or pornography; for their repentance, salvation and deliverance
- Newspaper and media people, both local and national
- Your pastor and church leaders and also other pastors in the community, to be faithful stewards of the Word.
- Our armed forces, both here and overseas in theaters of battle; for their protection and salvation
- For criminals and those in jail and prison, for their repentance, salvation and deliverance
- For your enemies, including terrorists both here and abroad, for their salvation.

What can be really powerful is to research these things and – to a degree – get to know these people on the local level, like your local politicians and media people and doctors, etc. Pray for them by name. If you feel so led and have an opportunity, talk to them. Ask them if it is okay that you pray for them. Most of these people will be touched and surprised by your approach. Ask them if there is something special they need prayer for and make a note of it.

Imagine how it would change your life and the lives of your children and community if everyone in your church spent an hour or so in prayer every day like this! It would transform this nation – and we certainly need that!

To get you started, here is a sample prayer for your children. This is based on a prayer written by Thomas White, a brother who has excellent teaching on prayer and spiritual warfare.

*Abba Father, you alone are my refuge, my strength, my fortress. I ask you to honor your Word and be a refuge to my family and especially to my children. **Prov. 14:26 In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge.** I ask you, through Yah'shua The Messiah's intercession, to grant to us Your sovereign protection from evil. Show me and sin or disobedience that robs me and my children of your protection. **I John 5:18 We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that the wicked one toucheth him not.***

*Show me, Holy Spirit, anything that grieves Your blessing in our lives. **Eph. 4:30 And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.***

*I entrust my children to you. They are Your gifts to me. I ask You to surround them (name them individually) with your presence, and to shield them from Satan's power. God, shed your light upon your servants, bathe us with the joy of your redemption. **Ps. 97:11 Light is sown for the righteous and gladness for the upright in heart.***

*Cover my children (name), with the power of the blood of Your Son.*

**Rev. 12:11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.**

*I ask you, Father, to expose and destroy schemes of the enemy planned against my children (name), and to assign legions of your holy angels to guard and protect them according to your perfect will.*

**Ps. 91:11-13 For He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.**

**Matt. 18:10 Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.**



**Hebr. 1:14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?**

*Lord Yah'shua The Messiah, thank you for praying for our protection. By faith I receive your protection for myself and my children.*

Think of this as “trainer wheels.” If this is not enough to get you started, how about praying for your pastor and his family. Pray for suffering Christians in China, Africa and elsewhere. Pray for the leaders of our nation, and your local state and municipal leaders. You will be amazed how that 90 minutes can fly by!

One final note: none of this should be construed as trying to plant fear in parents’ hearts. As much media attention as these tragedies are getting, they are still comparatively rare. The vast majority of children are not abducted or murdered. With increasing prayer and vigilance, we can increase that majority substantially! Amen!

### **Endnotes**

1. The cruel and bizarre exception to this rule in most Western, “civilized” nations (as well as others like China) is abortion. At no time in the last millennia have human beings slain their unborn (or born) offspring with such macabre gusto. You would have to go back to the days of pagan societies like the Moabites or ancient Rome to find such slaughter.
2. In our ministry and work, we have become convinced that video games produce a kind of desensitization, not only to violence, but also to normal stimuli. By that, we mean that there is both a dissociation which happens in video games, and also a creation of an artificial kind of “stimulant-adrenaline rush” which makes normal events like family conversation, going to church or reading the Bibles seem terminally boring by comparison. Video games are the mental equivalent of “speed,” and create an increasing desire for more and faster stimulation which “real-world” experiences cannot hope to match. This is further enhanced by the rapid-fire camera cuts seen in MTV, commercials aimed toward youth, and even in modern TV and movies generally. Most young people exposed to this sort of material for very long develop a very low threshold for boredom and seem to have the attention span of a small child.
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With One Accord Ministries

[www.withoneaccord.org](http://www.withoneaccord.org)

3500 Dodge St., Ste 7-290

Dubuque, IA 52003

[sneblen@gmail.com](mailto:sneblen@gmail.com)