

What Your Friends Don't Want to Hear When The Devil Is Attacking

I've been in a season of spiritual warfare since I stepped into the editor's role at *Charisma*. I've had strange ailments attack my body. Two of my teeth randomly broke over the course of as many weeks. People around me are having emotional meltdowns for absolutely no logical reason. I've been accused, cursed and persecuted.

Of course, this is really nothing new. Although I experience seasons of rest from warfare, I do tend to withstand plenty of onslaughts as I co-labor with Christ to advance His kingdom. Besides writing hard-hitting columns and books that stir up antichrist spirits in the world and Jezebel's puppets in the church, I'm also building the Awakening House of Prayer, launching AwakeningTV and running hard with the New Breed Revival Network to stoke the flames of revival in the nations.

Clearly, I'm a target—and I am sure you are too. Anyone doing anything to forward the gospel message is on the devil's hit list. If you are raising up your children in the way they should go, you're a target. If you are sowing seeds of truth in your workplace, you're a target. If you are making intercession in the secret place, you're a target. You get my point. Every believer is in the army of God—and that brings warfare.

We Don't Need Job's Friends

Last week, I wrote an article about the enemy's onslaught—how sometimes it seems the devil is coming at you seven ways from Sunday in an attack that's touching just about every area of your life and working overtime on your mind. I wrote about how sometimes the good fight of faith doesn't seem so good.

JOIN JENNIFER ON FACEBOOK FOR SPIRITUAL COMMENTARY AND ENCOURAGEMENT. [CLICK HERE](#).

At times like that, people around you will be tempted to tell you what you've done to open the door to the enemy in your life. Many times, they will act like Job's friends. You know what I mean. Eliphaz comes over to your house to tell you how it's all your fault because you have some hidden sin in your life (Job 4:7-8). After he leaves, Bildad calls to confirm Eliphaz's poor prophecies (Job 8:20). Finally, Zophar acts as a third witness to condemn you in the battle (Job 11:14-17).

Indeed, we all have plenty of friends who like to judge us when life isn't going our way. The enemy uses those close to us to add fuel to his fiery darts when what we really need is someone to stand in the gap for us. Of course, we should all examine our hearts when the onslaught comes to make sure we don't have any open doors, but too many well-intentioned Christians give pat answers and platitudes that do not reflect God's heart in the midst of our battle.

Cut Out the Platitudes

Spiritual platitudes—banal, trite and stale remarks—are not as painful as pious calls for repentance for sins you haven't thought about committing. But spiritual platitudes are unhelpful at best and admittedly annoying. Let's face it, pat Bible answers—"cast all your cares" and "those whom He loves He disciplines"—that really don't apply to your situation are anything but a word in due season.

When people are going through hell and back, most people don't need to play patty cake with verses about not growing weary in well doing, fighting the good fight of faith, standing and withstanding or counting it all joy. That may be helpful for baby Christians, but mature warriors usually don't need to be told what is obvious: Have faith in God; only believe; the battle is the Lord's.

Yes, we all need encouragement in the warfare and sometimes we need correction. Proverbs 25:11-12 (MSG) says, "The right word at the right time is like a custom-made piece of jewelry, and a wise friend's timely reprimand is like a gold ring slipped on your finger."

The key is helping your friends in times of warfare is to be led by the Spirit. Unfortunately, many times we're not sensitive to the dilemma of our friends. Many times we don't understand their pain. Often we try to sympathize, but we really can't empathize. We don't have any idea what it's like to walk in their shoes. We can't see things from their perspective. We aren't enduring the battling coming against their mind. We just don't get it.

Pray Without Ceasing

When people close to you are going through trials, facing serious battles or otherwise struggling, the best thing to do is to be slow to speak and quick to listen (James 1:9). After all, the Bible says there is a time to keep silent and a time to speak (Ecc. 3:7).

Job's friends offered him plenty of reasons to feel guilty and condemned. His wife went so far as to tell him to curse God and die. Thank God for Elihu, a younger man who witnessed Job's trials and his friends' response. Elihu declared, "I am full of words; the spirit within me compels me" (Job 33:18). Unless we can say that, we shouldn't open our mouths to give counsel.

Ultimately, Elihu pointed to God's justice and reminded Job that our righteousness is in God alone. Elihu proclaimed God's majesty in the midst of the storm—and suddenly God showed up on the scene, spoke to Job, led him to repentance, stirred him to pray for his judgmental friends, and restored everything the enemy took seven times.

If you want to help a friend facing intense spiritual warfare

and trials, the wise thing to do is to lean into the Spirit and let Him inspire your words and actions. That may mean proclaiming the opposite of what you see and hear coming against them, sharing a prophetic word that edifies, comforts and exhorts, or keeping your mouth shut altogether and just being with them—and it always means prayer.

When your friends are going through spiritual warfare, God is watching how we respond to them. Will we respond with pious condemnation and spiritual platitudes that make our friends feel like failures, or will we be Spirit-led and pray without ceasing? Selah.