

Prepare for Battle

The days in which we are living are some of the most exciting in history. But they are not without peril. The kingdom of God suffers violence (see Matt. 11:12), yet these are still times of hope and peace for those who know who they are in Christ. In order to survive the onslaught of the enemy against us, we had better learn to become women who are mighty in spirit.

Perhaps my best example of such a woman is my mom, Gaynell Chavis Jacobs. Unassuming and unpretentious, Mom was baptized with the power of the Holy Spirit and raised 12 children to know, love and serve the Lord. She was an extraordinary prayer warrior, and when she would lay hands on the sick, they would be healed.

We all have this potential because Jesus declared: "Great works shall you do because I go to my Father" (see John 14:12). The Spirit of Christ will enable you to walk into a room and have every demon of hell walk out. He will empower you to speak God's Word in a way that will change the atmosphere and the situation.

We are going to need this power. I believe we are in for the fight of our lives until Jesus comes back. There will be times when, despite our being Spirit-filled, we will encounter assaults from hell that are designed to stop us from doing what God has called us to do.

The devil is not after you because of who you are but because he knows what God has put in you and what God can do through you. In the natural, the giants will always appear bigger than you are, but in the supernatural, you can see through the eyes of the Spirit, just as Caleb did when he declared, "We are well able to conquer [the land]" (Num. 13:30, The Living Bible).

I'm sure there are many strategies for becoming mighty in

spirit. But during the course of my life, I've found six practices to be very effective in overcoming the power of the enemy and walking in victory.

BE CONFIDENT IN YOUR CALLING In Galatians 1:15-16 Paul wrote: "Even before I was born God had chosen me to be His, and called me—what kindness and grace—to reveal His Son within me so that I could go to the Gentiles and show them the Good News about Jesus. When all this happened to me I didn't go at once and talk it over with anyone else."

When you are confident in your calling, you don't have to seek anyone's permission or approval. You know you are called because of the witness of the Holy Spirit inside you, but Satan will try to make you doubt that your calling is real.

I can recall an incident that happened to me when I first went out as a soloist in full-time ministry. During a service, a young girl, who was possessed by demonic spirits, lunged toward me, screaming obscenities and totally disrupting the meeting.

I could have given in to fear and intimidation, but I chose to put the enemy under my feet, and the girl was completely delivered and set free. Today, deliverance is still a vital part of my ministry.

God never told us that we were going to float along on this journey to become all that He destined for us and never have another problem. But He did promise us this: " 'When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you' " (Is. 43:2, NKJV). You must decide now that you're going all the way.

HAVE STRENGTH IN ADVERSITY When I left home to pursue God's call on my life, I knew it was not going to be easy. I'd made up my mind to follow hard after the Lord, but I remember a very discouraging time in my life while I was in college.

I had just lost my mom. My father had already passed away. Trying to go on with my life while dealing with my intense grief was very difficult. Finally, I decided to abandon my plans and go back home.

On the day I was preparing to leave I suddenly thought, Maybe I should go to church one more time and say goodbye to my friends and my pastor. At the close of the Wednesday night service, my pastor called me onto the stage and said to me: "God says to tell you, 'You are not your own, you have been bought with a price. I have chosen you and appointed you to go to the nations of the earth, so you can't do what you want to do. My strength is made perfect in your weaknesses, for when you are weak, then I am strong.' "

Without anyone touching me, I was slain in the spirit. Hours later, when I got up, I had a new confidence, a greater boldness and a determination to go on that hell could not touch.

Jesus said: " 'You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you' " (John 15:16).

You, too, are not your own. Be strong and don't abandon your calling.

DEVELOP GODLY CHARACTER When David wrote, "Assign me Godliness and Integrity as my bodyguards" (Ps. 25:21, The Living Bible), he must have understood that, ultimately, if your character is ungodly, it doesn't matter how sweetly you sing or how people respond to your ministry. It is a grave mistake to put all your energies into your "kingdom work" and leave little or no time for intimacy with the Lord. You can begin to live to be seen by others and forget that character is who you are when no one is looking.

Isaiah said: "Be clean! You who bear the vessels of the Lord" (52:11, NKJV). There are times when I can't do what I want to do. Paul says we must make faithfulness our goal. "Consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards that one be faithful" (1 Cor. 4:1-2).

Leave a good example for those who will come behind you, unlike King Saul, who was anointed but lost his kingdom and his life. King David was anointed, also, yet he fell into a trap due to his unruly passions.

You must be painstakingly conscientious about everything—attitude, lifestyle, personal worship and gifts. The enemy of your destiny has already been defeated, so don't allow yourself to be sidetracked by his devices.

PRACTICE VIOLENT FAITH I believe that sometimes we come up against things in our lives when simply believing won't be enough. I can remember a time when I was very sick with bronchitis, which, according to my doctor, had turned into pneumonia. At this point in my walk with the Lord, I was determined to go to the next level of faith, so I rejected my doctor's recommendation of hospitalization and returned home.

For three weeks I was isolated from my husband, Jamie, and our two girls. I was believing for a miracle and expecting an angel to walk into my upstairs bedroom and lay his hands on me. Instead, as I lay in bed, I heard the Lord saying: "Get up out of this bed, go downstairs and command this junk to get out of your house and out of your body."

I got up, realizing now that this was an attack from the devil to take me out. I opened the front door and stepped out onto the porch in the dead of winter. I was desperate. I had a word from the Lord, and I needed a miracle!

I lifted my voice and said: "In the name of Jesus, bronchitis, pneumonia and everything associated with it, get out of my

cannot stay, and you will not stay. On the authority of God's Word and through the name of Jesus, you will leave right now!"

Immediately I felt an overwhelming breath flow through my body. That kind of attack has not been back at my house. All you need is one word to see God do the miraculous.

Violent faith combines determination with spiritual aggressiveness and raw, if you will, guts. Violent faith is Abraham standing on top of a mountain, preparing to sacrifice his promise (Isaac) to God (see Gen 22).

It's Esther going into the king's chamber for the sake of her people, saying, " 'If I perish, I perish!' " (v. 4:16). And it's Peter taking the crippled man by the hand, saying, " 'In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk,' " then jerking the man to his feet (Acts 3:6, NKJV).

Violent faith will cause you to do things in the supernatural that make no sense in the natural. As you practice it, your prayer life and hunger for God will increase, and there will be a determination forged in you that nothing can shake.

BE PERSISTENT IN PRAYER The apostle Paul gave us a formula for getting our prayers answered and tearing down the enemy's strongholds. He wrote these powerful words: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints" (Eph. 6:18, NKJV).

Jesus said: " 'Keep on asking, and you will be given what you ask for. Keep on looking and you will find. Keep on knocking and the door will be opened to you' " (Matt. 7:7, NLT).

Don't give up. Pray again. You may be feeling right now that you have tried, cried, prayed and fasted without results. With as much compassion as I can write this, I would tell you that what moves God more than anything is faith, violent faith!

Taking back what is yours from the forces of darkness takes courage and is not for those who are passive or faint of heart. It is for the person who would say: "This is it, I am drawing the blood line today. It will never be the same again."

You can exercise this kind of faith, too. You can choose to say, "I know what the outcome of this thing is going to be, so I am going to lift my head up and rejoice, because right now the Father God is working it all out."

PRAISE GOD One thing I have learned and am still learning is that you don't praise God when the answer comes, you praise God until the answer comes. Something happens when you lift your hands and your voice to praise God in the midst of all hell surrounding you.

When Saul was pursuing David to kill him, David chose to say: "I will bless the Lord at all times. His praise shall continually be in my mouth" (Ps. 34:1, NKJV).

The devil wants to rob you of your worship and praise. He wants to shut your mouth because if he can get your praise and worship, then he has your joy and strength. He knows the Word declares, " 'The joy of the Lord is your strength' " (Neh. 8:10).

Begin to rejoice in God. See yourself mighty in spirit and walking in victory. What you can see with spirit eyes in the supernatural, you can believe to come forth in the natural.

You have the authority to speak to that spirit of sickness in your body, that rebellion in your teenager, the adultery that is looming over your marriage, and that spirit of destruction that is targeting your dreams. You have to see that hateful teenager dancing in the Spirit and that husband walking in truth. See yourself prosperous, healed and delivered. See it!

Now, here's what I see: mighty women of godly character with confidence in their callings. I see them standing strong, anointed, violent in their faith and persistent in prayer. And, as I see those hands lifted high in worship, I hear a shout going through the heavens.

I see the devil fleeing in terror because you and I are rising up now, and we know that "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty in God for pulling down [Satan's] strongholds" (2 Cor. 10:4). We are women, mighty in spirit, who are strong in the strength of our Lord. And in His power, we are victorious!

Read a companion devotional.

Judy Jacobs is an anointed singer and the author of *Take It by Force!* (Charisma House), from which portions of this article were adapted.