

Battle On

Annual Consecration

Week 4

If you are honest, you will probably have to admit that your prayer life is not where it should be. I do not say this to make you feel guilty. I say this because admission leads to confession. I have to admit I'm prayerless before I'll do anything to change my prayerless condition. Advancement in prayer begins with an admission of my need to pray.

Our adversary, the devil, looks for ways to manipulate and outmaneuver us. Sometimes he is so subtle that, if we're not praying, we don't even see him coming. He works on us to compromise and waste our lives. Before we know it, we've wasted a day, then a week, a year, and maybe most of our lives.

The only way to have victory is through Christ. We cannot fight "against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavens" by trying harder in our flesh. Our puny human efforts will fail. Our responsibility and calling is to stand and pray. Remember this: careful organizing, sincerity, or trying to do your best without prayerfully agonizing is a disaster.

It is the Spirit of Christ in us that will draw Satan's fire. The people of the world will not care much about what we believe and they will stare vacantly at our religious forms. There is one thing they will never forgive us for—the presence of God's Spirit in our hearts. They may not know the cause of that strange feeling of antagonism which rises within them, but it will be nonetheless real and dangerous. Satan will never cease to make war on the Man-child, and the soul in which dwells the Spirit of Christ will continue to be the target of his attacks.

If we are who we're supposed to be, satan will oppose us. He doesn't bother those saints who don't bother him. He will leave the prayerless believer alone. But when we are actively engaged with God in prayer, we become noticed in dark, devilish places. This is why Paul would tell us it is important to know your enemy, to be aware of your adversary, to "take your stand." The very statement implies opposition, someone trying to push us off the field of play or the field of battle. Someone is trying to undercut us. We must take our stand and not just stand, but stand firm.

To stand is to hold your ground. It is the opposite of retreat. The scriptures are clear regarding our position in Christ and how we are to practically live out our understanding of that position. To be in a praying position and to boldly pray, we must know who we are in Christ or

else we will pray like an impoverished person and not a soldier. We stand in the victory already won by Christ at the cross. We pray from a position of victory.

Because of Christ, the devil has been stripped of all his weapons. Jesus has overcome all we have to fear—death, hell and the grave. We are dead in Christ, and Satan can't put fear into a person who has already died to himself. Jesus has also openly disgraced him. "He erased the certificate of debt, with its obligations, that was against us and opposed to us, and has taken it out of the way by nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and disgraced them publicly; He triumphed over them by Him." (Col. 2:14-15)

There is not victory in self-help methods, greater willpower, or positive thinking. These concepts may sell in the marketplace, but they have no value in the heavenlies. We are to stand on the ground that Christ has won the battle for us. We are commanded to "be strengthened by the Lord" and to "put on the full armor of God." It's not either/or—it's both/and. Our strength is not in our flesh; it's in the Lord. But at the same time, we have to stand firm.

This week we will sacrifice all fried foods. I know this is extremely painful for most of us because of our love of fried chicken, but strengthen your hearts and allow the Lord to speak to you about you. Once again, we will be meeting for prayer on Monday night at 7 pm. I will let you know the details about Friday night prayer later this week. Please pray for the upcoming Couples' and Singles' Retreats next month. Pray for souls to be saved and delivered out of their spiritual prisons. We will not be ending our period of Consecration until the first weekend in February.