

This Should Be Your First (and Best) Response to a Spiritual Attack

If you're in the Kingdom, you're in a battle.

That battle can be initiated by people or circumstances. It can attack your reputation, your finances, your health or your family.

But because of your position in the kingdom, there's always a tie to the spiritual world. Paul says, "For our fight is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places" (Eph. 6:12).

If that's the case, then maybe the best place to start in resolving whatever is coming against you is in a warfare prayer.

The Believer's Warfare Prayer

In the early days of New Song, I felt spiritual pressure constantly and some sort of threat to the church's existence daily.

Someone handed a printed prayer to me by seminary professor Victor Matthews called "The Believer's Warfare Prayer." I never met Dr. Matthews, but his prayer has contributed significantly to my ministry.

I prayed his prayer out loud, verbatim, that first day, and the spiritual pressure I was feeling abated. The pressure returned the next day, so I prayed it out loud again. I found that every time I prayed the prayer, I felt relief. It was

like the Lord and I were pushing back Satan, claiming territory and victory.

I began to pray the prayer daily. This went on for years.

As New Song grew and our members matured, more and more people were lifting me up in prayer, so I began to experience their prayer shield. I prayed my warfare prayer less often. I didn't seem to need it as much.

Then, a few years ago, New Song appeared on the *Outreach 100 Fastest Growing Churches* list. That seemed to paint a target on my back. The church and I have experienced spiritual attack over the last two decades, but never like this.

Proverbs 15:22 tells me that plans fail for lack of counsel, so one day I went to see a counselor. You know what she told me?

"You should remember that these attacks you're experiencing have a spiritual basis to them."

Good call! I dug out my believer's warfare prayer and began praying it again. It's helping. A lot.

Every Christian leader I know feels attacked, discouraged, disparaged or hopeless from time to time. Leaders are proactive, so we start by addressing the symptom of our problem, but it makes sense to go deeper and attack the root.

The believer's warfare prayer is a sound spiritual exercise. God can hear our innermost thoughts, but Satan can't. I find that praying it out loud has a two-fold benefit: God hears and respond, and demons hear and flee.

My encouragement to every believer who feels attacked is to pray this daily until they find themselves back in a smooth place and then to pray it weekly or monthly thereafter. The prayer takes six to eight minutes to pray out loud, and it's well worth it.

I pray the prayer exactly as written. When I stumble over a sentence, I reread it accurately. Words matter, and Victor Matthews was a genius. His prayer is an excellently-crafted, well-rounded, biblically-based prayer that contains crisp theology.

Now What?

Why not pray it right now?

Believer's Warfare Prayer

(To be read aloud)

Heavenly Father, I bow in worship and praise before You. I cover myself with the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ as my protection. I surrender myself completely and unreservedly in every area of my life to You. I take a stand against all the workings of Satan that would hinder me in my prayer life. I address myself only to the true and living God and refuse any involvement of Satan in my prayer.

(I command Satan, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to leave my presence with all of his demons. I bring the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ between Satan and myself.)

Heavenly Father, I worship You and give You praise. I recognize that You are worthy to receive all glory and honor and praise. I renew my allegiance to You and pray that the blessed Holy Spirit would enable me in this time of prayer. I am thankful, heavenly Father, that You have loved me from past eternity and that You sent the Lord Jesus Christ into the world to die as my substitute. I am thankful that the Lord Jesus Christ came as my representative and that through Him, You have completely forgiven me. You have adopted me into Your family; You have assumed all responsibility for me; You have given me eternal life; You have given me the perfect righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ so I am now justified.

I am thankful that in Him You have made me complete, and that You have offered Yourself to me to be my daily help and strength.

Heavenly Father, open my eyes that I might see how great You are and how complete Your provision is for this day. I am thankful that the victory the Lord Jesus Christ won for me on the cross and in His resurrection has been given to me and that I am seated with the Lord Jesus Christ in the heavenlies. I take my place with Him in the heavenlies and recognize by faith that all wicked spirits and Satan himself are under my feet. I declare, therefore, that Satan and his wicked spirits are subject to me in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I am thankful for the armor You have provided. I put on the girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the sandals of peace, and the helmet of salvation. I lift up the shield of faith against all the fiery darts of the enemy and take in my hand the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. I choose to use Your Word against all the forces of evil in my life. I put on this armor and live and pray in complete dependence upon You, blessed Holy Spirit.

I am grateful, Heavenly Father, that the Lord Jesus Christ spoiled all principalities and powers and made a show of them openly and triumphed over them in Himself. I claim all that victory for my life today. I reject all the insinuations, and accusations and the temptations of Satan. I affirm that the Word of God is true and I choose to live today in the light of God's Word. I choose, heavenly Father, to live in obedience to You and in fellowship with Yourself. Open my eyes and show me the areas of my life that do not please You. Work in me to cleanse me from all ground that would give Satan a foothold against me. I do in every way stand into all that it means to be Your adopted child, and I welcome all the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

By faith and in dependence upon You, I put off the old man and stand into all the victory of the crucifixion where the Lord Jesus Christ provided cleansing from the old nature. I put on the new man and stand into all the victory of the resurrection and the provision He has made for me to live above sin.

Therefore, today I put off the old nature with its selfishness, and I put on the new nature with its love. I put off the old nature with its fear, and I put on the new nature with its courage. I put off the old nature with its weakness, and I put on the new nature with its strength. I put off the old nature with all its deceitful lusts and I put on the new nature with its righteousness, purity and honesty.

In every way I stand into the victory of the ascension and glorification of the Lord Jesus Christ, whereby all the principalities and powers were made subject to Him. I claim my place in Christ as victorious with Him over all the enemies of my soul. Blessed Holy Spirit, I pray that You would fill me. Come into my life, break down every idol and cast out every foe.

I am thankful, heavenly Father, for the expression of Your will for my daily life as You have shown me in Your Word. I therefore, claim all the will of God for today. I am thankful that You have blessed me with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. I am thankful that You have begotten me unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. I am thankful that You have made a provision so that today I can live filled with the Spirit of God with love and joy and peace, with long-suffering, gentleness and goodness, with meekness, faithfulness and self-control in my life. I recognize that this is Your will for me, and I therefore reject and resist all the endeavors of Satan and his wicked spirits to rob me of the will of God. I refuse in this day to believe my feelings, and I hold up the shield of faith against all the accusations and

distortion and insinuations that Satan would put into my mind. I claim the fullness of the will of God for my life today.

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I completely surrender myself to You, heavenly Father, as a living sacrifice. I choose not to be conformed to this world. I choose to be transformed by the renewing of my mind, and I pray that You would show me Your will and enable me to walk in all the fullness of Your will today.

I am thankful, heavenly Father, that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, to the casting down of imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God and to bring every thought into obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, in my own life today, I tear down the strongholds of Satan and smash the plans of Satan that have been formed against me. I tear down the strongholds of Satan against my mind, and I surrender my mind to You, blessed Holy Spirit. I affirm, heavenly Father, that You have not given me the spirit of fear but of power and of love and of a sound mind. I break and smash the strongholds of Satan formed against my emotions today, and I give my emotions to You. I smash the strongholds of Satan formed against my will today; I give my will to You and choose to make the right decisions of faith. I smash the strongholds of Satan formed against my body today; I give my body to You, recognizing that I am Your temple. I rejoice in Your mercy and goodness.

Heavenly Father, I pray that now and through this day You would strengthen and enlighten me, show me the way Satan is hindering and tempting and lying and distorting the truth in my life. Enable me to be the kind of person that would please You. Enable me to be aggressive in prayer and faith. Enable me to be aggressive mentally, to think about and practice Your Word, and to give You Your rightful place in my life.

Again, I cover myself with the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ and pray that You, blessed Holy Spirit, would bring all the work of the crucifixion, all the work of the resurrection, all the work of the glorification and all the work of Pentecost into my life today. I surrender myself to You. I refuse to be discouraged. You are the God of all hope. You have proven Your power by resurrecting Jesus Christ from the dead, and I claim in every way this victory over all Satanic forces in my life. I pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ with thanksgiving. Amen.” {eoaf}

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