

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
- The people of God were determined to seek Him rather than live in fear

Exodus 14:13–15 (NKJV)

¹³ And Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. ¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace.” ¹⁵ And the LORD said to Moses, “Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward.

Even though Pharaoh let them go he sent his army after them

- There they stood, with the Red Sea on one side and the Egyptian army on the other
- They were ready to return to Egypt because the thought their only other option was to die in the wilderness
- Often, we do the same thing they did – Run!

What we run from hurts us the most. – Author unknown

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

Deliverance comes when we learn to stand still (stop running) and confront the problem we prefer to avoid

- Open your heart to God and the truth, and let Him do what He needs to do to set you free – **John 8:32**

Zechariah 4:6 (ESV)

⁶ Then he said to me, “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts.

Even though we cannot see the devil we can easily discern and recognize the fruit of his activity

- Strife, hatred, anger, war, famine, disease, disasters, tragedy, insecurity, addictions....
- Remember he comes only to steal, kill, and destroy
– **John 10:10**
- But Jesus gives us, “*life as God has it*”
- That is the quality of life God offers us through Jesus

Eternal life doesn’t begin when we die and go to heaven

Jesus came to give us victory and make us more than conquerors and destroy the works of the devil – **1 John 3:8**

Romans 8:37 (NKJV)

³⁷ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

- Jesus didn’t make the works of the devil disappear, but we can live in victory when we know how to fight
- That requires a plan and strategy

Strategies for Spiritual Breakthrough and Victory

Worship

Strategies for fighting a spiritual war are actually the opposite of the way we would think to fight a war in the natural

Remember the strategies God gave Jehoshaphat and Gideon?

- Nothing they did could have defeated the enemy
- It was their act of obedience that would seem foolish to the world that gained them the victory
- Worship wins the war
- Worship – *“reverence and adoration of a deity”*

Worship is not so much a physical position, though it can be, as it is a position of “trust”

- God has given the church many songs that move us in spirit
- Many of us can testify of a specific song that we sang that gave us to strengthen and minister to us
- Satan hates Spirit-filled music
- He was once a worship leader in heaven – **Ezekiel 28:13**
- Even if all we can do is make a Spirit-filled joyful noise it will be enough to help us in our battles

But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God. Suddenly there was a great earthquake. The foundations of the prison were shaken; all the doors were opened, and everyone’s chains were loosed. – Acts 16:25–26 (NKJV)

Rest

Many times, we believe we are fighting a spiritual battle because we are constantly resisting the devil in some area

- This doesn't work and will eventually wear us out
 - Living this way can be exhausting
 - Many times, we are trying to get our difficulties to disappear
 - God's goal is to get us so strong that the difficulties don't bother us anymore
 - Remember you can't resist without submission (*surrender*) to God
 - His grace makes us strong in our weakness
- 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

The devil never attacked anyone as often or intently as Jesus

- We never see Jesus lose control, become worried or afraid
- Part of the answer was He knew Who He was, where He came from and where He was going
- We need to know that we are children of God, created in His image
- He has a plan for our lives
- Our destiny is settled, and our home is waiting for us
- When Jesus was raised from the dead, Satan's fate was settled

We are merely walking out our part of God's overall plan until the final enemy – death – is defeated

Hebrews 4:9–10 (NKJV)

⁹ There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. ¹⁰ For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God *did* from His.

- The Sabbath rest of the Old Testament was only a shadow of the rest we now have available
- *Vines' Greek New Testament Dictionary* says the kind of rest God offers us now, “*is not a 'rest' from work but in work*”

When we are enjoying the rest of God, we are not worried, emotionally upset, or willfully trying to take care of our problems in our strength without leaning on God

- Relentlessly trying to figure out what we should do
- Telling God that we don't know what to do
- Rest is total satisfaction in Christ

We can do all we need to do and stand firmly in place

– **Ephesians 6:13**

- We can do all that God asks us to do
- From a position of rest
- Not a position of worry, reason, fear, frustration, and struggle

Jesus is seated in heavenly places, not standing but sitting

- We are seated with Him – **Ephesians 1:20; Hebrews 8:11**
- This rest wasn't available until Jesus died for our sins and defeated the devil

Remain Calm in Adversity

Psalm 94:12–13 (NKJV)

¹² Blessed *is* the man whom You instruct, O LORD, And teach out of Your law, ¹³ That You may give him rest from the days of adversity, Until the pit is dug for the wicked.

- God disciplines us in our trials
- As we go through difficulties we can learn to not let them frighten or disturb us
- Our difficulties do not come from God, but He does use them to help us grow spiritually

2 Corinthians 4:8–10, 16-18 (ESV)

⁸ We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; ⁹ persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; ¹⁰ always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.

¹⁶ So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, ¹⁸ as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

- Paul didn't say the trials were easy
- Going through a trial is hard enough without having to worry or be anxious about it
- We confuse the enemy when we go through trials in rest

Stay Protected by God's Presence

Recognizing the value and power of God's presence whether He is doing anything for us or not at the moment is very important

- It is Him we need
- Not what He can do for us
- We are to seek His face, not His hand

Anything besides God we feel we have to have to be satisfied is something the devil can use against us

- We all want many things but only One thing is needful
– God Himself

God Sending Moses to Take the People into the Promised Land

Exodus 33:12–14 (ESV)

¹²Moses said to the LORD, “See, you say to me, ‘Bring up this people,’ but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, ‘I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my sight.’ ¹³Now therefore, if I have found favor in your sight, please show me now your ways, that I may know you in order to find favor in your sight. Consider too that this nation is your people.” ¹⁴And he said, “My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.”

- Notice Moses requested God to do something and God's reply is His presence will give him rest

Moses' Response

Exodus 33:15 (ESV)

¹⁵ And he said to him, “If your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here.

- Moses was wise enough to know that if God’s presence wasn’t with Him there was no purpose in going
- He knew he would be defeated
- God has promised to never leave us or forsake us
– Deuteronomy 31:6

How often do you think about God’s presence

- Do you “*practice*” His presence?

Psalm 27:4 (NKJV)

⁴ One *thing* I have desired of the LORD, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD, And to inquire in His temple.

Psalm 91:1 (NKJV)

¹ He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

- When we dwell in the “*presence*” of God, no evil will befall us – Psalm 91:9-10
- Practice seeking God for who He is, not just for what He can do for you
- Start each day by spending time with God, without asking for something

Obedience

James 4:7 (ESV)

⁷ Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

- We already discussed this briefly
- The only way to gain a victory over the enemy in a spiritual war is to follow God's directions

In fact, anytime we submit to God and do what He asks instead of what we want to do, we engage in spiritual warfare

- Disobedience opens the door to the enemy
- It gives him access
- This is especially true if we know what we are doing is against God's will and we do it anyway
- *"Not My will, but Yours, be done"* – **Luke 22:42**

A good place to begin walking in greater obedience is to take out thoughts captive – **2 Corinthians 10:5**

- The enemy wants to control the way we think because the way we think will become the way we believe
- Obedience is the way we demonstrate our love for God
- He doesn't love us more because we believe, but it is how we express our love for Him

John 14:15 (ESV)

¹⁵ "If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

Understand the Power of Your Words

When Jesus was tempted by the devil He used His words to gain the victory – **Luke 4:1-12**

- Jesus had been fasting and He was hungry
- The devil came and suggested that if He were the Son of God He could turn stones into bread
- Jesus answered, *“It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone’”*

When Satan showed Him the kingdoms of the world, and offered to give them to Him He answered, *‘It is written, “You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve”’*

- The world had been given to Satan by Adam and Eve
- Jesus came and took that authority back and gave it to us
- Unless we believe it and walk in it, it will do us no good
- Remember Eve gave up her authority through disobedience
- We can now walk in authority as we obey God

Jesus answered every temptation of the devil with the word of God

- Remember one of our spiritual weapons is the sword of the Spirit
- The devil will twist the word to try and get us to disobey God
- We need to “Stand Still” and answer him back with the truth

Two of the ways the devil tempted Jesus was in the area of His identity

- The devil will try to get us to doubt that God loves us and has a good plan for our lives
- This is why its so important to know what God says about us

Many times, when we are emotionally distraught over our situation we are tempted to talk about how we feel, but that can be dangerous

- There is a time to talk as well as a time to be quiet
- If we cannot say something positive when facing a trial, we should say nothing

John 14:30 (ESV)

³⁰ I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me

- Jesus evidently was determined to not give the enemy an open door, so He chose to be quiet
- **Isaiah 53:7** prophecies that Jesus was submissive and opened not His mouth when He was led as a sheep to the slaughter

Psalms 141:3 (ESV)

³ Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips!

Walk in Love

Matthew 22:37–39 (NKJV)

³⁷ Jesus said to him, “ ‘*You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.*’

³⁸ This is *the* first and great commandment. ³⁹ And *the* second is like it: ‘*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*’

- No matter how many things we do or how great our faith is, it is useless if we don’t walk in love – **1 Corinthians 13:2-3**
- Faith works by and is energized by love – **Galatians 5:6**
- Love that comes from a pure heart and good conscience produces sincere faith – **1 Timothy 1:5**

Overcome Evil with Good

- If we would learn to walk in love and forgive we would overcome evil by doing good – **Romans 12:21**
- We defeat the devil by doing good and loving others

Unfortunately, many times we stay angry and chose not to forgive

Loving others, especially when we are hurting, is something we never “feel” like doing

Hebrews 12:11 (ESV)

¹¹ For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

Remember the devil only has the power to deceive us

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
- We also may be (running) by staying busy

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 won't 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