MORE THAN CONQUERORS

Dear Co-Workers,

Romans 8:37 may say, “in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us,” but in our day-to-day struggles we often find ourselves, instead, identifying with David when he declared in Psalm 143:3,4, “The enemy pursues me, he crushes me to the ground; he makes me dwell in darkness like those long dead. So my spirit grows faint within me; my heart within me is dismayed.”

How do we move from spending a life in darkness, with our spirits growing faint, to becoming more than conquerors? The first step is don’t give up and grow weary in well-doing. (2 Thess.3:13) Instead, “fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called.” (1 Tim.6:12) If we are going to take hold of eternal life we must realize that we are warriors in Christ’s army fighting the good fight of faith, and refuse to be captives of Satan. Jesus says in Matt.12:30, “He who is not with Me is against Me.” Jesus is calling us to be conquerors who will continue to believe in spite of the circumstances.

If we are going to be victorious conquerors we must take the second step and “demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” (2 Cor.10:3) If we don’t bring every thought in obedience to Christ every day, every moment, we will find ourselves swallowed up by the anxiety, depression and despair of the moment. By dwelling on the negative, we are giving Satan permission to enter the interior castle of our being. That is why it is so critical that we put up the shield of faith and resist the fiery, negative thoughts of the evil one. (Eph.6:16) This involves choosing to believe what God says in the Scriptures rather than the arguments that set themselves up against the knowledge of God.

The difficulty comes as a result of the “strongholds” that we have been allowed to take root in our lives. These “strongholds” are lies that we have accepted as truth which directly contradict what God says in His Word. For example, in Philippians 4:19 it says, “And my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus.” These who have trusted God in the past know this is true. Yet the presence of a stronghold, perhaps as a result of a hurt in the past, where things didn’t happen the way we expected, keeps us from
relaxing and experiencing the peace of God in the midst of the present need. This “stronghold” keeps screaming in our minds “but what if the money isn’t there? What if the need isn’t met, then what are you going to do?” It is critical that we answer these doubts as Jesus did, when Satan tempted Him, through the use of Scripture. Scriptures like Ps.61:2,3 and Psalm 62:1,2 are just two of a multitude of Scriptures that can be used to fight doubt.

If we are going to be more then conquerors, then we must accept a third point and that is, “the weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.”(2 Cor.10:4) These weapons enable us to overcome strongholds not only in our personal life but also in our community, on the job and in every other area of life. These weapons include prayer, the Word of God, the blood of the Lamb (Christ) and our personal testimony.

One of the multitudes of weapons our arch enemy Satan uses against us is anxiety. Anxiety or worry, as it is commonly called, slowly wraps its arms of hopelessness around us until all life, joy and peace are choked from us. When this happens, everything and everyone is perceived in a negative fashion until bitterness and cynicism become a way of life. For that reason it is absolutely critical that when anxiety comes knocking at the door of our minds, we answer with prayers based upon faith in the Living, Loving God. We must never forget that “the Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”(Phil.4:5-7) As we engage in prayer, knowing that God hears and answers, it is important that we let only the following enter our minds: “whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy —think about such things.”(Phil.4:8) Remember the mind is the gateway to the interior castle of our being. It is there in the heart of our soul that truly effective prayer takes place. After all, prayer is not just the verbalization of words, but rather an engagement of an intimate communication between the Living God and the total essence of our being. “Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.”(Hebrews 4:14, 16)

In addition to the weapon of prayer, we must also use the weapon of the Word of God. “For the Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any
double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.” (Hebrews 4:12, 13) It is the Word of God that reveals the motives that exist in the interior castle of our being where the Holy Spirit desires to reside. “Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you?” (1 Cor.3:16) The Spirit breathes life into God’s Word that dwells within us. “The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.” (1 Cor.2:10) “We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.” (1Cor.2:12,13)

In the weapon of the Word of God, we also gain knowledge of God and the promises of God. “His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness. Through these He has given us His very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.” (2 Peter 1:3,4) If we are going to be more than conquerors, we must read the word of God daily and then apply it to the challenges we encounter. F.F. Bosworth said, “Most Christians feed their bodies three hot meals a day and their spirits one cold snack a week, and then wonder why they are so weak in faith.” Remember “faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.” (Romans 10:17)

The Word of God reveals to us two additional weapons that are absolutely essential if we are going to be more then conquerors. We find these two weapons described in Revelation 12:11. “They overcame him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb (Jesus) and by the word of their testimony.”

It is the shed blood of Jesus Christ which sets us free from the curse of sin. The term the “blood of the lamb” means that the death of Jesus and His resurrection provide us forgiveness and set us free from being slaves to sin. “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace that He lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.” (Eph.1:7, 8) As individuals who have experienced the forgiveness of sins because of God’s grace, we are able to live victorious lives. Our consciences, which Satan tries to torment with guilt over past wrongs, are liberated and we are able to serve God as more than conquerors. “How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself
unblemished to God, cleanse our consciousness from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God.”(Heb.9:14)

Rev.12:11 makes it clear that the two weapons of the “blood of the lamb” and “the word of our testimony” work together to defeat Satan. Our testimony, who we are, is a result of Christ’s work on the cross (the blood of lamb). “In His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade--kept in heaven for you.”(1 Peter 1:3, 4) The weapon of the “word of our testimony” involves being born into “the living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” This radically changes the way we approach life. The word of our testimony causes us to receive the directives of Scripture and pattern our lives according to them. “The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.”(Romans 13:11-13)

The weapon of “the word of our testimony” and the hope and new life it provides give us the strength and assurance of God’s presence that we need to continue in spite of the circumstances. We believe it when the Bible says, “But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus.” (Eph.2:4-6) When we encounter trials and tribulations, instead of giving up or falling into the pits of negativism, let us remember the word of our testimony that God has raised us up with Christ. As a result, when we daily encounter principalities and powers, let us never forget we are more than conquerors because we are seated with Christ victoriously in “heavenly realms.” With the ever present knowledge that Jesus Christ is our deliverer and our very present help, we can remain faithful in His work even “in troubles, hardships and distresses; in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger; in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love, in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left.”(2 Cor.6:4-7)

With these weapons “in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loves us.”(Romans 8:37) The key to consistent daily victory is abiding in the consciousness of God’s love for us, demonstrated through our
resurrected Lord Jesus Christ. Let us decide now to live in the victory to which Christ has called us.

Yours in Christ,

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