

3 Things You Can Do Today to Win Tomorrow's Spiritual Battles

Many believers are concerned with being spiritually defensive that they forget the practice of offensive spiritual warfare.

Sometimes the enemy can create circumstances that promote storms in our lives, so it is vital that we keep ourselves prepared for action and do not fall prey to deceptive mind games that can war against our souls. Let me be clear, I'm not talking about looking for demons behind every corner. Rather, we must proactively prepare our minds for action so we do not get caught off guard and fall for his evil devices (see 1 Peter 1:13).

If you struggle with living a lifestyle of warfare where you can't ever catch a break and constantly feel defeated and worn out by demonic torment, then I want to tell you that there is another way to live! Yes, we may have seasons of spiritual battles when we advance the kingdom of God and take new ground. However, Jesus never intended for us to live in constant spiritual defensive mode.

So how can you break out of a cycle of non-stop warring against the enemy? I'd like to propose that much of your victory in tomorrow's spiritual battles is directly proportional to the way you manage your soul today.

What I Learned from an Experience With a Fortuneteller

I learned this lesson the hard way when I was a young man. One day in my freshman year of high school, we had a substitute teacher in history class. Instead of teaching history, this substitute decided to read the palms of all the students in the room. I was young and did not understand the significance

of what was released through the practice of divination (modern-day witchcraft), so I stood in line to get my palm read with the rest of my fellow students.

When it was my turn, the teacher looked at my palm, sighed deeply and refused to read it.

I left the class distraught. My head was spinning. All I could do was think, "Why wouldn't she read my palm?" At the end of the day, I went back and begged her to read my palm. She reluctantly grabbed my hand and began to tell me what she saw in the lines and wrinkles on my palm. "Your lifeline ends early. That means you will die very young," she said in a timid voice.

My face turned pale, and my body shook uncontrollably as my thoughts swirled around in my head. I hurried out of her class and ran most of the way home. Her words haunted me for years.

I gestated her destructive seeds, and they finally germinated when I crashed and had a nervous breakdown the year after I was married. Bad words are like eating fruit from a poison tree. The deadly fruit of destructive words encompasses us every day. It is up to us not to consume and assimilate these words by allowing them to take root in our minds and hearts.

Guarding Your Heart Produces Victory in Warfare

Our eyes and ears are two of the main gateways to our hearts. It is vital that we steward what we hear and see so that seeds of deception do not get planted in the soil of our souls.

Paul put it this way, " Finally, brothers, whatever things are true, whatever things are honest, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue, and if there is any praise, think on these things. Do those things which you have both learned and received, and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you. (Phil. 4:8–9).

Bill Johnson says, "We can't afford to have a thought in our mind that isn't in His!" We must set up guards at the entrance of our hearts and minds to protect the kingdom of God within ourselves. Meditating on negative words is like opening up our heart gates and allowing enemy armies to invade the peaceful palace of our souls.

Testimonies Open Your Eyes

On the other hand, testimonies of God's supernatural acts are like planting God's seeds in our hearts. (I guess you could say God's deeds are heart seeds). In Bill Johnson's best-selling book *Strengthen Yourself in the Lord* (Destiny Image, 2007), Bill reminds us that testimonies become highways to our divine calling. In fact, the book of Revelation says, "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. 19:10b).

What I'm getting at is that what God did for someone else, He will do for you. When we forget the works of God, we lose sight of His supernatural ability to rescue us from any situation no matter how desperate the circumstances.

Testimonies not only remind us of the miracles of God, but they are also meant to open our eyes to another realm of kingdom provision, which is imperative to hold fast to in the storms of life. This principle was brought to light so clearly when the disciples forgot to bring bread on a boat trip (see Matt. 16:5–12). Jesus said to them, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees" (Matt. 16:6b).

The disciples were convinced that He was scolding them for being irresponsible with their provision. Jesus reminded them that He fed 5,000 people with five loaves, and He fed 4,000 people with seven loaves and still had many baskets of bread left over. Therefore, He said, "How is it that you do not understand that I spoke to you not concerning bread, but that you should beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees?" (Matt. 16:11).

Your Testimonies are Your Weapons in Warfare

In other words, when the disciples witnessed the miracle of Jesus multiplying the loaves (He multiplied fish also, but they were only arguing about bread), it was supposed to unveil another dimension of provision for them so that they never had to worry about being short of bread again. The testimony of the supernatural provision was to give them faith to see God in a new way. Yet they forgot the miracle of multiplication, which ultimately opened a door for worry, fear and anxiety to take root in their lives.

In the same way, the testimonies that you proactively fill your heart and mind with can protect you against doubt, confusion and fear.

How to Practically Steward Your Heart

The sons of Ephraim are a great example of what happens when you spend all your energy preparing for battle in the visible realm but ignore the unseen dimension of the spirit. "The people of Ephraim, being armed with bows, turned back in the day of battle. They did not keep the covenant of God and refused to walk in His law; and they forgot His works and the wonders that He had shown them" (Ps. 78:9–11). These famous warriors forgot the miracles that God had accomplished in their lives and retreated in battle.

Like the sons of Ephraim, we should enter spiritual battles fully equipped with weapons of warfare. But we must not forget God's past victories in our lives, or we will lose heart and retreat in the heat of the battle.

For years, I have kept a journal to help me remember past victories. I am not very disciplined about writing in it every day, but in tough seasons, I always record my struggles. In hard times, I go back and read the notes I made about my past fears and God's deliverances in my life.

Lamentations 3:21 says, "This I call to mind, and therefore I have hope." Recalling the work the Lord has done in our past really helps bring peace to us in our present stormy seasons.

As a reminder, here are three ways you can manage your soul into a posture of victory before your next battle:

1. **Meditate on Scripture.** Continually cultivate the garden of your heart by feeding the soil of your mind with truth.
2. **Say no to lies.** Refuse to believe lies about yourself that sow weed seed into your being that destroy your confidence and undermine your destiny.
3. **Remember who God says you are.** Water the orchard of your heart with words that build, edify and comfort you, realizing that you are the beloved of God.

How do you cultivate a mindset of peace and victory in your life? I'd love to hear what you think in the comments! And if you need more help navigating the spiritual realm, I encourage you to check out my book, *Spirit Wars*.

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