

7 Ways to Shorten Your Seasons of Struggle

Battle is part of the Christian life. There is a real enemy and you were born into a war. So, seasons of struggle are a given.

But can you shorten your seasons of struggle? I believe you can, and I believe that the Bible is filled with good advice toward this end. You do not need to prolong the agony. You can arise and conquer.

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One of the enemy's ploys is to make you roll over into a passive position. When that happens, you are no longer actively engaged and the devil can roll over you. It is important to daily arise, speak to your inner man and remind yourself of the foundational truths in the Word of God! As you rise up, these truths become weapons that drive the enemy back and make quick work of the battle.

Even if you have been through a few skirmishes before, you can't just slide into automatic pilot. It is vital to use your most effective weapons, ones that are tried and tested. These are weapons that work—but you must work them. Did you catch that? For the weapons to work, *you* must work *them*!

Jesus' work on the cross is perfect and complete, but you are called to enforce of victory of Calvary in your own life. Sometimes you must *do*. You cannot just passively "slip and slide." Passivity leads only to one place: the downward spiral of darkness. Instead, put on your spiritual armor and dress yourself for battle.

So let's take a look at seven foundational truths, the weapons of our warfare, that we must remember and apply.

1. **You must know and speak the Word.** I cannot emphasize enough the power and efficacy of Scripture. As Jesus did in the midst of His wilderness temptation, you must know and speak the Word of God. Not only will the Word put a stop to the enemy's lies, but it will also build you up so that you can stand firm. Here are a couple of words from the Word about the effectiveness of the Word:

"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15, NIV).

"All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17, MEV).

2. **Your conversations must reflect the mentality of a conqueror.** Let the Holy Spirit and the Word permeate your mind and heart so that your conversations reflect the mentality of a conqueror. This gives new meaning to the proverb, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit" (Prov. 18:21).
3. **You must take authority over Satan in the name of Jesus.** Always remember the power of the name of the Lord. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the [consistently] righteous man [upright and in right standing with God] runs into it and is safe, high [above evil] and strong" (Prov. 18:10, AMP). Declare His name, loudly or quietly, and expect your enemy to fall back:

"Therefore God highly exalted Him and gave Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee

should bow, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth" (Phil. 2:9-10, MEV).

4. **You must by faith clothe yourself with God's spiritual armor.** Day after day, clothe yourself by faith with God's spiritual armor: "Therefore put on God's complete armor, that you may be able to resist and stand your ground on the evil day [of danger], and, having done all [the crisis demands], to stand [firmly in your place]" (Eph. 6:13, AMP).

Never take your armor off. When you do, you allow yourself to get bombarded by the wicked thoughts of defeat. Keep the sword of the Spirit in your hand and the helmet of hope of salvation upon your head. Always have your shield of faith ready to extinguish the fiery darts of the evil one.

5. **You must tap into the power of prayer and fasting.** Do not forget to tap into the power of prayer. "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man accomplishes much" (James 5:16b, MEV). Fasting adds power to your prayers:

"Is not this the fast that I have chosen: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and break every yoke?" (Isa. 58:6).

Get others involved in the praying. Call your believing friends and ask them to pray for you. Never underestimate the extra power of a prayer of agreement:

"Truly I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you, that if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by My Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 18:18-19).

6. **Keep declaring the praises of God in your mouth.** Keep praising God through everything. Not only does praise

express and build up your faith, but it also creates a climate that Satan cannot tolerate. What a wonderful weapon for bringing light into darkness! Remember how a few psalms played on a little harp drove the evil spirit away from King Saul:

“It happened that when the evil spirit from God came on Saul, David would take the lyre in his hand and play. So Saul was refreshed and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him” (1 Sam. 16:23).

So, keep on praising the Lord! Praise will turn your prison cell into a place of triumph. Remember, it is the high praises of God that bind the powers of darkness (see Ps. 149).

7. You must draw forth the wisdom of God’s spiritual veterans. Honor the veterans of spiritual battles and learn from their successes and failures. Sometimes you will have “vets” nearby who can mentor you. Other times, you will need to resort to good books and helpful messages from people far away, many of whom will have gone home to their reward years before you were born. “A wise man will hear and will increase learning, and a man of understanding will attain wise counsel” (Prov. 1:5).

Take it from this veteran—you *must* learn when to rest and not directly engage the enemy. The devil will always work to wear down the saints (see Dan. 7:25), and the spirit of the antichrist comes to do the same (see 1 John 4:3). Therefore, seek wisdom for your warring and learn to rest, both spiritually and physically.

Powerful Warfare Scriptures

Remember that you are fighting an unseen enemy who is behind all of the opposition that you can see and feel (see Eph. 6:12). You have the authority of the one who called you, who said:

"I saw Satan falling like a lightning [flash] from heaven. Behold! I have given you authority and power to trample upon serpents and scorpions, and [physical and mental strength and ability] over all the power that the enemy [possesses]; and nothing shall in any way harm you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice at this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are enrolled in heaven" (Luke 10:18–20, AMP).

The body of Jesus Christ tramples on every enemy, enforcing the victory of Calvary. This battle is part of our birthright. However, as the Lord said, we are not supposed to rejoice merely because evil spirits must leave when we say so, but because we are being prepared for a heavenly destination. He wants us to have His perspective.

He wants us to remember that, although we will have to suffer the sting of the enemy's wrath (as He Himself did), it will not last forever. We can be glad about that! "Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe unto the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short" (Rev. 12:12, MEV).

The devil and his minions are filled with terror. Although they are not omniscient, omnipotent or omni-anything, they do know that their time is short, and this knowledge increases their wrath. They are trying to wreak as much carnage as possible before the final curtain goes down. This can help us as soldiers in God's army. We can adopt an attitude that says, "Satan, you may have inflicted some wounds on me, but you do not have the final word. I've seen the end of the book, and I know you will lose."

Every skirmish has the same ultimate outcome—victory in Jesus! The last words of Jesus on the cross must be the last words in our mouth and heart: *"It is finished!"*

So, don't prolong your inevitable battles; use the foundational truths in the Word of God—the weapons of your warfare—and keep the enemy on his toes! {eoa}

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