

Why 'I'm a Warrior' Theology Could Keep You From a Life of Victory

Editor's Note: This is the first of a two-part series. Watch for Part 2, coming soon.

Not long ago, a friend of mine was dying of cancer, which she had battled for many years. In one of her last Facebook posts, she stated how tired she was and that she was ready. Numerous people responded with comments such as, "Don't give up," "You have fought so hard, keep going" and "You can do it."

I understand that they were trying to encourage her. I also knew by her words and her tone that this wasn't what she needed to hear. I responded, "It's OK if you are too weary. Don't feel guilty about it. Rest in God's arms. He knows your needs and desires above everyone else. Give it all to Him."

She died a few days later.

Then shortly afterward, I heard a song on Christian radio. The chorus stated, "I am a warrior." And I thought to myself—I'm not. I'm so glad that I'm done trying to be a warrior. For many years, including after I gave my life to Christ, I thought that was an honorable and holy goal.

I was wrong.

God helped me to understand the error in this theology after I went through an exhausting medical issue that left numerous doctors scratching their head and saying, "Your brain MRI shows that something is wrong. It's likely an autoimmune disease such as multiple sclerosis, but we aren't sure what is happening."

One Sunday morning during this season of my life, I was

particularly overwhelmed. I chose to stay home from church and rest. I fell asleep, and when I woke up the Holy Spirit clearly spoke to my soul: "I will strengthen you. Don't worry or fear; I am your strength. Stop striving. Stop trying to be what I haven't called you to be. I AM your source of strength. I'm not calling you to do this life and journey on your own strength. I have never called you to carry the burdens of life. It's OK. I intentionally created you to lean on me for your strength. I will exchange your human weakness for my flawless power."

This is how and when I discovered my flawed perception and the danger and lies lurking behind the "I'm a warrior" theology.

I am *not* a warrior.

God never created me to be a warrior. I almost exhausted myself to death trying to become a warrior. It's not my vocation, purpose or destiny. It's God's. "The Lord is a warrior; the Lord is his name" (Ex. 15:3, NIV).

That doesn't mean I haven't become stronger. Now, I am a *force*  to be reckoned with. Not because Laura is ferocious, but rather because I have learned how to hide myself inside the one who is the Lion of Judah, Jesus Christ (Col. 3:2-3).

I exchange my limited abilities for His strength when I cover myself with the one who is the ultimate warrior.

For those of us who have emotional wounds from childhood or the past, this can be extremely difficult and frightening to consider. We learned at an early age not to depend, trust or need anyone. We had to be our own warrior, protector and bodyguard because there wasn't anyone else doing it.

Trust me. I know.

However, I also know that if God could teach me how to let Him be my guardian, advocate and hero, He will do the same for

you.

He wants to do this for you more than you want it for yourself.

And the reason why is because it's crucial to grasp this truth if you desire victorious Christian living.

Pitfalls and Dangers of the 'I'm a Warrior' Theology

–I'm relying on human strength to succeed or fail.

–It teaches that I don't need God.

–It robs me of resting in God's strength.

–It stunts my growth. I'm like an immature child, saying, "I can do it myself."

–It puts my eyes on myself rather than God.

–It quenches my faith and trust in God. Why do I need Him if I can do it?

–It sabotages intimacy with my Savior. Being hidden in Christ keeps me close to Him. I can hear His heartbeat.

–It hinders my potential: limited human strength versus God's unlimited strength.

–It teaches others to view themselves (or even worse, Laura) as the source of strength.

Being dependent on God is a good thing, not a sign of weakness. Our faith in Him becomes enormous and infinite when we solely rely on Him.

Benefits of a New, 'God Is My Warrior' Theology

– I can relinquish control, and rest. Aren't you exhausted from trying?

–God can do all things; I can only do a few.

–God is omnipotent and omnipresent. He sees and knows everything; I can only see what’s before me or behind me.

–Learning to rest in Him is a demonstration to others around me.

–He is equipped to be a warrior. I am not.

Before I get hateful emails from those who are misinterpreting what I’m saying—let me clarify.

I am *not* saying that God wants us to lie around the house 24/7, watching TV and eating candy—while He fights our battles.

After Moses died, Joshua became the leader of God’s people. (Can you imagine the pressure of filling *those* shoes?)

God told him in Joshua 1:7 (MEV), “Be strong and very courageous, in order to act carefully in accordance with all the law that My servant Moses commanded you. Do not turn aside from it to the right or the left, so that you may succeed wherever you go.” He continues in Joshua 1:9a, “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous.”

He doesn’t imply that Joshua is expected to do this on His own power. “Do not be afraid or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go” (Josh. 1:9b).

God expects me to diligently listen to Him, to pray and read His Word so that I can learn how to stay close to Him and avoid the temptations of life. I am to consciously choose to avoid the things that I know are opposed to Christ (sin), and can pull me away from Him.

I am also to gather with other Christians so that we can help, encourage and strengthen each other. All of this goes alongside my daily responsibilities of providing spiritually,

emotionally and financially for myself and my family.

I am also not saying that God doesn't refer to his soldiers, particularly men like King David, to be his warriors. That is not the context I'm referring to in this article. I am saying that since Jesus came, and the Holy Spirit now resides in every believer in Christ, "Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God, and that you are not your own?" (1 Cor. 6:19). God doesn't want us to live life on our own strength.

He wouldn't have sent the Holy Spirit if we didn't need Him.

You may be thinking, *OK, I'm ready to let God be my warrior. But How? Where do I start?* Check out Part 2 of this article, coming soon! {eo}

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