

How Praise Breaks Yokes

Ephesians 6:12 tells us that our struggles are not with other human beings but with the devil and his demons. Satan, the enemy of our souls, attempts to defeat us with strategy and deceit through well-laid plans and deception.

But the devil is a liar. Jesus called him “the father of lies and of all that is false” (John 8:44, The Amplified Bible). He tells us things about ourselves, people and circumstances that are just not true. He does not, however, tell us the entire lie all at once.

He begins by bombarding our minds with a cleverly devised pattern of little nagging thoughts, suspicions, doubts, wonderings, reasonings and theories. He moves slowly and cautiously. He has a strategy for his warfare—he has studied us for a long time.

He knows what we like and don’t like. He knows our insecurities, weaknesses and fears. He is willing to invest any amount of time it takes to defeat us.

Through careful strategy and cunning deceit, Satan attempts to set up “strongholds” in our minds. A stronghold is an area in which we are held in bondage (in prison) due to a certain way of thinking (see 2 Cor. 10:4-5).

The apostle Paul tells us in these verses we have the weapons we need to overcome Satan’s strongholds and that we are engaged in spiritual warfare. Verse 5 shows clearly where the war is waged. The Amplified Bible translation of this verse says that we are to “refute arguments” with these weapons. The devil argues with us, offering theories and reasoning. All this activity goes on in the mind—the true battlefield.

One weapon is God’s Word received through preaching, teaching, reading and private Bible study. But we must continue in the Word until it becomes revelation given by inspiration of the

Holy Spirit. Continuing is important.

Jesus said, "The measure [of thought and study] you give [to the truth you hear] will be the measure [of virtue and knowledge] that comes back to you" (Mark 4:24). We must continue using the weapon of the Word.

Praise and prayer are other available spiritual weapons. Praise defeats the devil faster and more efficiently than any other battle plan, but it must be genuine heart-praise, not just lip service or a method being tried to see if it works. Also, praise and prayer involve the Word. We praise God according to His Word and His goodness.

Prayer is relationship with the Godhead. It is asking for help or talking with God about something that bothers us.

To have an effective prayer life, we must develop a good personal relationship with the Father. Know that He loves you, that He is full of mercy, that He will help you. Get to know Jesus. He is your friend. He died for you. Get to know the Holy Spirit. He is with you all the time as your Helper. Let Him help you.

Learn to fill your prayers with the Word of God. Even Jesus used the weapon of the Word in the wilderness to defeat Satan (see Luke 4:1-13). Each time the devil lied to Jesus, He responded with, "It is written," and quoted the Word to him. The truth is always revealed through the Word.

Unfortunately, people don't always accept it. It is a painful process to face our faults and deal with them. Generally speaking, people justify misbehavior. They allow their past and how they were raised to negatively affect the rest of their lives.

Our pasts may explain why we're suffering, but we must not use it as an excuse to stay in bondage. Jesus will walk us across the finish line to victory in any area if we are willing to go

all the way through it with Him.

Satan knows well that if he can control our thoughts, he can control our actions. If you have any major strongholds in your life that need to be broken, let me encourage you by saying, "God is on your side."

There is a war going on, and your mind is the battlefield. But the good news is that God is fighting on your side.

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