

Weapons for Victory



The Enemies We Face (Part 17)
by Derek Prince

This is always so vivid to me in regard to the dealings of Jesus with Peter. At the Last Supper Jesus told Peter, "You're going to deny me three times before the night is out." Because Peter said he would not, but you know he did. Then Jesus said, "But I have prayed for you [not that you will not deny Me, but, what?] that your faith will not fail." If you can keep believing, your faith will take you through. So never get moved away from your faith. Let no failure, let no accusation, nothing ever move you from your faith that Jesus died in your place, bore your sins, was made sin for you and has offered you the garment of His spotless righteousness.

You know what "to be justified" means? This is not part of my message but it is so important. It is a legal phrase. You have been tried by the court of heaven and the court has handed down its verdict. And the verdict is NOT GUILTY. Wonderful! Not guilty! Satan, you can say what you like. You can point out all my sins and all my failings and all my inadequacies and I will agree with you. I even can tell you some you don't know about... But the court of heaven has said NOT GUILTY. I am reckoned righteous, made righteous, justified, "just-as-if-I'd" never sinned. And when you stand on that ground, you are more than a conqueror of Satan in the conquest that Jesus has already won. If we start from any other basis, we will never achieve victory. The only basis is the cross.

And then having deprived Satan of his weapons against us, and the one great, sovereign, supreme weapon is guilt, Jesus has equipped us with the weapons with which to defeat Satan. That's the second part of it. Second Corinthians, chapter 10, verses 3, 4 and 5. Ruth and I make this confession and I think we will do it together. We have a number of Scriptures, I mean probably 50, that we proclaim as part of our spiritual warfare. And this happens to be one.

> For though we walk in the flesh, we war not after the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. Casting down imaginations, and every high thing which exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

What a victory that is, isn't it?

You see, we have weapons that are not carnal. So what are they? If they're not carnal, what are they? Spiritual. In other words, we don't use bombs, or tanks, or rifles, because we are not fighting persons with bodies. They are useless. But we have been given in place of those physical, material weapons spiritual weapons, that we can use. And this is what we can use them for: pulling down strongholds. Whose strongholds? Satan's, that's right. If you notice the next verse, there are various alternative translations. You can have "arguments," "reasonings," "speculations." And then it speaks about the mind and the thought. So we've discovered the battlefield. Very important to know what the battlefield is. It is the mind. How many of you realize that? Most of your problems as a Christian are in the area of the mind. Don't let that discourage you. That's where the war is. But we have been given the weapons of victory. And we can pull down Satan's strongholds or road blocks or fortresses. You see, Satan builds up fortresses in the minds of men and women to prevent them being able to receive the truth of the Gospel. And one of our functions is by the spiritual weapons God has given us—prayer, preaching, praise and so on—to break down those strongholds and open the way for the Word of God to enter and to save people and to change them.

We dealt, for instance, with two anti-Christian forces, Judaism and Islam in our last talk. Each of them has a specific stronghold that you have to break down. The stronghold in the Jewish mind is: "If I believe in Jesus, I'll no longer be Jewish." You may not be aware of that, but that is the strongest barrier that they have against receiving the truth about Jesus. The Moslem stronghold is: "God does not need a Son. There is not a Son of God." And if you are going to reach either Jews or Moslems effectively, you are going to have to use these spiritual weapons to break down those strongholds before you can really make an impact on them.

So we have the weapons for victory. Notice the ultimate aim is to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. It is a staggering assignment. First of all, we have to release people's minds from the false captivity of Satan and then we have to bring their minds into captivity to obedience to Jesus. That's wonderful, isn't it? That we have been given the weapons to do it. Now my talk tonight is not on those weapons. I have given many talks on that theme in the past. But I want to deal just with certain general basic requirements if the church is to be victorious.

I'm going to deal with them briefly. I have actually listed seven; you could probably make it eight or you could make it six, but in my making of outlines, when I get to the number seven I usually stop.

Let's turn to Matthew 12:25. Here is a statement by Jesus which is extremely important. And I think I'm afraid the church has often ignored it. Jesus said: Matthew 12:25:

> "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation and every city or house divided against itself will not stand."

We've spoken about the kingdom of God. But if the kingdom of God is divided against itself it cannot win. So Satan's primary attack on the church is to divide us. Has he been successful? I'm sorry to say, he has been extremely successful. One thing we have to do is to resist division. That does not mean that we automatically associate ourselves with everyone or everything that is called Christian. But it means that wherever there are people who are true believers in Jesus according to the Scripture and committed to love Him and serve Him, we have to acknowledge them as our brothers and sisters. And we do not let unnecessary barriers come between them and us.

Ruth and I in our ministry we work with I don't know how many different ministries and persons around the world. And basically I can say we don't have any problems in our relationships with them. I think the primary reason is because they and we are committed to something positive. And we are committed to Matthew 24:14: "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be proclaimed in all the world as a witness to all the nations and then the end will come." We believe this is our responsibility to prepare the way for the Lord by proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom to all nations. And wherever we meet with people who have that primary aim based on Scripture, we may never have met them before, but in 10 minutes we feel like we have known them all our lives.

So let's not focus on the negative. Let's focus on the positive. You'll find where people are truly committed to prayer and intercession or to evangelism, the barriers melt. But where people are all tied up with church structure and programs there usually are problems. So the first thing we have to do is guard against division. It is not easy. We certainly don't have all the answers but when we give it due priority I think we will be nearer to achieving it.

Then the second thing we have to do, and this is tremendously important, is to know and proclaim the whole of God's Word. Now I want to turn to 2 Timothy, chapter 3. This has become a very significant chapter for me recently, because I think it is a picture of the last days. If you begin at the first verse of 2 Timothy, chapter 3, it says:

> “But know this that in the last days perilous times will come.”

And the whole of this third chapter deals with things that are particularly relevant to the last days. The first thing it does is to paint a picture of the general degeneration of human character and conduct as the age comes to its close. And Paul picks out eighteen major moral or ethical blemishes which will characterize humanity at the close of this age. And really the root of them all is selfishness. Love of self, love of money and love of pleasure. I don’t know three words that better describe our contemporary civilization than that: love of self, love of money and love of pleasure. All the others are within that context.

The great enemy is selfishness. We need to bear that in mind, because the fact that we don’t indulge in drugs and alcohol or immorality does not necessarily separate us from the world. The only thing that really separates us is unselfishness. And I think a lot of moral, good living churchgoers are basically extremely selfish people. It’s number one first. And we need to understand that isn’t the distinctive mark of the church in these days. The distinctive mark is unselfishness by commitment to God and to humanity, to serve and be servants.

Radio Program

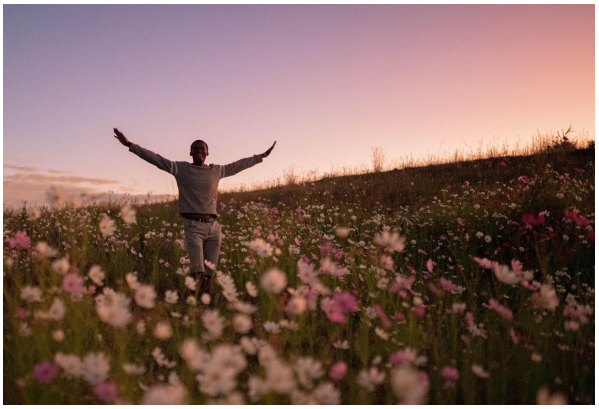
Transcript: TS-R157-102-ENG
Last Updated: 12 Apr 2023
Website: derekprince.com

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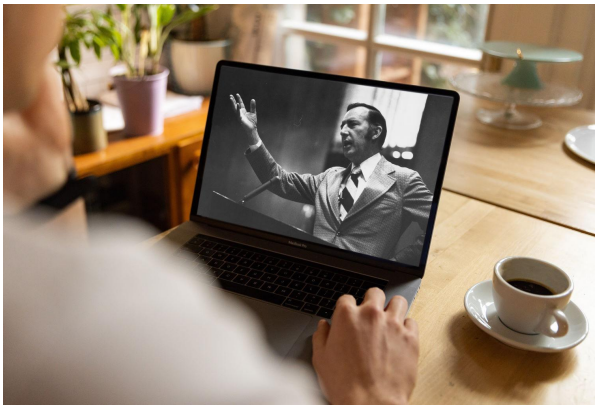
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