

Battle-Worn Parents of Prodigals, Remember This Key Truth

The night our prodigal came to Christ, two additional, greatly significant events occurred.

First, I had a vision in which God poured His love for our adopted son into me, assuring me I would need it. Yes, I have needed it.

Second, that began three sleepless nights engaged in fierce battle with the powers and principalities of the prince of the air—the minions of the devil himself.

My understanding was that the evil one had always assumed this boy was his. His birth heritage and early life put him undeniably in Satan's domain. So when prayers were answered and he said yes to Jesus, the devil was not happy.

Perhaps he thought if he could defeat me, he would regain control over our son. If I had been battling on my own, I would surely have lost. But no. I had a far more powerful warrior on my side—the Spirit Himself.

He was my defense—and also this boy's defense, shielding us from the fiery darts sent our way. And he was on the attack, giving me words of truth, courage, fearlessness, wisdom—whatever I needed in the battle.

I watched in wonder as I saw lived out the magnificent truth that the Holy Spirit is our warrior.

That part of the battle lasted for three nights, and then I was given rest. But the conflict continued.

Many tears and fears revealed my weakness, but unceasing

prayer and supernatural strength and wisdom from the Spirit enabled me to stand in the gap for my son. And He still enables me, for our enemy is relentless.

The Holy Spirit is always with me and in me. He was the warrior I needed in this ongoing spiritual war. And as He fought for and through me, He was also the warrior my son needed. And He still is, even as Satan continues to pursue our son.

Too often we try to win the war on our own. We forget that we are completely outmatched—in the struggle for our loved ones and in all the other ways the evil one seeks to defeat us and our wanderers.

We cannot do it alone.

Gratefully our loving Father and beloved Savior have sent the Spirit to be in us and with us. To fight beside us, for us, through us—and He is far greater than our enemy.

See what He promises us:

“You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world” (1 John 4:4, NASB).

This is what the Lord says to you: ‘Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours but God’s’” (2 Chron. 20:15).

“‘Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the Lord of hosts” (Zech. 4:6, ESV).

It’s important to remember that we face a defeated but still powerful enemy, and we are still in the battle.

God Himself has provided for us the required armor. We just need to remember to wear it.

Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For 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.

Therefore, 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.

Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.

In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests (Eph. 6:11-18, NIV).

What does God give us for this battle? These are our weapons:

Truth: The devil is a liar, but Jesus is the truth, and the Spirit living in us will guide us to all truth (John 16:13). He will tell us what to say to the enemy—and to our prodigals.

Righteousness: The righteousness of Christ has been gifted to those of us who have believed and received Christ. It is like a breastplate to protect from the devil's darts.

Peace: Satan comes to kill and destroy. Our Lord covers our feet with the gospel of peace so we can stand strong and withstand the devil's efforts to destroy us—and those we love.

Faith: Our faith, our trust in God and His promises given to us through the Holy Spirit, is a shield to deflect the enemy's arrows.

Salvation: The helmet of salvation is our assurance that we have received the mercy purchased by Jesus. And that helmet will protect our thoughts from Satan's attempts to convince us we have failed and are not worthy of redemption.

The Word of God: This is our offensive weapon—the sword of the Spirit. Every time we speak God's Word to the devil, we send him fleeing.

Prayer: Even with all the weapons, we must not go to battle in our own strength or wisdom, not anger or retribution or revenge, not our cleverness nor our power. The work of God is done on our knees. Then we find out what happened.

Most importantly, He gives us His Spirit, a warrior to fight for us in the battle for the souls of our loved ones. {eo}

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