

Is Your Warrior Mindset Keeping You From Real Intimacy With God?

In part 1 of this blog, I shared why I have chosen to relinquish the exhausting and tedious work of trying to be a warrior. It's God's job, not mine.

Changing Roles and Ideas

That is easier said than done, isn't it? Especially for those of us who are strong-willed. Exactly what does it require to step off the "I need to be a warrior" treadmill?

First, I'll share my thoughts on what creates this manner of thinking, especially in women. Over the years, the role of being a woman, and what society thinks a woman should be, has drastically changed.

Today, it's hard to find a TV show that portrays women as anything but tough and strong. We encourage women that their ultimate goal is to be performing some sort of a task every second, whether inside or outside the home, and it should all be done with an "I don't need anyone, especially a man" attitude.

I personally believe women have morphed into this thinking because of all the pain, rejection, abuse and abandonment they have experienced. For many women, it started when the family unit began to disintegrate. Daddy or Mommy chose to abandon her emotionally, mentally or physically. And girls who grow up without an emotionally healthy parent often begin thinking, *I'm not going to let anyone hurt me again.* She lives with her dukes up, ready to fend off anyone who gets too close.

As an adult, she goes looking for someone to fill the void

created by the parent(s), and frequently she chooses poorly, which leads to a thread of more abandonment, abuse, loss and grief.

In my opinion, an additional reason women feel they must become warriors is the significant increase of sexual abuse among children. Studies by David Finkelhor, director of the Crimes Against Children Research Center, show that:

- 1 in 5 girls is a victim of child sexual abuse.

- 20% of adult females recall a childhood sexual assault or sexual abuse incident.

- Over the course of their lifetime, 28% of U.S. youth ages 14 to 17 had been sexually victimized.

- Children are most vulnerable to sexual abuse between the ages of 7 and 13.

Almost any law enforcement agent or counselor will tell you that most victims of rape or sexual abuse never tell anyone. So the actual numbers are significantly higher.

Dangerous Outcomes

Regardless of the reasons the warrior concept occurred, there is one major problem with the "I'll never let anyone hurt me again" and "I don't need anyone" manner of thinking. It typically turns into isolation, depression and exhaustion. That's because God created us for community. He never designed us to do life alone.

I'm not saying a woman needs a man, or that marriage is required for her to have a fulfilling life. I am saying that the wounds to our female soul, which created a wall of protection and taught us to become a warrior, don't work long term.

We become so afraid of dropping our guard and getting hurt

again, that we crawl into a protective shell and place an icy shield around our heart.

Society applauds. God weeps.

Our shield keeps God at bay, too. Without realizing it, we don't dare let Him into our deepest thoughts, our most profound fears or our delicate dreams.

I clearly remember the moment when God revealed to me that this is what I had been doing in my relationship with Him. As much as I served in the church, prayed and attended many Bible studies, I would only let Him in so far. I thought I had fully surrendered, but deep fears—that I was unaware existed—wouldn't allow it.

Once I realized what I was doing, I knew He was asking me to let go, and trust Him with all of it. I whispered, "If I let You in this far, this deeply into my soul, and You abandon me too—I won't make it. It will be the end of me."

Warrior No More

But somehow, I got the courage and the assurance that He didn't love like people do. And I surrendered. A full abandonment. That's when He exchanged my weakness for His strength. That's when I realized I didn't need to be a warrior anymore. My heart was now entrusted to His safety.

Does that mean I don't ever get hurt? Does it communicate that the attacks and hurtful actions from people don't bother me anymore? Am I saying that the bullets of evil, criticism, betrayal and grief don't assault me?

Absolutely not. I'm crushed by them more often than I like to admit.

The good news is that now those life lessons and people teach me how to love like Jesus. They tutor me on how to forgive like Jesus. They train me to respond like Jesus.

And all of that brings peace.



With every situation, I must decide: Will I go back to having a cold, aloof heart and draw my sword to protect myself? Or will I let God be my provider and shield? When King David was under a severe attack from his enemy, he cried out to God and said, “But You, O Lord, are a shield for me, my glory and the One who raises up my head” (Ps. 3:3).

When it’s an emotional attack, it often requires discernment and discovering the difference between becoming a people pleaser or enabler, and when it’s wise to say no.

Here’s the catch that most people miss: *Letting God become my defender doesn’t mean I become a doormat.*

The longer I allow God to be my warrior, the more He teaches me how to leave in His hands the things I cannot control, how to take the proper steps on the things I can control and the wisdom to know the difference.

God does a much better job at being a warrior than I ever did. He fights for me. He fights for my family. And the best news of all: He always wins.

When death, loss or tragedy occur, my human eyes don’t always see it that way. But my heavenly mind, the place where “deep calls to deep,” knows that God is for me, not against me (Jer. 29:11).

And that God has weapons He uses against evil, of which my mind can’t even comprehend (2 Cor. 10:4). {eoa}

Laura Petherbridge is an international speaker and published author of five books, who has appeared in numerous publications, TV shows and radio productions. A featured expert on the “DivorceCare” DVD series, she has been married to Steve for 35 years and has two stepsons who gifted her with two grandchildren. Join with other stepmoms at Laura’s next

retreat, , and learn more at .

This article originally appeared at .