

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*”

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*.

Know Your Enemy

1 Peter 5:8 AMP

⁸ Be sober [well balanced and self-disciplined], be alert *and* cautious at all times. That enemy of yours, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion [fiercely hungry], seeking someone to devour.

- If we get to know the enemy's tactics we can avoid being deceived and trapped by him
- He comes "*like*" a roaring lion
- He is not a roaring lion

I'm not saying he has no power, he does, and we should take him seriously

- Jesus is the Lion of the tribe of Judah
- Satan can only portray an imitation of what is real and true
- The devil is a liar and he can only harm people who are deceived by him

We need to know up front that we do not need to defeat the devil

- He is already a defeated foe
- Jesus defeated him on the cross
- We merely apply by faith the victory that is already ours

Colossians 2:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

- Jesus has rescued from darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of light – which is God’s Kingdom
– **Colossians 1:13**
- Scripture teaches us that we are fighting from a vantage point of already having victory

Romans 8:37 AMP

³⁷ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors *and* gain an overwhelming victory through Him who loved us [so much that He died for us].

- The way we see ourselves is very important
- We should see ourselves as people with authority
- As victorious conquerors

If we allow the devil to convince us that we are weak, incapable, unable, and losers, then we will demonstrate those characteristics

- We should agree with God and what He says about us

One of Satan’s main objectives is to prevent us from knowing who we are in Christ, and what our privileges are as children of God

Satan is a defeated foe, and he knows that

- If we don't know that he will take advantage of us and bluff his way into intimidating us

Believing what God says about us in His Word and seeing ourselves as He sees us is one way we let Him fight our battles for us

- We may have to walk through some difficulties, and stand strong in faith, but we know how the story ends

Genesis 3 – The first time Satan appears in the Bible

- He tries to make Eve suspicious of God's word
- The devil is a liar
- God is truth and cannot lie

When Eve listened to the devil she began to question God's goodness

- She took Satan's bait and disobeyed God's instructions to her and Adam

Genesis 2:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

God's instructions were for Adam and Eve's own good, but the devil made them sound as though God was depriving them of something they should have and enjoy

- To believe a lie is to be deceived
- When you are deceived you are not aware that you are deceived
- You believe that what you *think* is true and you act accordingly

One of the most difficult challenges in ministry has been trying to convince someone who is deeply deceived that they are wrong in what they believe

- Not only is the devil a liar, he is the father of lies

John 8:44 AMP

⁴⁴ You are of *your* father the devil, and it is your will to practice the desires [which are characteristic] of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks what is natural to him, for he is a liar and the father of lies *and* half-truths.

If we don't realize that Satan is a real threat and we don't know his character, he can easily deceive us, and we can end up believing many things that are not true

- Remember murder starts in the heart
- The devil will always lead you to target people as the enemy and the source of your problems

When we believe the lies of the enemy it will keep us from enjoying the life that Jesus died for us to have

Going to church, and even being involved in ministry will not automatically give you a life of victory

- Are you easily angered by others?
- Are you resentful, unforgiving, jealous, and critical?
- Is everybody else the problem of your disfunction?

Blaming others for our problems is one of the enemy's greatest strategy's

When Adam and Eve were caught in their sin

- Eve blamed the devil
- Adam blamed Eve
- God assigned responsibility and punishment to all of them

Satan was guilty of lying to Adam and Eve, but they were guilty of listening and believing what he said instead of what God had said – **Genesis 3:1-19**

- As long as we blame other people for our own bad behavior and problems, we will be caught in a never-ending cycle of misery
- The only path to freedom is letting God show us truth, face it, and ask Him to help us change

Romans 12:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, “*Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,*” says the Lord.

- If you have been truly treated unjustly, God will vindicate you in due time

The devil wants you to live a life of shame because of your past failures or abuses

- He wants you to believe that your life will always be second-rate
- He wants you to think that your life could never be as good as it was meant to be
- He wants you to live with resentment and hopelessness

God wants you to know that He will give you double for your unjust treatment

Isaiah 61:7–8 (NKJV)

⁷ Instead of your shame *you shall have* double honor, And *instead of* confusion they shall rejoice in their portion. Therefore in their land they shall possess double; Everlasting joy shall be theirs. ⁸ “For I, the LORD, love justice; I hate robbery for burnt offering; I will direct their work in truth, And will make with them an everlasting covenant.

You Need to Take Your Mind Back

“Why is the Christian’s mental life so beset by evil spirits? This can be answered in one sentence: believers afford the evil spirits (or the devil) the opportunity to attack.” – Watchman Nee

2 Timothy 2:26 (NKJV)

²⁶ and *that* they may come to their senses *and* escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to *do* his will.

- Why would believers give evil spirits the opportunity to attack their minds?
- Only because they are ignorant of his methods and deception
- Remember he is *“cunning, crafty, and deceitful.”*
– **Ephesians 6:11**
- His *“clever tricks”* are Satan’s way of gaining entrance into a person’s life

He lies in wait for an opportune time and then he lies, deceives, and makes his way in, often undetected

- He delights in hearing us blame God and other people for the trouble he instigates
- Ask God to reveal the truth so you can repent of the way you are living

The enemy is always on the prowl looking for someone to devour

- If we do not learn to think for ourselves we are headed for trouble
- Do you ever think about what you've been thinking about?
- If you would, you would often find the source of your problem
- Our words, emotions, and actions are the result of our thoughts

You cannot spend the day meditating on negative thoughts and remain happy and joyful

- When your thoughts are negative and sour, your mood becomes the same

When our thoughts are positive and hopeful, we live with an expectation that something good is heading our way

James 4:7 (NKJV)

⁷Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

- We cannot accept every and any thought as our own that the enemy tries to put in our minds
- We should choose our thoughts carefully because they ultimately become the blueprint for our lives

2 Corinthians 10:4–5 (NKJV)

⁴For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ

- We have weapons
- They are not physical, but spiritual
- They cannot be seen in the natural realm
- They certainly affect the spiritual realm
- Our primary weapon is the Word of God

With the Word we defeat every lie and whisper of the enemy

- We must take these thoughts captive
- It is not something God or anyone else will do for us
- We learn to direct our thoughts towards the will of God
- Think the way God wants us to think

Romans 12:2

²And do not be conformed to this world [any longer with its superficial values and customs], but be ^[a]transformed *and* progressively changed [as you mature spiritually] by the renewing of your mind [focusing on godly values and ethical attitudes], so that you may prove [for yourselves] what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His plan and purpose for you].

The word *transformed* in **Romans 12:2** means, “*to be changed completely according to the new inner reality.*”

- As we learn to think, and behave according to this new reality, our entire life changes

This happens gradually as we gain knowledge of God’s Word, will and ways, as well as our willingness to submit our thinking and actions to it

If we allow ourselves to be conformed to the world we will think as the world tells us to think, and act as the world tells us to act

- The enemy relentlessly fights against God’s plan for our lives
- He does it through lies, deceptions, and various strategies
- He will keep us distracted by sending trouble and difficulties our way

Mark 4:14–20 (NKJV)

¹⁴The sower sows the word. ¹⁵And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts. ¹⁶These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; ¹⁷and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word’s sake, immediately they stumble. ¹⁸Now these are the ones sown among thorns; *they are* the ones who hear the word,

¹⁹ and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. ²⁰ But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept *it*, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred.”

Being a Christian does not mean that God will make everything comfortable and wonderful for you

We need to put on the full armor of God and cast down every thought – **Ephesians 6:11; 2 Corinthians 10:5**

- God has given us responsibility in the process
- He never fails to do His part
- He won't do our part for us
- He wants us to actively participate with Him
- We are partners with God in His work

Many times, people say, “I don't know why God would allow this or that to happen. If He is good and He delivers us from our problems when we pray, then why is this happening to me?”

We are to keep our focus on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, waiting patiently in faith for the breakthrough and victory He has in store – **Hebrews 12:2; Ephesians 6:13**

- God is fighting with us and for us
- He promises to help but the timing and the way in which He does it is up to Him

Practical Ways to Avoid Deception

Manage your emotions and feelings

- Feelings can be quite motivating, but when they disappear we should not stop doing what we committed to do
- Learn to judge what you feel according to God's word

Avoid Extremes

It may be prudent to save money for the future but if we become stingy we may hoard out of the fear of not having enough

- When we live this way, we are not trusting God to take care of us

Some people are not willing to do anything for anyone while others do too much for some people

- Don't become self-absorbed and stingy
- Don't enable someone to not care for themselves
 - This may allow people to take advantage of you

Some people have no discipline at all, while others are very legalistic, living by rules and regulations

- Don't be spiritually lazy
- Don't become difficult to get along with and critical of people who don't live like you do

Don't Put Your Trust in the Works of the Flesh

- Don't try to make things happen without leaning on God
- God doesn't do everything for us, but we cannot do anything without Him
- These activities keep us busy and frustrated
- They are not effective and leave us disappointed
- Worry is an attempt to solve our own problems
- Cast your care upon Him – **1 Peter 5:7**

Refuse to Compromise

- The devil says, *“just once wont hurt.”*
- Set standards and live by them
- Don't compromise when others urge you to
- We are in the world but not of it – **John 17:14-16**

Deny Deceitful Desires

- God will give us the desires of our heart – **Psalm 37:4**
- He won't give us the desires of our flesh
- Sometimes we pursue things that have no ability to do for us what we think they would
- They may be exciting for a short time but leave you empty in the long run

Jesus said He came that we might *“enjoy life and have it in abundance”*

He wants us to have an abundance of all good things, but we must remember that things without God cannot give us happiness