

2 Chronicles 20:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ You will not *need* to fight in this *battle*. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the LORD, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem!’ Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the LORD *is* with you.”

Our text here tells us that we do not need to fight our own battles, because our battles belong to the Lord, not to us

- We just need to take our position and stand still (*in Praise and Worship*) until our breakthroughs come

2 Chronicles 20:22 (NKJV)

²² Now when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated.

- The people of God were determined to seek Him rather than live in fear
- Their praise confused the enemy – NLT – “*they started fighting among themselves*”

We see the same principle in the book of Judges

Judges 7:21–22 (NKJV)

²¹ And every man stood in his place all around the camp; and the whole army ran and cried out and fled. ²² When the three hundred blew the trumpets, the LORD set every man’s sword against his companion throughout the whole camp; and the army fled ...

Ephesians 6:12 (NKJV)

¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

- We do not fight against people – “*other people or our own selves.*”
- Perhaps the greatest war we wage is with ourselves
- The enemy is a master at turning us against ourselves
- We struggle with where we are spiritually, compared to where we need to be
- We wrestle with wishing we would have accomplished more than we have done in life
- We may feel like a failure in our jobs or relationships, or in any number of other areas
- We won't change anything by struggling and being frustrated
- Only God can fight and win the battles we fight within ourselves

We need to get honest with ourselves about our sins, failures, and weaknesses, yet still know we are right with God

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV)

²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Many Christians go to heaven yet fail to enjoy their lives here because they do not know how to enjoy God or enjoy themselves

- We don't enjoy ourselves because we are engaged in private internal battles over all our deficiencies
- We don't enjoy God because we live with a continual vague feeling that God is angry or displeased with us
- Always wrestling with ourselves, always at war, always struggling

Most of us have more problems with ourselves than we do with the enemy or any person on earth

- We can be changed as we worship God and focus on Him

2 Corinthians 3:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

- Most of us want to change
- We want to see changes in our behavior
- We want to become more stable or loving
- We want to show more of the fruit of the Spirit

We cannot change these things on our own, but God has given us the Helper, the Holy Spirit Himself, to help us be like Jesus

Change in our lives happens little by little, not all at once

- One step at a time
- That is how God changes us

He reveals something to us and then He waits until we decide to trust Him with it before He works His character in us over that area of our lives

The amount of time required for change depends upon several things

- How long it takes to get us into agreement with God that we really do have a problem
- How long it takes us to stop making excuses and blaming our problem on other people
- How long we spin our wheels, trying to change ourselves
- How much time we spend studying God's word, waiting on and worshipping Him

God is always trying to work in us, our families, and our circumstances

Exodus 3:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.' "

- God calls Himself, I Am, Not I Was, or I Will Be
- He is ready to work in our lives right now!

God is ready, willing, and able to work in you now

Resist the temptation to compare where you are on your journey with someone who “*seems*” to be further along

Each of us is an individual and God deals with us differently, according to what He knows we can handle

- Continue to believe that He loves you unconditionally
- Over time you will see that He was working in you all along
- You are being transformed into His image

Romans 8:29 (NKJV)

²⁹ For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.*

- Jesus is the “*express image*” of the Father – **Hebrews 1:3**
- We are to follow in His footsteps
- He is the example of how we are to live and conduct ourselves

Our goal is not to be successful in business or some specific area of life

- Our number one goal is Christ likeness
- Only God’s grace can change us
- Stop struggling to change yourself

As Christians we should be forgiving, merciful, and loving

- This can only happen if we have received His forgiveness, mercy, and love
- Our lives and our godly behavior should make others hungry and thirsty for what we have in Christ

Matthew 5:13–14 (NKJV)

¹³ “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. ¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.

- Salt makes people thirsty, and light exposes and leads people out of darkness

We do not need to be perfect for God to use us, but we cannot expect our faith to catch people’s attention if we live a carnal life

- God will make us better as we study His word
- We see who He is in His written word, and it becomes a mirror to us
- When we see ourselves in light of what the word says, we realize how we need to change
- Little by little as we study and search the scriptures, He changes us and makes us more like Him

Once God begins to change us we can be sure that He will finish the work – **Philippians 1:6**

There is a Price to Pay

1 Peter 4:1-2 AMP

So, since Christ suffered in the flesh ^[a]*for us, for you*, arm yourselves with the same thought *and* ^[b]purpose [patiently to suffer rather than fail to please God]. For whoever has suffered in the flesh [having ^[c]the mind of Christ] is done with [intentional] sin [has stopped pleasing himself and the world, and pleases God],² So that he can no longer spend the rest of his natural life living by [his] human appetites *and* desires, but [he lives] for what God wills.

- Sacrifice and suffering are not popular terms among Christians

Jesus paid the full price for our sins, but if we want to mature spiritually and be like Christ, we must say no to our selfishness and yes to God

- We need to die to really live

When we are willing to give up our independence and submit to God, to have His will in our lives, that leads to a glorious victory, it leads to real life, the way God wants us to have it

- The suffering that leads to a godly life eventually fades and is replaced with rest, relaxation, peace, and joy
- When we follow the Holy Spirit, He will always lead us into truth – **John 16:13**

When we humble ourselves before God and lay down our rights concerning others, the momentary suffering we feel will lead to joy and peace

Romans 14:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ For it is written: “As I live, says the LORD, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God.”

We not only need to have the right attitudes and worship in our hearts, but also need to express our worship outwardly

- We can demonstrate and declare the surrender in our hearts in several ways

Taking Communion

1 Corinthians 11:26 (NKJV)

²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.

- We are outwardly declaring Jesus as our living bread and water
- We are declaring that He is all we need
- I am forgiven, happy and fulfilled in You
- You are my number one need – I cannot live without you!

Declare it With Actions

Psalms 47:1 (NKJV)

¹ Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph!

- We need to express our worship
- It brings a release in our lives
- It honors God and helps us fight and win the battles in life

Even though it is beautiful to be still and quiet in God's presence, it is equally beautiful to express sincere praise and worship through various emotions

- Emotions shouldn't control us
- It isn't healthy to suppress them either
- King David shouted, danced, and showed many emotions in worshiping God – the book of Psalms records this

Declare it With Words

Hebrews 13:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of *our* lips, giving thanks to His name.

- Death and life are in the power of the tongue
– **Proverbs 18:21**
- Words of thanksgiving are devastating to the enemy

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)

¹² For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

- One edge defeats Satan
- The other edge releases the blessings of Heaven
- The sword of the Spirit – **Ephesians 6:17**

When we speak the word of God we are waging spiritual warfare

Psalm 91:2 (NKJV)

² I will say of the LORD, “*He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust.*”

- What are you saying about the Lord?
- We need to say right things not just think them

People often claim to believe something yet everything they say indicates the opposite

- Words have power
- Spoken confession should be part of our fellowship time with God
- Pray, sing, and confess God’s word
- Verbalize your thanksgiving, praise, and worship

Lift Up Your Hands

Psalm 63:1–4 (NKJV)

¹ O God, You *are* my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water. ² So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, to see Your power and Your glory. ³ Because Your lovingkindness *is* better than life, my lips shall praise *You*. ⁴ Thus I will bless You while I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name.

Psalm 141:2 (NKJV)

² Let my prayer be set before You *as* incense, The lifting up of my hands *as* the evening sacrifice.

- Several other scriptures – **Psalm 63:4; 134:2; 1 Timothy 2:8**

Lifting of hands seems to be a natural thing to do in the presence of God

- It is an expression of adoration, reverence, and surrender
- When we surrender, God takes control
- He will not force His will on us
- You can lift your hands and speak words of praise to God throughout the day
- When we lift our hands there is a tremendous release of emotions

Our spirits long to worship expressively; something is missing for us spiritually until we begin to do so

Psalm 119:164 (NKJV)

¹⁶⁴ Seven times a day I praise You, Because of Your righteous judgments.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if several times a day we just took the time get alone with God, kneel, lift our hands, and take time to just worship God for His goodness

Bow Down

Daniel 6:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.

- When we bow down we are humbling ourselves before God
- We are basically saying we are nothing without God
- Young Daniel had a high position in the kingdom
- His enemies were jealous of his position
- Because Daniel was righteous his enemies knew they couldn't accuse him of any wrongdoing
- So, they tried to find a way to weaken his devotion to God through the fear of being harmed

They persuaded the king to issue a decree stating, that for thirty days, anyone caught petitioning any god or man except the king would be thrown into the lion's den

His enemies knew Daniel had the habit of going to his room three times a day, opening the windows, and kneeling down to pray and worship God

- He refused to compromise his worship
- Daniel did have to go to the lion's den, but God shut the mouths of the lions

Daniel 6:16–23 (NKJV)

¹⁶ So the king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast *him* into the den of lions. *But* the king spoke, saying to Daniel, “Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you.” ¹⁷ Then a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signets of his lords, that the purpose concerning Daniel might not be changed. ¹⁸ Now the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; and no musicians were brought before him. Also his sleep went from him. ¹⁹ Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions. ²⁰ And when he came to the den, he cried out with a lamenting voice to Daniel. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, “Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?” ²¹ Then Daniel said to the king, “O king, live forever! ²² My God sent His angel and shut the lions’ mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you.” ²³ Now the king was exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, because he believed in his God.

- When we worship God, we have the courage to remain faithful to Him
- Victory is not the absence of problems; it is having peace and joy in the midst of them
- We may have difficulty but it will work out in the end