

The background of the entire page is a textured, painterly illustration. It depicts a dark, possibly black or dark blue, military aircraft, likely a helicopter or a small transport plane, flying from left to right across the upper half of the image. Below the aircraft, the landscape is rugged and mountainous, with steep, rocky slopes. The colors are muted, with a lot of greys, browns, and blues, giving it a somber and historical feel. The overall style is reminiscent of a military or historical painting.

# Landing Zone Hope

## Dealing with PTSD, Anger, and Depression

By: Jim Phillips

Combat Assault in Central Highlands, Vietnam

Photo by: Jim Phillips



## Men of Charlie Company



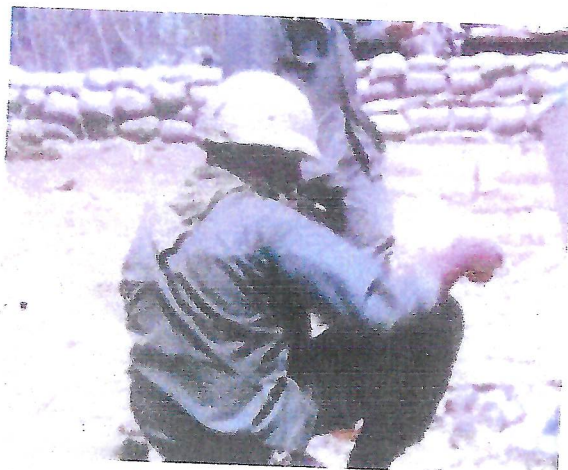
**Sgt Leonard Garland**



**Sgt Wes Selby**



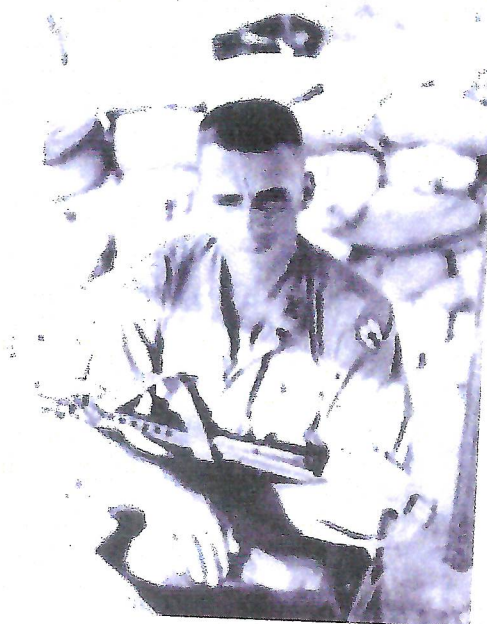
**Sgt Danny Edmonds**



**SSgt Louis Baker**



**Medic  
Paul Magdaleno**



**Captain Jim Lanning**



**Sgt Hubbard ( left)  
listening to Motown**





1st Lt. Platoon Leader  
Roger Cole



1st Lt. Platoon Leader  
Devallis Rutledge



Sgt Jim Phillips

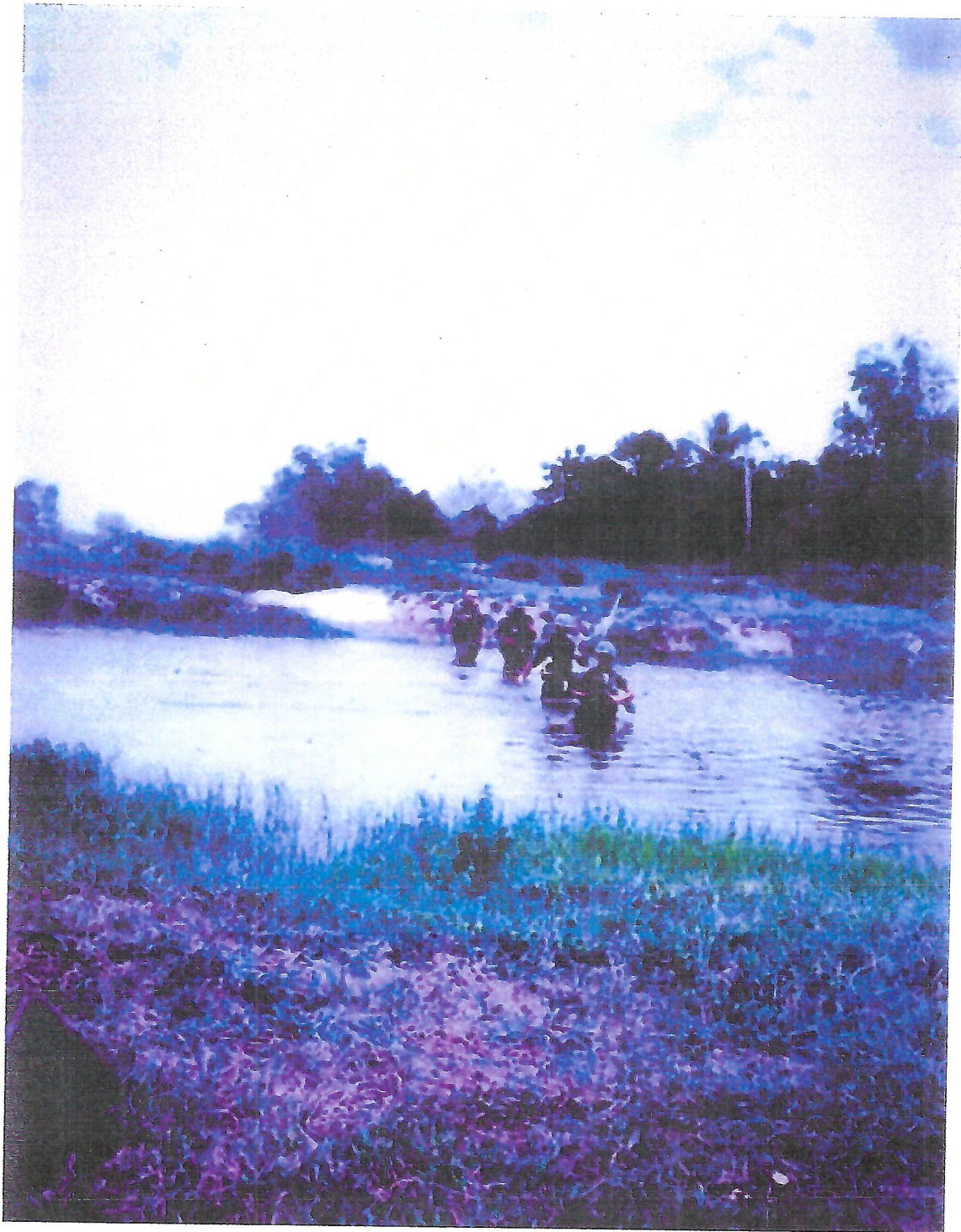




**Reunion in San Antonio, Texas  
50 years after Vietnam**

**Pictured top row L to R: Jim Phillips, Bill Stoner, Randy Thorne; second row L to R: Larry Prater, Jim Lanning, and Devallis Rutledge**





**Recon Team lead by Sgt Buster Hopper coming back to company after checking out the area.**



To the men who gave their lives for this country. Brave and courageous men that I had the honor to serve with in 1967. Men of Charlie Company, 2/35th Infantry 25th Infantry Division. Along with the many wounded, there were those we had a special bond or brotherhood since we were always together doing our duty as soldiers . Jim Lanning, our Commanding Officer, and Devallis Rutledge and Bill Stoner were our Platoon Leaders.

Our RTO's were Larry Prater, Frank Hondrich and Jim Phillips. Long Range Patrol leaders were Buster Hopper, Randy Thorne, Randy Morrison. Forward Observer was Bill Farmer and many others who each day and night faced the jungles of Vietnam.

God also placed in my life great men of God who taught me the ways of the Lord. Dr. Mike Christian, Dr. Jimmy Arms , Bro. Chuck Branch, Dr. Jason Groe, Rev. Roy Allen, Bro. Mike Leggett, Rev Terry Geren, Bro. Carmel Lee , Joe Webb and all my Pastor Friends. These men would pray for me and listen without condemnation.

My greatest supporter in life has been my wife, Janet . A Godly woman who has been my life partner for 51 years. We have two exceptional children and four precious granddaughters. Since I suffer from severe PTSD, she has always been my calming agent. My son's wife, Jessica, and my daughter's husband, Aaron, have both been very supportive and understanding in dealing with the dynamics of our family and the challenges I have faced dealing with the trauma of my being in combat.



## KIA 1967

03/21/1967

Carl Thomas Anthony JJuan Pascual Aviles Guye Raymond Benson  
 Scott Cannon Bowcutt Joseph Champion Timothy Easley Charles  
 Robert Emory James Harvey Hopson Robert Lee Kaster William Edward  
 Lund Henry Robert Matthews Johnnie Murray Mayo  
 David Eugene McLemore Lewis Edward Milam Thomas Francis  
 Minogue Daniel James Newman Jr. John William Odierno Percie  
 Edward Owens Robert Harvey Reinke Dennis Bernard Stockwell  
 Michael Gordan Sudborough Hayzell Calvin Turner

05/02/1967

Kenneth Harold Wright

05/20/1967

Gary Martin Killian Joseph Ledesma Jr. Roland Edward Rush

05/24/1967

Stephen John O'Shea

05/29/1967

William Hoke Farmer Jr.

06/23/1967

Ronald Lloyd Hamilton Jack Walter Peterson

06/25/1967

Jerry T. Thomas

07/11/1967

Asher Audbry Anthony



07/26/1967

George Samuel Campbell Charles Robert Vest

07/27/1967

Edward Joseph Wise

08/04/1967

Donald Maurice Wilson

10/27/1967

Lawrence Buford Prater

11/18/1967

Coties Ree Sowell

11/30/1967

Leon Peter Miller

12/25/1967

Danny Wayne Jeter Charles D. McClurg Ronald James Siengo



## Landing Zone Hope

Growing up in a small East Tennessee town, there was not much opportunity for a career other than leaving the area or working in the hosiery business. High school consisted of playing ball, cruising around town at night, and working at the local IGA. There were dances at the VFW and, of course, girls. I don't know why I decided to go to college since my grades were just average. For some reason, I enrolled at Tennessee Tech in Cookeville, Tennessee and followed the steps of my older brother.

The first two years of school were a joke. I failed more classes than I passed. During this time I met a young lady who would become my lifelong partner and friend. She has been my safe place to run to when life gets rough. A godly lady with whom we have two children and four grandchildren who, by the way, are the joy of my life.

This lack of study during this time ended my being on probation so I went to work in the construction industry to enable me to make enough money to go back to school in the fall. Boy was I wrong! As long as you were in school you were exempt from the Draft. It was the time of the Vietnam war and things were getting bad there. Less than a month went by and I was reclassified from 11S to 1A. I was drafted in June of 1966. Janet and I had a hurry up wedding and a huge life-altering change of everything.

Two days later I was on my way to Ft. Benning, GA for basic training. Since I worked construction, the physical aspect was easy for me. Then it was off to Ft. Polk LA. for AIT. . the first words I heard when I got there was "Most of you will get killed in Vietnam!" That will wake you up but it was true. I lost many friends in combat. One year of constant battling to stay alive and get home to my wife and family put a stress on me that is unbelievable unless you have experienced it. Many suffer with PTSD and over 22 veterans commit suicide each day. There is anger and rage that lies so deep inside that you can't sleep, you lash out at others including your family. Each day you stay on alert for dangers that may be there or not. Everything seems to be a threat. The jungle just won't go away. This has been my life for 50 years. Maybe my life story is like yours. Is there any hope for me? I am here to tell you "Yes!" So begins my new life.

I will not bore you with the first part of my life other than say I grew up the middle child of two brothers and two sisters. My mother was a Godly woman who



had a good education and she wanted her children to do the same. My Dad was an alcoholic who worked hard but drank up most of the money. I know what it is like to be poor and hear fighting during the night. Most of my life I have been very insecure. We moved around so much that I would end up fighting the new kids or being funny to get along. Authority was hard for me to accept. I disliked my principals, the Police or anyone else who tried to help me. I felt like they were just calling me poor and I hated it.

There was a church that had a big yellow bus that came by our home and would take us to church. During Sunday School my Teacher Jerry Hood told me Jesus loved me and showed me the verse John 3:16. I knew that I would perish without Jesus so I invited him into my life and confessed that I was a sinner. Jesus began to change my life. I was a brand new creature. Were all my problems gone? No! Was I still insecure? Yes! Still poor, Yes! I thought you said you were a brand new person. I was Jesus now that lives in me and He has never left me. Like a new born baby, I had to learn his words and ways. I began to study His word. Little did I know He was with me even in the dark jungles of Vietnam. I prayed every day for the Lord to help me and protect me and get me home safe and I would serve Him. He answered my prayer but I didn't do what I said I would.. I was about 30 years old when while I was at work, a bulldozer blade fell on my hand and broke several bones. My wife had tried to get me to go to church with her but I would refuse. I got madder and madder when she asked. I knew she was right and I was wrong! The Holy Spirit would break my heart, but with a broken hand and a broken heart, I had no where else to go. On Thanksgiving day, I went to dinner at church. I repented that day and Jesus forgave me. I began to teach Bible Study and serve as a Deacon for the next twenty Years. At the age of fifty, God called me to preach His Word. I have been a Pastor for 22 years at a church in Jackson County, Tennessee.

I have suffered with depression, anger, rage, loss of sleep, and awful night visions of death and combat since 1967. Days like March 12 and March 21 April haunt me still to this day. In May of 1967 after seeing many friends killed, I have my head full of those visions at night. I don't sleep from being on guard just waiting for the next gunshot to go off. Maybe it's a bobby trap or the smell of burnt flesh. It's a firefight each day and night in my mind.

Where was Jesus? Let me assure you He was there. Without Him I would be in jail for murder. Since I have been diagnosed with chronic PTSD, He is my strength and rock and my shield I run to.



Psalm 27:1 *"The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"*

## What Is PTSD?

PTSD (posttraumatic stress disorder) is a mental health problem that some people develop after experiencing or witnessing a life-threatening event, like combat, a natural disaster, a car accident, or sexual assault.

It's normal to have upsetting memories, feel on edge, or have trouble sleeping after this type of event. At first, it may be hard to do normal daily activities, like go to work, go to school, or spend time with people you care about. But most people start to feel better after a few weeks or months. If it's been longer than a few months and you're still having symptoms, you may have PTSD. For some people, PTSD symptoms may start later on, or they may come and go over time.

### What factors affect who develops PTSD?

PTSD can happen to anyone. It is not a sign of weakness. A number of factors can increase the chance that someone will have PTSD, many of which are not under that person's control. For example, having a very intense or long-lasting traumatic event or getting injured during the event can make it more likely that a person will develop PTSD. PTSD is also more common after certain types of trauma, like combat and sexual assault.

Personal factors, like previous traumatic exposure, age, and gender, can affect whether or not a person will develop PTSD. What happens after the traumatic event is also important. Stress can make PTSD more likely, while social support can make it less likely.

### What are the symptoms of PTSD?

PTSD symptoms usually start soon after the traumatic event, but they may not appear until months or years later. They also may come and go over many years. If the symptoms last longer than four weeks, cause you great distress, or interfere with your work or home life, you might have PTSD.



There are four types of symptoms of PTSD, but they may not be exactly the same for everyone. Each person experiences symptoms in their own way.

1. **Reliving the event (also called re-experiencing symptoms).** You may have bad memories or nightmares. You even may feel like you're going through the event again. This is called a flashback.
2. **Avoiding situations that remind you of the event.** You may try to avoid situations or people that trigger memories of the traumatic event. You may even avoid talking or thinking about the event.
3. **Having more negative beliefs and feelings.** The way you think about yourself and others may change because of the trauma. You may feel guilt or shame. Or, you may not be interested in activities you used to enjoy. You may feel that the world is dangerous and you can't trust anyone. You might be numb, or find it hard to feel happy.
4. **Feeling keyed up (also called hyperarousal).** You may be jittery, or always alert and on the lookout for danger. Or, you may have trouble concentrating or sleeping. You might suddenly
  5. get angry or irritable, startle easily, or act in unhealthy ways (like smoking, using drugs and alcohol, or driving recklessly).

### Can children have PTSD?

Children can have PTSD too. They may have symptoms described above or other symptoms depending on how old they are. As children get older, their symptoms are more like those of adults. Here are some examples of PTSD symptoms in children:

- Children under 6 may get upset if their parents are not close by, have trouble sleeping, or act out the trauma through play.
- Children age 7 to 11 may also act out the trauma through play, drawings, or stories. Some have nightmares or become more irritable or aggressive. They may also want to avoid school or have trouble with schoolwork or friends.
- Children age 12 to 18 have symptoms more similar to adults: depression, anxiety, withdrawal, or reckless behavior like substance abuse or running away.

### What other problems do people with PTSD experience?

People with PTSD may also have other problems. These include:



- Feelings of hopelessness, shame, or despair
- Depression or anxiety
- Drinking or drug problems
- Physical symptoms or chronic pain
- Employment problems
- Relationship problems, including divorce

[Portions Taken from Veterans report of PTSD]

For years I walked round with a depressed heart and spirit. Saved and on my way to heaven, but I still had this sense of insecurity .

**Proverbs 18:14** *The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity but a wounded spirit who can bear. KJV.*

I felt crushed. The only way others could tell was the way I behaved myself. The Bible tells us that a wounded spirit is worse than a physical sickness. A physical sickness can be controlled by a healthy spirit but a crushed spirit can't be controlled by any thing`

*The only hope is found in Jesus! He is able to heal a physical wound as well as heal a crushed spirit.*

Have you ever surrendered your life to Jesus? I am talking about asking him to forgive you of your sin, take over your life, (be boss of your life) and follow Him. I am not talking about your giving "right answers" to some spiritual questions. Has the Holy Spirit convicted you of your sin? You know at this moment, as you are reading this, whether you have surrendered your heart to Jesus or you have not! You are the only one who knows that!

I know by now you are probably thinking that is not what I need!! I have shared the way to be saved with many, many people over the last 40 years. I have found that a lot of people will agree with what you are saying, and maybe even give the right answers, but their lives never really change. This is very common. It is hard to swallow your pride and ask for help from anybody...especially God. But only God knows exactly your real need. There is a way that seems right to man.



Proverbs 14:12 *There is a way which seemeth right to a man, But its end is the way of death.*

I know He can change a soul who is tired of the way he is living and sincerely desires help from someone outside himself. I know this because He changed me from a wretched person to one who has learned to lean on Him for my peace, strength and comfort on the good days and on the bad days. It is not an instant fix!! It comes by daily surrendering your own self, daily relying on Him to teach you through His Word, and daily being willing to obey Him and do what He says do, even though you may not understand His ways.

Isaiah 55:9...*"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

Do I still have rough times? Yes! But I have a heavenly Father who loves me and gave Himself for me so I might have an abundant life here on this earth. When I leave this body, I will be with Him in heaven. Like the children's song says. "Jesus loves me this I know...For the Bible tells me so!"

So simplistic that a child can understand.. yet so powerful it can help a person of any age, any condition, any situation. Just the fact that "He loves me!! What peace and comfort He gives. I am not alone. Even on those scary nights, He is with me and He has promised to help me!

To keep you from this Peace and Comfort, is an enemy. He may be telling you right now...you don't need this junk! He wants you to stay miserable.

### The enemy's name is Satan!

1 Peter 5:8 *Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour.*

### You are in a Battle.

Just like Vietnam, you have a real enemy . But there is a big difference. We could outgun, bomb, napalm, and just completely out man the enemy. Our leaders and men of Charlie Company, 25th Infantry were a force that would bring fear to most. Just the sight of the Ace of Spades on our helmets caused people to avoid us.

My weapons and yours will not match Satan's. This battle will never end until you take your last breath.

*Ephesians 6:11-12 "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rules of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."*

One of the most frightening things in the life of a combat soldier is making a combat assault and landing in what we call a **HOT LZ!** Before you can land or exit the chopper, you are attacked with small arms fire. Many men have been killed or wounded while trying to secure the landing zone.

What a joy and relief it is to land in a safe and well guarded place!

Hence forth the title **LANDING ZONE HOPE!!**

*Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope."*

**SINCE WE KNOW NOW THAT OUR BATTLE IS NOT WITH FLESH AND BLOOD BUT IT IS A SPIRITUAL ONE. LET'S LOOK AT THE ENEMY AND HIS TACTICS.**

We became a much better fighting force because we were trained who the enemy was, his traps and his methods....Booby traps, Tunnels, Spider holes, and ambushes.

**I. SATAN** wants to get a **STRONGHOLD** in your life

A stronghold is a fortified position from where he can launch attacks at you. He would love for you to think wrong much more than do wrong.

Our minds are like a Train Station where trains come and go. So like in our minds... thoughts come and go. Good thoughts and bad thoughts. Like the train station Good Trains and Bad Trains. Do I find myself having bad thoughts most of



the time or do I think on good things, or am I always on the bad train. Angry, frustrated, full of hatred, depressed, bitter and so on.

Do I start the day with good thoughts and then something happens and, like a computer with a default setting I switch back to the bad. Remember..our human nature always takes us to the bad thoughts!!!

*Matthew 7:13-15...Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and few who find it.*

## WHICH ROAD AM I ON? WHO AM I?

### WHERE AM I HEADED?

A. What is my Identity? How do others see me? My wife, children, church family, co-workers and friends.

Am I a nice person until something doesn't go my way? Am I on the good train and then, out of nowhere, I'm riding the bad train. Am I known for that?

I'm never happy. I am always in a bad way, I like being this way. It's what I'm known for! People stay out of my way! I'm miserable and I want you miserable too! I love to criticize everything! Nothing is right!

Do I control my thoughts?

*Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*

## B. It takes a Conscious Effort

Each day is filled with a set of choices to be made. Example: the good train or the bad train. It's your choice!!

In Deuteronomy 30:15-20, Moses tells the people that when they enter the land God has given them they will be faced with two choices. They can choose life or death, blessings or a curse. So can you!!

*Deuteronomy 30:19 I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing, therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live.*

Jesus says the same thing in Matthew chapters 5, 6 and 7. We know it as the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus gathered his disciples and others around him and began to teach them.

*Matthew:13-14 Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is henceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the salt of the world.*

People should look at me and at you and see a peaceful and contented person!

## Today's decisions determine who you will be tomorrow.

1. Today I choose to resist any decision that will lead me away from Christ.
2. Today I choose to make a Conscious Effort that leads to life.

Each day of your life is filled with a new set of choices to be made.

Which train are you going to get on?

### Some common observations

1. All my choices are a process of thought
2. All my choices have influences



3. All my choices have real and lasting consequences
4. All my choices create a pattern
5. All my choices reflect my own affection [what I love]

**Satan will set up ambushes for you to trap you.**

### **Satan's Three Traps**

#### **1. Ambush of Temptations**

As you will be reminded again later, Satan(Your enemy) cannot read your mind, but he observes your behavior very closely. From his observations, he discovers what you like or desire. Then, he meticulously begins to set his trap for you. As in fishing, you choose the bait that the fish is attracted to. Then you carefully conceal the hook so as not to alert the fish of the upcoming danger. The trap is set. Satan is the same way. He sets you up because you do not have knowledge of how Satan(your enemy) works.

#### **2. Ambush of Hidden Things ( Booby Traps)**

We all have different triggers that cause us to react. We must constantly be aware of situations that could potentially set off an instant negative eruption. Watch where you go! Watch who you talk to! If there are situations where you know you are vulnerable, avoid at all cost. Just like hidden booby traps, be on guard for them and avoid them. Remember, life is not a day in the park.

#### **3. A Full Frontal Attack (Human Wave)**

A full frontal attack is being attacked from all directions. It comes in like waves and feels like it is never going to end. How do we prepare for this? **Prior Planning Prevents Poor Performance.** As preparing for combat, you gather the essential tools to fight. In life, you must begin your day realizing it is warfare everyday and, for me to stay alive, I must recognize my enemy, be careful in my steps, and always be on alert. Because some days the wave of attacks seem to never end, I need to be fully prepared to fight the enemy daylight to dark consistently following what I have been trained.

## SESSION I

### **The Ambush of Temptation**

One of the greatest things to know is that Satan cannot read your mind. He does not know, as God does, our thoughts and our heart. Satan watches your behavior and sees your reactions to certain desires we may have. So, as a well trained Enemy, he can temp you after carefully watching your reactions to certain triggers. God will never temp his child to do evil. He may test you but only for your good...never for evil. God never tells you to get on the bad train!!!

*James 1:13 " Let no man say when he is temped, I am tempted of God. for God cannot be temped by evil, neither does he tempt any man"*

### So where does temptation come from?

*James 1:14 "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed."*

### So It is Me.

It's my own self. It's what I want. It is my desire. It makes me feel good. It is fun. I like it. It is my own fleshly desires.

*Proverbs 7:23 "....as a bird hasteth to a snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.*

There must be something in the trap he wants so much he is killed for it!

So, like the bird we see something we want, we desire to have it so bad that it consumes us . Our mind keeps flashing these thoughts. Do you remember the trains... Good Train , Bad Train? It's your choice! It is so easy to get on that train that leads to destruction.

### **Here is where that Conscious Effort comes into play.**

I will not, absolutely will not , I will turn and walk away, I will not get involved, I will go to God and his word for help.



## Three Ways We Let Evil Enter Our Mind

### 1. Our minds are Sinful. Unrepentance and unconfessed sin

*Eph. 4:23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind.*

*Isaiah 59:2 But your iniquities(sins) have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you. that he will not hear*

### 2. Our Minds are Unguarded.

*Isaiah 26:3 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee*

### 3. Our Minds are Polluted. Evil, lustful desires, bitterness, anger, hatred etc.

It is time to change Trains. Get off the bad Train and get on the Good Train!!! It's your choice!!!

The Word of God will become eviction papers that will remove even the worst of thoughts. The Word of God can have a Cleansing effect and a Controlling Effect and also a Correcting Effect effect.

*Ps 119:9-11 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word. With my whole heart have I sought thee: o let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.*

## Some observations about the Word of God

1. It will keep you from sin
2. It will enlarge your Heart
3. It will teach you the importance of Discipline
4. It will make you wise,

5. It will give you directions in life
6. It will provide Peace

Temptation can come even when you don't expect it and from places you feel you are the strongest. So be on alert! Guard your heart and your mind. It's your choice! Conscious Effort!

Example:

Before we headed out each day on our hunt for the enemy We checked our weapons to make sure they were in the best of shape. Do we have enough ammo, grenades, smoke grenades, hand flares, food, water, batteries for our /radio, Radios were working clearly, the proper gear (Helmet, poncho. etc). We had our direction and our leadership was in place. We had a point man that led the way. The last thing was a call to LOCK and LOAD. We were ready for whatever we hit.

So take time each morning to talk to God. He has all you need. Read His Word for directions and let Him calm your spirit. Now be ready.. LOCK and LOAD. Be on Guard!!!

### Scriptures on Guarding YOUR HEART

*Psalm 51:10 Create in me a clean heart,O God; and renew a right spirit within me.*

*Philippians 4:7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

*John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you, not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*

*Psalm 26:2 Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart,*

*Psalm 37:4 Delight thyself also in the Lord,; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart.*



Always be ready to be calm and be assured God is with you. Excuse yourself and leave. Be kind and determine to be ready for a soft answer. Never argue or get defensive or be critical.

## SESSION II

### **The Ambush of Hidden Things (Booby Traps)**

One of the most frightening things for a combat soldier to hear is a loud explosion and hear the cry for a Medic. Someone had hit a booby trap. Do I dare move, take another step, and are they all around me. Is it a trip wire, is it a bouncing Betty or a command detonated mortar round (IED). Your heart is in your throat. Your mouth is as dry as cotton. You slowly begin to move and your eyes are searching every where. Someone has been killed and others wounded. Anger begins to boil. Beware anyone in my way. Every thing is a threat. You could be dead on the next step or your legs blown off. This horror follows you home. You wake up from real experiencing nightmares in a cold sweat. You hear things that may be real or not. You get up and search the house. You check outside. You are too shaken to go back to sleep. This becomes a nightly occurrence.

*"A unguarded strength can become a double weakness"*

[Oswald Chambers]

*Job22:10 "Therefore snares [booby traps] are all around you, and sudden fear troubles you."*

*1 Timothy 3:7 "Moreover he must have a good testimony among those around him, lest he fall in reproach and the snare [booby traps] of the devil."*

Remember the very gates of hell can't make me lose my temper, become angry, fight, or stumble unless I remove myself from God's Protection and His Power

Always be on guard for some of the major ambushes( booby traps) that can keep you from having a joy filled life including, but not limited to:

The ambush of Anger

The ambush of Depression

The ambush of Pride

The ambush of the flesh

The ambush of self ( Self will is the opposite of God's will )

The ambush of lust



As we noticed in our study, our ways can fall into a deep dark way of life. I have listed some helps in the appendix for ways to combat these daily thought. Always remember it takes a constant effort each day and every minute to ward off these thoughts and feeling. Start the day with the study of God's word. Pray that He will guide your steps and illuminate your steps. Make a contract with your mouth that you will speak kind words.

*James 3:5 the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts.*

## SESSION III

### **A Full Frontal Attack ( Human Wave)**

A full frontal attack is coming from all directions wave after wave nonstop. An enemy attack! It can include attacks from home, work, friends, and even church. This can lead to full blown depression and even the thoughts of suicide.

### **I WANT IT TO STOP NOW! I NEED HELP!**

Don't be ashamed to seek help It's not a crime or a sin. You are human.

Life can become like March 21, 1967 . Our Company was just walking through the jungle and mountains of the Central Highlands and when we had stopped to check out bunkers and we found several. They appeared abandoned and we decided to have lunch. Our rear security saw two NVA moving toward us and we opened fire on them. Out of nowhere, hundreds of NVA started to attack us. All day and into the night the battle was on. Would it ever stop. Am I going to die here 13,000 miles from home in a place no one knows. With the help of our gun ships and leadership of our Lord, I did survive. After 50 years, I still relive this and other firefights at night and it robs me of sleep . I feel threatened in certain situations and am always on guard . It affects those around you and certainly your family. This would be only one of many firefights during my tour of duty.

PTSD is an emotional and behavioral disturbance that may occur after exposure to an exceptionally stressful, threatening, or catastrophic event. Even though 90% of adults have at least one intense traumatic event in their lifetime, not everyone develops PTSD. The diagnosis emerges in 5% of men and 10% of women, but rates are higher in specific populations, depending on the type and intensity of the trauma.

### **THE ENEMY IS EVERYWHERE!!!!**

This is the battle everyone who is alive is fighting. Most are not aware they even have an enemy. Everything strikes at once! All Heck Breaks Loose!

### **A FULL FRONTAL ATTACK!**

As Jerry Shirley stated in his sermon, *Who is my Enemy?*, **"Life is not a playground, it's a battleground! It is not fun and frolic. It is a fight! It is not a stroll, it is a struggle! It is not a waltz, it is all out warfare!"** Shirley also said,



“We must know our enemies. We have three: the world, the flesh and the devil. The world is our external enemy. It is our society apart from God. Our internal enemy is our flesh, our sinful nature. Our infernal enemy is the devil.”

*1 Peter 5:8-Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary(enemy), the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.*

Listed below is a list of stressful or traumatic events that one may face and can increase these rates:

- 
- Disaster Victims
- Sexual abuse
- Violent crimes/Rape
- Military personnel due to war or conflict
- Witnessing violent death/crime
- Life threatening accidents
- Treat of serious injury or death
- Terrorism
- Firefighters/policemen

Not everyone ends up with PTSD. Why? There are two obvious factors: The intensity, duration, and number of traumatic experiences and the person's mental interpretation (meaning) of the experience.

### SYMPTOMS ASSOCIATED WITH PTSD

1. **Arousal Symptom:** restless, sleepless, hyper-alert, unable to relax, jumpiness, difficulties concentrating. Arousal symptoms suggest a heightened physiological and psychological activation.
2. **Intrusive Symptoms:** mental “replays” and dreams in which the person sees, hears, feels, smells, tastes aspects of the event and has repeated bad dreams or nightmares. Sometimes replays feel real, vivid, and frightening.
3. **Avoidance Symptoms:** “shutting off one's emotions”, avoiding reminders such as places, people, conversations, and stimuli, shutting oneself off from the world.

PTSD symptoms last beyond a month and can appear long after the original trauma. It can cause significant disruption and impairment to one's normal life pursuits, such as social, school, work, and home.

### INTENSITY OF PTSD

1. **Low intensity:** Some distressing symptoms, memories, and disturbing dreams. They are distracted from home and work duties, but functions are maintained. The condition often resolves spontaneously.

2. **Moderate intensity:** This displays greater quantity and intensity of symptoms, impulsive intrusive images, greater effort in avoiding trauma stimuli, heightened arousal, restless, sleep difficulties, depression, loss of faith, and work production. There is a disruption in normal life activities, diminishing family life, parenting, and sexual activity. Professional help is usually required.

3. **Severe intensity:** This is a very serious stage. They usually have the inability to work or participate in almost anything. They will have nightmares, panic attacks, rage reactions, intense feelings of guilt, anxiety, depression, and powerful disturbing intrusive images. They are usually in spiritual despair with suicidal thoughts that may overwhelm that person. Many cognitive, physical, emotional, and spiritual symptoms may appear. Suicidal actions may increase. Professional help is required!

### SPIRITUAL SYMPTOMS

- World is unjust or unfair
- Loss of belief in God, feeling abandoned by God, no value in Scripture, finding it very hard to pray, not feeling spiritual
- World is unpredictable and unsafe
- Hopeless, lack of order and congruence in life, shattered self-esteem and self-efficacy
- No spirit of thankfulness



## HELPFUL HINTS FOR PTSD

- Help individuals to remember that unwanted thoughts and memories are just mental images and memories. Having these thoughts are normal. Have them talk to people they trust, and encourage them by saying that traumatic thoughts, memories and images usually lessen with time.
- Help individuals with feelings of anxiety and panic to know that these feelings are not dangerous. The same reactions can occur if one exercises strenuously not thinking negatively ("I am having a heart attack; I am going to die; I am losing control"). Use slow breathing techniques, stay calm, rest for a few minutes, and resume activities when sensations subside. Encourage them that practice makes coping easier.
- Help individuals feeling like trauma is happen again and having flashbacks to keep their eyes open and notice where they are. Use self talk to remind them where they are and that they are safe, the traumatic event happened in the past and they are in the present. Encourage them to get up and move around, get a drink of water, wash their face and hands, call someone they trust to tell them what is happening, and help them to remember that this is a common traumatic reaction. Have them talk to a counselor if memories become intense.
- Help individuals with trauma-related dreams and nightmares to understand the nature of brain activity when sleeping. Help them to understand that the brain does not distinguish between memories and reality. It may cause them to react as if they are in danger, and that having anxiety and panic does not mean that they are in real danger. Have them get up to orient themselves, listen to music or read, do light paperwork or light physical activity, talk to someone or have them talk to their doctor if nightmares persist.
- Help individuals with sleep difficulties to maintain a regular bedtime schedule. Exercise earlier in the day, not a few hours before bedtime. Encourage them not to use tobacco, alcohol, or caffeine before bedtime. If unable to sleep, have them get up and read, listen to music, perform a

relaxing hobby, write in a journal or some other light activity until they become sleepy.

- Encourage individuals who are irritable, angry, and displaying rage to stop, take a time out, using breathing exercises, and to think things over. Help them to know it is okay to walk away from a situation. Only engage in meaningful arguments if need be, and help them to just let things go. Encourage them to exercise daily and take walks to reduce the tension in the body. If they are unable to control their anger, encourage them to speak to a counselor.
- Help individuals with concentration problems to slow down, get better focused on their objectives or task, write down notes to themselves as reminders, break big projects into smaller segments, and make reasonable plans each day.
- Help those who are emotionally numb by understanding that this is a normal reaction to trauma. It is not deliberate, it is not controlled. It just happens. Encourage them to spend time with people they care about and do things they enjoy to encourage rekindled feelings. Encourage them to say positive things to people they care about or write it down. Surround them with people who care.

### **NEEDED SUPPORT FROM OTHERS**

Most spouses don't fully understand PTSD. They usually just want the symptoms to go away and for their spouse to get over what they are experiencing. It is imperative that a spouse is supportive, tries to understand, do not be in a quick hurry to "fix" things, support counseling efforts, and learn better communication skills. There are a number of different communication techniques, such as the speaker-listener technique and the awareness wheel that will get the spouse to communicate properly, as well for the other spouse to actually know and understand how their spouse is feeling and what they are going through. Regular communication fails to validate one's experience. This is a journey for this individual. Some will recover quickly, while others may take a little longer.



Listed below are a few suggestions for spouses to consider in helping their spouse through this process of recovery:

- Be familiar with traumatic stress so you can become helpful
- Provide companionship, sense of belonging that prevents isolation and feelings that no one cares or understands
- Support any professional services given and participated when needed
- Traumatic stress reactions may interfere with your loved one's ability to trust others or to be emotionally close
- Communication with a stressed victim may be difficult and discover safe ways to speak and listen.
- Some may "spare" the family distress by not talking about the trauma your spouse has endured. Ignoring these significant feelings may make your spouse feel "cut off"
- Understand that your spouse may experience a wide range of negative thoughts
- Your spouse may express little interest in social contact
- Understand this is a journey, just like taking a road trip. There are many twists and turns but they will eventually get to their destination of recovery. Be patient and supporting during this time. Healing will come.
- Understand that once your spouse has recovered, these symptoms will rarely come back. It is a step in their life that they have to face, overcome with strategies and coping skills, and using these from time to time to ward off intrusive thoughts.
- Your children, in accordance to ages, should be informed of the changes that a parent has undergone and advise them how to help the distressed parent.

Here is an excerpt from Captain Jim Lanning's sermon notes on how to overcome PTSD:

Philippians 3:13B, " But one thing I do **forgetting** (1) what is behind and **straining** (2) toward what is ahead. I press on toward the **goal to win the prize** ( 3) for which God has called me **heavenward in Christ** ( 4).

“ When Suffering becomes worse than changing, then we will change— but what change will we Choose? If you have tried drugs, booze, therapy but still have PTSD look for another way— try faith! Our bodies and our minds and our spirit are all connected; work on the spiritual change first; it will help your body to relax and your mind open to thing on better things.”

### I. Work on Forgetting

- A. Our Past Sin
- B. Abuse of Our Bodies
- C. Our Past Failures
- D. Our Past Failures and Broken Hearts

### II. The Art of Straining

- A. Physically, when our body is “ stopped up”, as with constipation, we strain to have a                      bowel movement, don't we?
- B. Dumping out for me took writing our Nam
- C. Our ability to make PTSD manageable does take effort and consistency i.e. straining!                      Writing out the past can be a part of healing but you may have another method that                      works for you.
- D. an old OT verse says, “ Cast your bread ( cares and hopes) upon the water and it will                      not return to you void.” In other words, give up trying to fix it yourself and give it all                      to God through Christ, the Living Water. He will then take your life, warts and all, and                      turn it around to produce goodness and mercy not only for you but for others you                      share your testimony with.

### III. The Prize

- A. Live in tension of ‘what we have been’ and ‘what we want to be’
- B. Let go of past guilt over RVN (Republic of North Vietnamese Army)
- C. Realize you are forgiven and then move on to a life of faith and obedience
- D. Grow in knowledge of God by concentrating on your relationship with Christ now
- E. Look forward to a fuller and more meaningful life



#### IV. Christ is in Charge

A. Corinthians 5: "Wherefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away and behold all things are become new."

B. New Birth is Essential!

### Hear Their Stories

Here are the stories of the real men who faced death on a daily basis. These are my fellow brothers of Charlie Co 1967 who wanted to share their story and how PTSD affected their life.

*John Washington, our machine gunner M60:*

*The Vietnam war followed me home. Once back with my family for an entire month on awaking I would bite my tongue quite seriously to ensure that I was still alive before opening my eyes. I was alive, alright, but psychologically and emotionally I wasn't. The state side Army was seriously into the drinking culture that easily sucked me in when I found that booze quickly brought back my sense of security, wiped away my depression states and hid my smoldering anger -- that is until the next morning.*

*After leaving the Army in 1969, I found myself doing stupid stuff while drinking. One night while drunk, with a loaded shotgun, I chased a friend from my house with the intention of killing him. Stuff like that! What saved me from drinking myself to death was a return to the Army in 1980 to retire in 1994. Being back inside the perimeter things got better and I went into a sober phase until my wife of 32 years left in 2008. Slowly I started drinking again until Jun 19 of last year. You talked to me in May and heard the condition that I had descended to.*

*These are the things that saved me and gave me the peace of mind to deal with my demons.*

- 1. The VA put me on Prozac and gave me a psychologist who understands the issues with PTSDers owed to being married to one of us. She not only talks to me during sessions but gives me exercises to work through in my free time.*
- 2. I found a girl friend who knows me by reason of having a son who returned from Afghanistan and Iraq tours with issues.*
- 3. I exercise strong every other day and keep busy with projects at times.*
- 4. My psychologist has taught me to watch my negative thoughts and challenge them.*
- 5. I have stayed sober.*
- 6. Being retired I am able to avoid stressful situations.*
- 7. Age has mellowed me.*
- 8. I know that there is a life beyond this and, therefore, a reason for being here.*



*Cpt. Jim Lanning, our CO 1967*

*Today my journey has taken me 1200 miles to Gatlinburg, Tennessee, to meet with a group of friends who served together in an Infantry Rifle Company in Viet Nam 50 years ago. The only thing better than a friend is an old friend. Attendees are coming from TN, GA, NY, NC, TX, VA, plus the wife and son of a deceased member from Iowa.*

*Viet Nam was the signature event of our lifetime. There was plenty to talk about as one year in combat produces many memories. Conversations often ended with the current health issues—blood pressure, diabetes, cancer, hearing loss, Agent Orange.*

*And P.T.S.D.— the pain does not go away, and commonly known are the symptoms: aggressive behavior, substance abuse, hopelessness, suicide, homelessness, and bad dreams. A great deal of energy and resources have been spent by the Department of Defense and the Veterans Administration on treatment. Basically, each person much address his own situation. For sure, everyone who went to Viet Name underwent change.*

*My own response: facing the possibility of PTSD upon my return to the U.S.A. and quite by happenstance I sat down and wrote literally hundreds of pages about my combat experiences. As I wrote, I dumped it. This is what worked for me.*

*I was asked to give the key sermon at the Gathering. I chose two points:*

*1.) St. Paul said, "forgetting what is behind and stringing towards what is ahead." Philippians 3:13 "We can let go of past guilt and look forward to what is to come. Do not dwell on your past; intimated look forward to what God will help you become. Realize that you are forgiven and then move on to a life of faith and obedience." (NIV Study Bible Commentary)*

*2.) St. Paul also wrote these words in Romans: "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus because through Christ jesus the law of the spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death." Romans 1-2. A friend stated those verses are what saved him from the Abyss. "The fact is that the entire human race has been justly condemned by repeatedly breaking God's law. Without Jesus we would have no hope at all. Jesus declare us not guilty and has offered us freedom from sin and given believers the power to do His will." (NIV Study Bible Commentary)*

*One does not have to bear the scars of war to grasp the application of these two passages to your life. They can give you peace.*

*As stated earlier, upon returning to the United States from Viet Nam, I wrote literally hundreds and hundreds of pages from memory and from notes I had kept in small green issue memo books. As I wrote of the war experiences, I "dumped them" from my mind. The Department of Defense has funded research through "Strong Star Consortium" on how wiring can help service members as a treatment for PTDS. I know this method worked for me.*

*Horace Mann said, "Habit is a cable, you weave a thread of it each day until at last you cannot break it." Journaling became my habit and I have continued on a near-daily basis writing in my journal and now have over 40 years of logbooks/journals. When my memory is fuzzy, I can consult the date for verification. More on habit: I found these words posted on the wall of the local MHMR hotline office:*

*" Watch your thoughts , for they become words;*

*Watch your words, for they become actions;*

*Watch your actions, for they become habits,*

*Watch your habits , for they become character;*

*Watch your character because it becomes your destiny."*

*Many journals can be found in public libraries including one by John Quincy Adams, the sixth president of the United States. He wrote from the age of 10 until his late 70s— 14,000 pages in all. If you are interested in recording your life, I recommended your purchase a blank book—notebook will do— and start the habit of recording on a daily basis the most significant event of the day and add to it any personal feelings.*

*The Bible shows that the Apostles, especially St. Paul wrote many letters to the New Testament churches. St. Paul expressed his personal hope that what he wrote was bringing people to God. 2 Corinthians 3:2 ( NIV) states: " Your lives are a letter written in our hearts, and everyone can read it and recognize our good work among you."*

*Larry Prater, a RTO (radio telephone operator) from Georgia:*

*My wife Jo has stood by me for 50+ years. She has been steadfast and faithful to help me deal with the issues of combat. We attend counseling sessions and therapy at the VA in Georgia. Having someone to talk to about my anger issues has helped me and kept me more calm. Working on projects in my shop and staying busy also*



helps me keep my mind off of those things. Please contact the Veterans Association because they are there to help you any way they can.

### *Jason Selby: A son's perspective on PTSD*

*Jason was the son of Wes Selby, Squad leader. He writes:*

*Recently, Vietnam veteran Jim Phillips asked me to contribute to a book about PTSD he is writing called LZ Hope.*

*Phillips wants accounts from soldiers actually shot at by the enemy. That should exclude me from inclusion in his work. However, he served with my father James Wesley Selby from 1966 to 1967. My experiences are the equivalent of secondhand smoke.*

*At the dinner table of our southern Iowa farm, my father's ashes got tapped into a black Hilton tray stolen from a hotel by one of his friends. My father woke early, usually around 3 a.m., because he was on Listening Post with the squelch on the radio turned down. When the air force dropped bombs it almost lifted him off the ground.*

*The platoon lieutenant Jim Lanning, a graduate of Texas A&M, took pride in the fact none of his men were killed by friendly fire in the field. When I met Phillips and Lanning for the first time last May in Tennessee, I was the messenger of my father's death.*

*"How is Wes doing?" Lanning asked.*

*But even if my father had not passed from cancer the previous October, I would not have had all good news to relay. Yes, he had survived, never got divorced, and lived long enough to become a grandfather to descendants who will not have clear recollections of the man. However, I was also burdened with the task to inform these two, both now pastors, that my father had been an alcoholic.*

*Lanning asked if my father had been saved. I told him that was between my father and God.*

*I cannot describe my feelings as a child toward my father as love. He was our protector. I often wondered who would protect us from our protector. In other words, this protection was not enough, either during the War or afterward. My father was stuck in time, though he appeared to be physically present, in an Indonesian jungle where he killed men with a shotgun, and their shadows followed him back home. He dissociated himself from their deaths by including others, a group effort—the men 'we' killed—but he mentioned the cross one of the boys wore around his neck, and the notion this particular enemy combatant believed in the same God.*

*My father was split in two because his memory was too good. He told me, while we were fishing one day in a farm pond, how he had watched a man get blown in half by a mortar right in front of him. I had not asked, 'Dad, could you tell me*

about a traumatic, gruesome experience that scarred you?' It had just appeared in his reflection in the water, flashed its scales near the surface, and dove back down.

Vietnam brushed everything orange, that kitchen top counter color from the 1970s and 1980s you can see on a TV show like *The Brady Bunch*. My father was a workaholic. Flashbacks and dreams kept his hands busy. He was his own boss, he could never again be subject to authority—at face value, not a bad trait, but not compatible while living in a world governed and filled with legal, religious and social rules. In short, he felt contempt and a lack of patience for what he had once almost given all.

As Agent Orange proved to my family, light contains darkness, and darkness contains light. Just because the jungle has been cleared of leaves, pouring sun on what was once too dense to pass through, it does not mean the path is safe to walk.

Which leads me to my role in this drama. We blamed Agent Orange when anything went wrong with our health. My brother died of cancer, and the idea saturated us.

The poet Countee Cullen wrote, 'My sorrow must be laid on your head like a crown.' If this is what a nation chooses to do to its children, the future, which no one can separate from collectively, then there is reason for pessimism and mistrust of authority.

It is now believed PTSD can be passed down. This is not a reference simply to living with abuse or alcoholism. It is an inheritance. There is scientific proof what happens to our ancestors changes our genome. The theory of epigenetics is a relatively new idea chanced upon by meticulous birth records kept in Scandinavia, which in turn could be measured against times of abundance and starvation.

As Dr. Jean-Pierre Issa writes, "Cigarette smoking causes genetic damage. Certain types of environmental exposures and radiation cause genetic damage, and that's how they cause cancer.

"But now if I say, 'Well, wait a minute, epigenetic damage can also cause cancer,' then you've got to ask, 'Well, what causes epigenetic damage in these cancer cells?'

Work by Professor Jonathan Seckl of Edinburgh University has demonstrated pregnant rats exposed to stress hormones give birth to offspring with raised anxiety. In his study, this condition lasted past the first generation.

This phenomenon has been called the Ghost in the Genes, and though not fully understood, it is the equivalent of a genetic unconscious. Experiences such as famine and war are marked as firmly in children as upon their fathers. Death is never the end of sorrow, pain or hope.

The epigenetic study suggested the grandchildren of ancestors who lived through starvation were sturdier in constitution. Maybe there is light in this darkness, a collective way for the human race to learn.



*At the end of his life, I loved my father. I understood what had happened to him, how it changed him, but I could never say to him, 'I understand.' If a memory returns after 50 years and is just as horrific and clear as the moment it formed, there could be no other archetype to describe it except as a demon, and the problem one of possession. In mythology, evil spirits leap from one body to another once the old casing is exhausted.*

*On several levels, there is a wider scope to the consequences of sending our young to war. This is the 100th anniversary of the Great Influenza, spread efficiently by World War I. Before its onset, doctors and scientific researchers understood that more people died of disease than combat during an armed conflict. They planned for it.*

*Yet the flu still became the greatest pandemic in human history and made fodder of both forethought and ideology. Life is change. It is an endless chain reaction. Progress is worth nothing if we cannot slow down enough to understand this ghost. If we cannot reach a better grasp of it, in the future the Great Influenza will seem quaint compared to what might be coming our way, both for the health of all nations and for the psychological and spiritual end of individuals that died to maintain a sane inheritance for their children.*

After reviewing these pages, I hope some particular points will stay with the reader. As for me, the Conscious Effort statement has helped me overcome many of my fears. I have allowed God to help me and change the way I think on a daily basis.

Our minds are engaged in though 24/7. Like the trains I mentioned (Good Train vs Bad Train) I must always be alert when the occasion arises to choose the good train.

I must know my true identity. Not what others believe me to be but who I and God know that I am. Let me encourage you, if you have not asked Christ to come into your life and forgive your sin and help you, that you will make that decision today. I have found this was my first step to being healed. I know God loves you just like He loves me and He wants to see you healed.

*"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life." John 3:16*

As we spoke of choices, this also is a choice only you can make. As a friend of mine, Larry Self, Director of Cookeville Rescue Mission, once told me. "If you are not through with your sin, roll up your sleeves and go at it." He found this to be true after 45 years of dealing with people who suffer from mental illness, homelessness, PTSD, etc. Some choose to change and some decide to continue living like they always have. May God Bless You!



## Resources:

35th Infantry Regiment Honored Dead. [www.cacti35th.org/regiment/kia/kia\\_index.php](http://www.cacti35th.org/regiment/kia/kia_index.php).

Captain Jim Lanning Commanding Officer of Charlie Company of 25th Infantry.  
*How To Overcome PTSD*

Lanning, Jim. *A Journey- The Daily Record of an Infantry Rifle Company in Combat in Viet Nam.*

Lanning, Michael Lee. *The Only War We Had.*

Selby, Jason. "Memorial Day Stories." *The Wayne County Independent.*

*What Is PTSD?*, [www.ptsd.va.gov/public/ptsd-overview/basics/what-is-ptsd.asp](http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/ptsd-overview/basics/what-is-ptsd.asp).'

Scriptures taken from King James Version Holy Bible

Photos by: Jim Phillips and Jim Lanning

Excerpts from *What is my Identity?* From Dr. Jimmy Arms Senior Pastor at Upper Helton Baptist Church

Excerpts from *Who is my Enemy* sermon from Dr. Jerry Shirley

A special thanks to Reverend Roy Allen, Jason Groe, Terry Geren, and Chuck Branch for their contributions from their sermons and to all the men I served with from Charlie Company that influenced my life and writings for this manual.

Don't let Satan in your Perimeter  
I Peter 5: 8

After talking to my Commanding Officer from Vietnam some 50 years later. His closing words to me was "Don't let them in the perimeter" After walking all day in the jungle cover mountains known as the Kontun or the Central Highlands. and then on North to Duc Pho. After humping [Walking] all day, carrying 125 # of ammo, weapon, water, food, radios machine guns ,grenades, colored smoke grenades, hand grenades and all your personal stuff, you were so tired just to stop and set up for the night. It was so welcome. Now was not the time to relax. We had to be prepared for the night. We begin to set up a perimeter. 3 to 4 men forming a position would begin to dig a foxhole , big enough to get in if the enemy attacked during the night. Each man would take turns 2 hours on guard. We would form a complete circle this way. We also put out trip flares and claymore mines to be blown first at the enemy. We also had LP"s [Listen Post ] About 50 to 100 yards outside the Perimeter, 2 or 3 men would .listen for any movement and would call in a report each hour during the night. We dared not slumber or sleep. Our life depended on it as well as our other buddies.

We knew as combat soldiers we knew who we were fighting , NVA or regular VC, and if they got inside our perimeter they could reek havoc.

Satan wants nothing more than to enter certain areas of your life so he can gain a stronghold. He'll try anything to throw you off center, distract you from your focus, and render you ineffective for the Kingdom of God.

And I believe that there are common areas he attacks – in any of us. As long as we're aware of his strategies, we can be on guard to keep him out of his targeted entry points.



These are the five areas of your life Satan wants to enter. I'm sure there are many other ways

## 1. Your heart – so it's not God's alone.

There's a reason God's Word tells us: *"Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it"* (Proverbs 4:23). Satan knows he has an entry point into your life if God is not first in our hearts. God's first commandment, set forth under the Old Covenant, was: *"You shall have no other gods before me"* (Exodus 20:3). And Jesus restated that under the New Covenant when He was asked what is the *greatest commandment* and responded by saying *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'..."* (Luke 10:27).

Satan's greatest desire is to prevent you from giving God *all* of your heart so he will constantly dangle people, things, and desires in front of you – anything to distract you so he can erect a false god in front of you that you don't even realize you have.

Do you love God more than you love anything (or anyone) else in life?

The Enemy will try to lure you with a false god like your career, a spouse or love interest, a dream or goal, a hobby or lifestyle. I know many people whose first love is Sports, so they spend more time at the ballgame or golf than letting God work within. It's a subtle way of starting to love other things more than God. Some of us love food, money, recreation, our children, a substance, or a "feeling" (like being in love, or feeling energetic) more than God, Himself. Guard your heart by keeping Christ on the throne of your life so Satan doesn't try to sneak anything into your perimeter. Especially your Heart

## 2. Your worries – to make you doubt God's love and provision.

Satan wants you stressing, because then you're not resting in God's ability to care for you. – bills that must be paid, what someone is saying about us, how our body looks, and so on. Men tend to stress about their

jobs, providing for their families, and whether or not they are "making the cut" in several areas of life. Then there's health concerns, fears about our getting old, and other situations that can crowd out God's peace in our lives and even cause us to begin to blame God for our circumstances.

Are you living like God's love and provision are real?

Don't let Satan in the perimeter through his tantalizing "what if?" questions and the doubts he weaves through your mind. God instructs us in Philippians 4:6-7 to *"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus"*. Keep praying about your concerns and keep thanking God ahead of time for what He's about to do, so Satan doesn't get inside your perimeter in your mind through your worries and fears.

3. Your everyday thinking – so you're just like the world.

It's amazing how many people profess to know God and follow Him, yet their thinking patterns are just like those of anyone else in the world. Satan loves that. He wants you to be so absorbed with the ways of the world that you are clueless about what God's Word says. He will do this through subtle messages in music lyrics, statements from your favorite celebrity, and words of advice from friends (even friends of yours who are believers,

Is your everyday thinking different from the world's?

Scripture commands us: *"(Romans 12:2, "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, acceptable, and perfect, will of God*



Furthermore, God's Word instructs: "(Philippians 4:8-9, Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

v.9 those things, which you have both learned and received, and heard, and seen in me, do; and the God of peace shall be with you.

But Satan would rather have us in mental anguish by listening to the world, rather than the word of God. Guard your everyday thinking by soaking it in Scripture. It's the only way to keep Satan and his worldly philosophies from entering in through a unguarded perimeter

#### 4. Your speech — so you tear others apart.

God wants us to be holy mouthpieces for Him — people who heal and help with our words. But Satan would rather have you and me blowing it big time with our mouths. A few critical words here, a few complaints there, some profanity mixed in with a little gossip on the side and we have given him permission to make us people who tear others apart and sound no different (and sometimes worse) than unbelievers. Satan knows we can cause much damage with our mouths if we do not bring them under God's control.

Are your words building up others?

Whether it is gossip, criticism or unkind remarks, our mouths can be instruments of righteousness or unrighteousness. Close that gap in the perimeter to Satan, altogether, by applying God's instructions in Ephesians 4:29: Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is goods to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers

And 1 Thessalonians 5:18 tells us , "In everything give thanks"

Be a verbally thankful person who speaks only to lift others up, not tear them down. That will diminish and destroy a critical and complaining spirit that gives Satan a open pathway inside

## 5. Our Bodies - so they no longer glorify God

(Romans 12:1, I beseech you therefore, brethren by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

Are you glorifying God through your body?

Satan knows that God considers our bodies His temple and therefore God wants us to keep our bodies holy, healthy and honoring to Him (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). Scripture says keeping our bodies holy is our "*spiritual act of worship*" (Romans 12:1, NIV). So because our bodies are holy to God, Satan would love to have us harm them, mutilate them, starve them, and destroy them with substances. Don't let him in. Not in how you dress. Not in how you see yourself. Not in how you treat yourself. Ask God for a healthy body image and a desire to protect your body so you can serve Him on this earth in it for as long as possible.

The best strategy:

So what's your strategy now that you know the areas where Satan wants to enter your life? God gives us a great defense



through Paul's instructions to the saints in Ephesians 6:10-18: *"Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes..."* I find it interesting that every piece of "armor" described. In other words, put on Christ-likeness. Abide in Christ, be clothed in His character and righteousness, and you will fend off the attacks of the enemy.