

Winning the War in your Mind

by Kathy Gray

Struggling with the voices in your mind leads to weariness. You can silence them instead with God's word.

The time we live in is unlike any the world has ever known. I call it the "age of terror" because in this season fear has launched a massive assault on mankind. New dangers and diseases are looming on the horizon. There are major wars being fought abroad, and even on the home front, civilians feel unsafe as they go about their daily business.

But the outward threats are nothing compared to the inner turmoil with which many struggle. Warfare in both the natural and the spiritual realms is taking place on a scale the church has never experienced. Will we be overcomers, or will we be overcome?

The actual battleground is not a geographic location—it's in our minds that the fiercest battles take place. Hebrews 12:3 encourages us to consider the opposition Jesus endured from sinful men so that we do not become "wearied and faint in [our] minds" (KJV).

God is preparing you to win the battle of the mind. He doesn't want you to grow weary and lose heart.

If you lose this battle, you will be easy prey to any form of terror. But if you consider Jesus and put His Word first in your life, you will discover scriptural keys that will make you victorious in this hour.

I see the victors in this battle crossing over a new threshold into a greater dimension of God's glory and power. They will experience the church's finest hour of spiritual authority and massive harvest. It's important for us to win!

DOUBLE WEARINESS

The enemy's plan in this age of terror is to cause severe mental exhaustion. "Wearied and faint" are two words for the same condition, but the author's juxtaposing them in the same sentence indicates an intensity that I call "double weariness." It produces discouragement, anxiety and depression in God's people.

Those who are mentally weary may become incapable and useless. An exhausted mind can't make a decision, communicate or help anyone else. You can be so mentally tired that you become physically sick.

The tactic of the enemy is to bombard your mind until you are so exhausted spiritually that you lose your grip. Then you will relinquish all the spiritual territory you have gained.

The primary weapon used against your mind in this age of terror is voices. Voices will bombard you till you give in to them. Once they get a foothold, your mind will become doubly weary. Soon, you will fall prey to a weakened mind.

Voices of the world around you are speaking constantly to anyone who will listen. Thousands of voices shout at you every day through the news media.

Other distracting voices include those of friends and family members who don't understand your commitment to Jesus and who want to persuade you to take a compromised stand.

Then there are the voices in the spirit realm. Using the most outrageous statements, they can badger your mind until mental exhaustion begins.

All these voices—from the natural and the spiritual realms—are potentially harmful. But the most powerful weapon I have ever had to fight against has been the voice of me!

Have you ever noticed how often you talk to yourself? I took stock of this one day and was surprised at all the self-talk.

Not only did I think a lot of thoughts that can bring on mental fatigue, I also spoke a lot of negative things out loud. No one else was around, so I had no excuse. I had to admit I was talking to me.

Many years ago, when I was growing in the ministry, I would sometimes be bombarded by voices. Usually they spoke words to disqualify me: "You're only a woman. You can't preach. Who do you think you are, trying to minister to people?" I gained a real victory when I realized those voices were neither the devil nor men telling me I could not minister. They were me, speaking to me!

DON'T JUST COPE—CONQUER!

It is time to stop simply coping with the voices that create mental weariness and battle fatigue. God is calling us to conquer in the battle for our minds. We need to heed Romans 12:2, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (NKJV).

Have you ever renovated an old house? You don't just put a fresh coat of paint on the walls, install new light fixtures and lay new carpet.

Often you have to gut the entire thing, sometimes tearing down old walls and peeling off hundreds of layers of wallpaper. Then you can tackle the more fun tasks of choosing a color scheme and new appliances.

It's the same way with our minds. To renew them, we have to remove the old thought patterns before new ones can be laid.

The world exerts a very powerful influence that touches every area of our lives. Letting the voices of the world dictate your thought life will soon produce outward results.

Your relationships, your finances and even your body can be affected. You can become so mentally exhausted that you become

a casualty of the war.

A mind conformed to the world is a weary, faint mind. But a mind being renewed by God's Word will be progressively renovated until you are conformed to the image of Christ.

THE TRANSFORMATION PROCESS

The process of transformation is exciting. But there are three steps you must take for it to occur: (1) Allow God's Word to set you apart and discipline you; (2) Set your mind in the right place; and (3) Consistently behold and reflect the Lord's glory.

Jesus prayed for His disciples in John 17:17, "Sanctify [or separate] them by Your truth. Your Word is truth." You must let the Word of God separate you from the voices of the world.

Mary and Martha, two sisters described in the gospels who were friends of Jesus', both had the opportunity to have their minds renewed. But their response to the Word was different (see Luke 10:38-42).

Martha's mind was distracted and anxious about many things. But Mary chose to sit at the feet of Jesus, the Living Word of God. In doing this, she was setting herself apart as a disciple.

A disciple is one whose mind is being disciplined and renewed. Mary was being transformed by sitting at the feet of the Word of God.

As you obey the Word and choose to "set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col. 3:2), you'll become less and less conformed to the world's patterns and its voices. It is not a "quick fix," but you will experience a progressive improvement in your mind.

You will discover that the voices fade away and the Word of God takes preeminence in your mind. You'll start living 2 Cor.

3:18: "We all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord."

God's plan is for you to win in this age of terror and start reflecting His glory more and more!

There is a double cure for the doubly weary mind the writer of Hebrews 12:3 warns about. Isaiah 26:3-4 contains the cure for this overwhelming mental fatigue: "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You. Trust in the Lord forever, for in Yah, the Lord, is everlasting strength."

In the Hebrew language, "perfect peace" is a double word, "shalom, shalom." Shalom means health, happiness, well-being, peace, prosperity, safety and soundness. It covers every area of your life—mental, emotional, physical, relational.

The peace of God prevents your mind from giving in to fear and dread. A person who trusts the Lord has a steadfast mind. Here the word for "mind" means more than just your ability to think. It includes your creative imagination.

In the Garden of Eden before the fall, Adam and Eve heard only one voice, that of their Father God. Can you imagine how clear and steadfast their minds were?

Their ability to think creatively as they managed the Garden must have been phenomenal. Never a mental block, never wanting to give up and let go of all God had given them. That is, not until the voice of the serpent disrupted their peace by planting questions in their minds.

Many Christians have a hard time thinking creatively and are unable to find solutions to their own problems, let alone come up with ways to reach others around them. Instead of fighting petty battles in your self, your home or your finances, you need to be set free to use your creative imagination.

God can give you strategies to touch cities and entire nations. When you trust in the Lord, your mind will be kept in perfect peace and your creative juices will flow!

WINNERS IN THE BATTLE

The attack of double weariness has been battled and won by God's people for centuries. When David and his men found Ziklag burned and their families taken captive, the Bible says they wept until they had no strength left.

David's loyal men turned on David in bitterness and wanted to stone him. The Bible shows how David resisted the attack: "[He] encouraged himself in the Lord his God" (1 Sam. 30:6, KJV). As he chose to trust the Lord, God's "double peace" strengthened him. He sought God, won the battle and recovered all.

The great Old Testament prophet, Elijah, won a huge battle against Jezebel and her false prophets. He should have rejoiced and basked in the victory. Instead, when Jezebel threatened to kill him, Elijah succumbed to mental weariness.

Exhausted by the constant mental battle, he asked God to let him die. He needed another voice to silence the threats of Jezebel—God's voice. It came in a gentle whisper, bringing him hope and direction. And as the voice of the Lord came to Elijah, the double weariness left him, and he received his marching orders to fulfill his destiny (see 1 Kin. 19:1-16).

This may be the age of terror, but it's not a time for you to be distracted, discouraged or dismayed. God has a destiny for you! But the voices of the world, the devil and yourself will continually harass you unless you say "no" to terror's voice.

It's time to silence the other voices and let the renovation process begin! If you have been living a mentally defeated, exhausted life, the double cure is for you.

Choose the better thing, as Mary did, and submit to the

discipline of the Word of God. Set your mind on things above. Spend time daily reflecting on Jesus, and soon you'll be reflecting His glory from the inside out.

Then the double peace of God will guard and keep you in all your ways. Instead of double weariness, creativity will abound, and thoughts of terror and dread will be far from you. Now, that's a double victory!

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