

Women & More

***Keeping Faith Through the Storms***

October 13, 2011

Faith is unwavering trust in God—trust that could never imagine He would forsake us, even in the storms of life.

*“The heart of the Lord is drawn to those who hold fast to their faith in such times as despair.”*

Dr. James Dobson

*“The ones who take a principle into their hearts commit themselves to an uncertainty; they enter upon an adventure. They must be ready for unexpected calls and new responsibilities. That is the law of the life of faith.”*

Henry van Dyke

**Prepare by Soaking in Scripture:**

**Psalm 27:14**

**Romans 5:1-5**

**Romans 8:35**

**2 Corinthians 4:7-9**

**2 Corinthians 4:16-18**

**Scripture to Memorize:**

**Proverbs 10:25** *“When the storm has swept by, the wicked are gone, but the righteous stand firm forever.”*

**NOTES on Speaking Session:**

**Questions for Mentor-group Discussion:**

1. Describe how you react when challenges and even storms come into your life? Are you inclined to question God, doubt God, or do you trust Him?
2. Explain why it is hard for you to trust God completely? Do you really believe He knows what is best for you?
3. Share something you are going through right now that is stretching your faith?

**Recommended Reading:**

*How to Handle Adversity*, Charles Stanley

*In the Eye of the Storm*, Max Lucado

*When God Doesn't Make Sense*, Dr. James Dobson

When God wants to drill a man,  
And thrill a man and skill a man,  
When God wants to mold a man to play the noblest  
part,  
When He yearns with all His heart  
To build so great and bold a man  
That all the world shall be amazed  
Then watch His methods; watch His ways!  
How He ruthlessly perfects  
Whom He royally elects;  
How He hammers him and hurts him,  
And with mighty blows converts him  
Into shapes and forms of clay  
Which only God can understand  
While man's tortured heart is crying  
And he lifts beseeching hands...

Yet God bends but never breaks  
When man's good He undertakes:  
How He uses whom He chooses  
And with mighty power infuses him  
With every act induces him to try His splendor out,  
God knows what He's about!

*A Step Further*, Joni Earickson Tada

## *He'd Still Been God*

1<sup>st</sup> verse:

“Master, carest thou not that we parish?  
Can't you see that we're about to die?  
This boat we're on is surely going under  
Save us now,” his disciples cried.

So Jesus rose to stand against the tempest  
Knowing his disciples had no faith.  
Just to prove that he was still the Master  
He spoke, and the wind and seas obeyed.

CHORUS:

He'd still been God even if he'd never calmed the storm on the raging sea.  
He'd still been God even if he'd never caused the blinded eye to see.  
He'd still been God even if he'd never brought a crippled man to his feet.

It's not about what he did,  
It's all about *Who He Is...*  
'Cause even if he'd never come and done a single miracle,  
Jesus would have still been God!

2<sup>nd</sup> verse:

Mary was his loving earthly mother,  
She understood the purpose of her Son.  
Ever since the angel came and told her  
This child is the blessed Son of God!

So when she'd see the people gathered round him  
Watching for a miracle to prove...  
That he would be their One and Great Messiah,  
She just smiled, 'cause she already knew.

Terry and Konnie Easley

## What exactly is Spiritual Warfare?

**Spiritual Warfare, in a nutshell, is “The constant battle for Truth!”** And it is not so much a physical battle as it is a spiritual one, although it often includes waged war against the physical, emotional, and mental parts of a person. When Satan attacked Job—to prove him spiritually false—he waged war with him on all these fronts. We absolutely know from Scripture, that God—*Truth*—has a plan for the ages, for the world, for people of every nation and tribe, and for believers. And all God’s plans are good and for the good. Satan, however, has schemes to undermine every plan that God has planned. And since Satan is the “father of lies” who has “never spoken the truth,” the battle IS for *Truth* against the Liar and his many lies.

- *What is God’s part—which is always the bigger and better part?* **God has overcome the devil and all of his warring schemes for all time.** He accomplished this at the cross of Calvary through His One and Only begotten and beloved Son, Jesus Christ! The Book of Revelation tells how God will deliver Satan and his demonic angelic host into the lake of fire. God is allowing the devil to scheme and war against *Truth* only for a time.

In spiritual warfare, God gives us the opportunity to cling to him and know his word on the warfare for human souls and believers lives that Satan is continuously waging. Though the Bible has a lot to say about angels and demons, it has very little to say about how we—believers—are to interact with them. But God clearly outlined a strategy for believers to resist the devil and stand against his schemes by arming ourselves for spiritual battle.

- *So what will it mean to “arm” ourselves for spiritual battle?* Scripture does not encourage us to have direct confrontations with evil, but rather to be so close in our relationship to God, as to utilize the powerful spiritual weapons he has outlined in Ephesians 6:10-18—“*Finally, **be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.** 11Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. 12For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13Therefore **put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.** 14**Stand** firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, 15and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. 16In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 18**And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, **be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.**”***

- Four times in this passage—verses 11-14—Paul tells believers to “stand”!
- take your stand** against the devil’s schemes in verse 11
  - when the day of evil comes you may be able to **stand your ground** v 13
  - and after you have done everything, to **stand** in v 13
  - Stand firm** then...in v14

Nowhere do we see that we’re to “take on” or to “engage” the evil One in battle or rebuke him with words. But we are to put on the armor which the Lord has provided for us, and **stand** against the devil’s schemes! Verse 12 tells us that “**our struggle is not against flesh and blood**”, but we are to **stand** against:

- “rulers”
- ”authorities” (Aren’t these the very ones who we are to submit to? Yes. In Luke 12:11 “*When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, <sup>12</sup>For the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.”)*
- “the powers of this dark world”
- ”the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms”.

We’ve provided defenses: 1) truth, 2) righteousness, 3) the gospel, 4) faith, 5) salvation, and the offense of 6) Scripture. We are challenged to fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith and to place our allegiance and trust in God and resist evil’s advances. Paul outlined the six powerful spiritual weapons provided for doing battle with evil—only one is offensive.

- 1) Belt of **truth**—First of all know God’s truth, and then daily reaffirm our belief in that truth. We must speak the truth, always, and respond to God’s truth in all of our actions and circumstances. We must embrace the *Truth*—the Lord Jesus Christ—John 14:6.
- 2) Breastplate of **righteousness**—God is righteous because he always does the right thing at the right time and in the right way. We must practice living *right* before God.
- 3) Shoes shod with the **gospel** of peace—the assurance that since we have received Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, we are at peace with God, ready to serve him and spend eternity in his company.
- 4) Shield of **faith**—Faithfully choosing to trust God and obey him, so that we will not buy into the devil’s schemes (lies).
- 5) Helmet of **salvation**—be secure in the knowledge that **Jesus saves and Jesus keeps** those who have been saved.

And now for that all-important offensive weapon:

- 6) **Sword** of the Spirit—know God’s **Word**, the Bible, and use it!

Satan's scheming weapon is **deception—from the father of lies**—which often appears good in the beginning, but destroys in the end. *“Let no man deceive you...”*

1. Religious deception;
2. Food deception (1 Timothy 4:5);
3. Legalistic deception (Luke 11:39-52—hypocrisy, imbalance, ostentation, impossible demands, intolerance and exclusiveness);
4. Deception regarding Scripture (reading the Bible with misconceptions and conditions—our own thinking applied to it);
5. Deception regarding eternal security of the believer (the lie that “you cannot know that you’re saved on earth” 1 John 3:14, 2 Timothy 1:12, 1 John 5:12, Acts 16:31 and Romans 10:9);
6. Ethical deception (conditional ethics) Can a civil right be a moral wrong?...
7. Mystical error, dreams, visions, *words* (darkness). If a ‘word’ does not edify, exhort, and emanate from God’s written word, then it is a lie;
8. Sexual deception (one man + one woman in marriage alone), and
9. Spiritual deception 2 Thessalonians 2:3—not to go beyond what is written.

1 Peter 5:8-9: *“Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. **Resist him, standing firm in the faith**, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.”* Peter says to “resist” the devil and to “stand firm” against his every scheme. Remember that very soon after Jesus had warned Peter that Satan wanted to “sift him like wheat” in Luke 22:31, he denied the Lord three times.

James 4:7: *“**Submit to God. Resist the devil** and he will flee from you.”* We are first to “submit to God,” and then we are to “resist” Satan. Scripture promises that when we do this, Satan will flee. We must do “spiritual” battle—warfare—under the banner of Jesus Christ, and in his powerful Name:

# *Truth!*

- *The TEST always comes before  
the BEST that God has for us is released!*

