

Spiritual Warfare

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New Wine Christian Fellowship
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"My wife's gone and has taken the kids with her," Mike tearfully shared, "and I'm not sure I can live with the pain and hurt." I'd only known Mike for a short while as a casual acquaintance, but today he was in my office pouring out his anguish. He told me that for many nights he'd hardly slept since his wife left him. He was quickly coming to a place of desperation and needed help.

"I've tried praying for her, but it's so hard to get past the feelings of rejection to believe that my prayers are doing any good," he said.

As I sat listening to Mike, I closed my eyes and asked the Lord for wisdom to help this hurting man. I then asked him, "What would you say if I told you there was something you could do that might increase the chances of your wife coming back?" He leaned forward with obvious interest.

"It's not foolproof," I said, "but there are certain specific things you can do and say that can change this traumatic situation. At the very least, doing these things will begin to give you something you desperately need, that is - Hope!"

I had his full attention now. I then proceeded to share with him the following six steps that would begin to change the spiritual dynamics of this distressing situation:

SIX STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO SEE OTHERS CHANGE

Step one: He needed to ask God to forgive him for any unforgiveness, bitterness, or resentment that was in his heart towards his wife, understandable though it was.

Step two: He needed to choose to forgive her for the ways she'd wronged him, remembering that forgiveness is a choice of the will, not a feeling or emotion. Often it is only after persistent choices of forgiveness that feeling and emotions follow.

Step three: He needed to break "in the name of Jesus" any unhealthy bondings of control or dependence between himself and his wife.

Step four: He needed to begin interceding for his wife and children with direct, offensive warfare prayers against the enemy, rather than just defensive prayers to God. In other words, he needed to begin fighting spiritual warfare.

Step five: He needed to ask the Lord for specific opportunities to "love on" his wife to show her that he held no resentment in his heart. He also needed to ask the Lord for wisdom concerning her need for space in the relationship.

Step six: He needed to be willing to wait and trust the results to God. Mike carefully noted these steps and left resolved to begin applying them in his life. His was a success story. Within six weeks his wife returned and began to go with him to his church's marriage counseling ministry.

This scenario typifies the kind of relationship struggles we all have. Everybody knows someone that at times causes him grief and pain. Our usual, natural response to hurtful situations is either to lash out in retaliation or to withdraw into a posture of self-pity. But as you begin to recognize the very real spiritual war that's going on, alternative responses become viable. Satan's plan for every relationship is to sow discord and division and to destroy any possibility of love and unity between people. When you know this and seek to apply scriptural principles of warfare, you can intelligently approach every situation and expect victory and release. The problem today, however, is that most believers don't even know that we're in a spiritual war, much less how to fight it and win.

NO ONE EVER TOLD ME

I was saved in the summer of 1971 when the "Jesus People" movement swept across America. Within a few months, the Lord led me to a fairly prestigious Bible school in Dallas to study for a season. I then attended a Christian discipling school for three years of intensive study and training in the Scriptures. Then, in 1975, I joined a powerful Christian community in Houston that was revolutionizing the understanding of the local church in its role of discipleship and ministry. I remained there for many years, learning and growing in the basics of the faith. But in all of this time, no one told me that there was a war going on. Oh, it may have been mentioned here and there, but I never met anyone that seemed to be fully aware of the spiritual battle that was raging all around us.

There seemed to be an unspoken rule that if you ignored or discounted the workings of Satan, then he would have little effect on your life. It was as if we'd reinterpreted the Scripture in James 4:7 "Resist the devil and he will flee from you" to mean "ignore the devil and he will flee from you."

Finally, in late 1982, at a time of particular spiritual desperation in my life, I went to a man of God who had wisdom and experience in fighting the spiritual war. After this brother prayed for me with an authority I'd never before experienced, scales began to fall from my eyes. The result was a newly found revelation concerning the enemy's workings and devices in my life. Over the next few months, as I began to move in a greater authority, I began to see for myself the incredible devastations of the enemy in so many of the lives around me.

This began a pilgrimage in the spiritual battle that I continue to this day - seeking to help others escape from passivity and blindness concerning spiritual warfare. I trust this booklet will help shed light in this area. I'm grateful to a number of writers, particularly C. S. Lovett in his book "Dealing With the Devil," for some of the principles shared in the following pages.

SATAN IS ALIVE AND WELL

Satan is alive and active in the world today, particularly in the church, for it is only the church that can upset or thwart his plans and devices for mankind. However, as long as the church relegates the nature and operation of the devil to something less than it is, then Satan can continue to steal, kill and destroy unhindered. The apostle Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 2:11 that we shouldn't be ignorant of the schemes the enemy uses to deceive. It is essential, in any war, that one knows the tactics, plans and operations of their enemy. That's why there are such things as spies. After entering the promised land, Joshua sent spies out before him to determine the enemy's fortifications and defenses before he attempted to take their cities. If knowledge of an opponent's strengths and skills is necessary in order to achieve victory in an earthly conflict, how much more essential is it in spiritual matters? The Scriptures are full of types and shadows revealing a wealth of knowledge concerning the schemes and devices of the wicked one. For those who have eyes to see and ears to hear, the Bible is essentially a "warfare manual" to equip believers to fight the good fight of faith. Let's consider a few examples that illustrate principles of spiritual warfare.

SCRIPTURAL TYPES AND SHADOWS

The forty year wanderings of the children of Israel in the wilderness typify the wanderings of many believers who never get beyond the adolescent stage of their faith. All of Israel's needs were provided for: daily manna, fire by night for warmth, cloud by day for cooling, clothes that didn't wear out, etc.

In the early years of a person's Christian walk the Lord sovereignly provides his basic needs as a parent does for a child. But every parent looks for the day when the child can begin entering the responsibilities of adulthood. God was testing and proving His people to prepare a generation that would no longer need to be "burped" and "babied," but would go forth in war and lay claim to the inheritances of their promised land.

The book of Joshua pictures a believer entering the overcoming life of the Spirit. After crossing the Jordan River, God ceased the daily manna, the cloud by day and the fire by night. It was time for His people to aggressively lay hold of the blessings of the rich land of promise. In chapter five, the angel of the Lord is called Joshua to take off his shoes upon the holy ground. This new generation of Israelites was to be holy, disciplined and separated in order to have what it would take to cast out the defiled inhabitants of the

land. The overcoming life begins when a person starts to take God's commands of holiness and discipline seriously. Without these attributes built into the character, the believer will continue to wander about on the other side of the Jordan.

The book of Nehemiah opens with the picture of a defenseless city without walls, ravaged by her foes. How many believers today find themselves in just such a state! Nehemiah begins the process of rebuilding the walls and gates of the city in spite of much resistance from the enemy. This book is filled with many pictures and types of the determination required to rebuild the walls of holiness and discipline in a believer's life. There are few places in Scripture that so clearly illustrate the devices of the Satan in his equal determination to hinder a believer from rebuilding these walls.

The entire book of the Psalms is really a spiritual warfare manual. While David's enemies were real men of flesh and blood, they were often driven by evil spirits in their relentless attacks against him. Much wisdom concerning Satan's tactics and plans of war can be gathered from this book. As you read the Psalms, just think of David's enemies as those wicked spirits aligned against you in your daily spiritual battles. When you do this, you'll find many passages you once found obscure to be precious and comforting.

WATCH AND PRAY

All animals have their enemies. From birds to apes, every beast is constantly involved in war. Imagine, for a moment, a forest scene of deer as they gently approach a watering hole. Carefully they drink, looking all around. Maybe one appears to be the sentry. Then there's a sound, a muffled roar. The enemy's presence is known. The herd instantly flees into the brush. Any hesitation would have been fatal. They survived because they watched!

Believers, too, must be ever on the look out for Satan's traps and snares. He's often quicker than a ravenous beast hungry for helpless prey. Peter tells us to be sober because of the prowlings of the devouring lion (I Peter 5:8). Jesus tells us repeatedly to watch and pray, for the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. You must maintain careful vigilance against the enemy by becoming familiar with his methods, schemes and disguises. This makes him easier to spot. Many are fearful of hearing anything about the devil. This is silly. That's like climbing into a boxing ring with a blindfold on. The result would be pretty one-sided in favor of the opponent. The Lord tells us to be wise as serpents and as harmless as doves. We at least need to match the enemy in warfare wisdom if we hope to overcome his wiles.

THE BATTLEFIELD OF THE MIND

Have you ever wondered why your mind tends to wander when you're praying for someone? That "wandering of the mind" may not be all your doing. The apostle Paul tells us that Satan has the ability to attack your mind, in much the same way that he seduced Eve:

"But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." (2 Cor. 11:3).

Satan manipulated Eve's mind with distracting and evil suggestions. Today he seeks to do the same to you, particularly when you attempt to reach out to God in prayer. The undisciplined mind is always open to satanic attack. Until you've learned how to resist the injected thoughts of the enemy, you'll never know much success in your spiritual life. Paul tells us in another place that we must bring every thought into disciplined obedience:

"The weapons of our warfare are not fleshly, but mighty through God to pull down mental strongholds, to cast down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and to bring every thought captive to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:4-5).

Your thought life is the battlefield. To prove this, try keeping your thoughts pure and on Jesus for just two or three minutes. You'll quickly find that you're in a thought war. Without a carefully tuned and disciplined mind, you really don't have much to say about what goes on in your thought life. Paul again tells us:

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12).

The enemy assigns specific spirit beings to every believer to keep his mind from operating and resting in the He things of God. Unless these beings are resisted, a believer's mind will be like a city without walls, easily invaded by anything that happens to be around. Solomon describes this in the Proverbs:

"He that has no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls." (Proverbs 25:28)

The spiritual war is won or lost in the battlefield of the mind. Until a person recognizes this and begins to take steps to clean up the thought life, all other spiritual activities are futile. The psalmist tells us that God desires those who serve Him to come to Him with pureness of heart:

"Who shall ascend to the hill of the Lord or stand in His holy place? He that has clean hands and a pure heart; who has not lifted up his soul to vanity" (Psalm 24: 3-4a).

HOW DOES SATAN ATTACK YOUR MIND?

First of all, it's important to see that, in spite of what many believe, Satan has access into the mind of the believer. Now we all know that God can see and examine the thoughts of our heart:

"Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." (Hebrews 4:13)

But, do you realize that the enemy also has a pretty clear insight into what you're thinking? If you doubt that, consider this verse:

"When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and understands it not, then comes the wicked one, and catches away that which was sown in his heart" (Matthew 13:19a)

This passage tells us that Satan has the ability to peer into your mind to see if you understand God's Word when it's sown in your heart. From this we see that the enemy does indeed have the capability to gaze into the depths of your thoughts. We're also told that Satan can steal truth out of a man's heart when that truth is not fully understood. If that isn't bad enough, Satan can also inject into your heart his own lies. Consider what Peter said to a believer:

But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Ghost..." (Acts 5:3a)

Apparently, the enemy has pretty formidable access into one's thought life. As uncomfortable as this may make you feel, it's important that you understand it if you're going to successfully thwart his attacks. Let me give you an example that will illustrate this.

A RECENT EXAMPLE

Recently a young lady came to our church struggling with recurring nightmares. When she first started having these bad dreams, she would wake up and immediately cry out to God for relief. Often the Lord would give her peace so that she could go back to sleep. However, the dreams would return within a few days and she'd have to again cry out to God for help. She shared her struggle with different ones and requested prayer. But the prayers she received didn't do much more than delay the next occurrence of nightmares a couple of days.

After a while, different fears that the dreams stirred up in her sleep began to torment her during her waking hours. This troubled her greatly. After seeking the Lord for relief, He led her to our ministry for help.

The first thing I told her was that Satan was behind her problem with nightmares. She seemed surprised at this, even though she'd been a believer for many years. After sharing some basic principles of spiritual warfare, I then taught her how to resist the enemy and rebuke his attacks. After praying with her, I sent her on her way. A few weeks later she came by and told me that she'd experienced no more problems with nightmares or accompanying fears! All she needed was a little instruction concerning the

basics of spiritual warfare. What a shame it is that she'd gone many years and had never been exposed to these simple truths.

SATAN'S SUGGESTIONS

Satan's typical method of attacking the thought life generally involves nothing more than well-timed suggestions. He's highly skilled at this, since he's generally familiar with one's particular weaknesses and vulnerabilities. His carefully timed suggestions can trigger dangerous results.

God's Spirit speaks to us through suggestions as well. When you yield your will to God's suggestions, you open yourself to divine revelation. But when you yield to satanic suggestions, you commit sin. Satan is a master at presenting a suggestion at just the right moment to incite his passion and appeal to his weaknesses. Satan is a spirit and communicates to your mind and spirit in a fashion similar to the Holy Spirit. One of the signs of Christian maturity is the believer's ability to distinguish one spirit from the other. The apostle Paul wrote:

"But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." (Hebrews 5:14)

Have you ever considered that when a thought appears suddenly in your mind, it may not be your own? Remember, Satan can see into your thought life and manipulate you through suggestions. Knowing this, you'll begin to treat the things that run through your mind with a healthy skepticism.

Suppose it's time to go to church and you're busy getting ready when all of a sudden a thought pops up, "I'm really tired. It's been a hard week and I need to rest." That may sound like your own thought, but it isn't. It's most likely the devil's. Or maybe someone in church walked by you and just nodded a greeting. You begin thinking, "I'll bet they're mad at me. Why didn't they show me more attention?" Again, that's a selfish thought inspired by the enemy. You see, Satan's suggestions usually come packaged through the desires and cravings of the self. This brings us to consider Satan's master disguise.

SATAN'S DISGUISE

Satan is a spirit being of the highest magnitude. When he fell from God's favor, it was because of an inner longing to exalt himself before his Creator. His independent spirit brought him eternal damnation and separation from God. There's a passage in Isaiah that clearly reveals the selfish nature of his character:

"...I will ascend into heaven and exalt my throne above the stars of God. I will sit on the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High." (Isaiah 14:13b-14).

In his rebellion Satan succeeded in drawing with him multitudes of other angels and ultimately all of mankind. When Adam and Eve yielded to his seduction in the Fall, they inherited his very nature and character. From that point on, man sided with Satan in rebelling against the Creator of the universe. The very spirit of self-exaltation that characterized Lucifer's rebellion became the spirit that characterized the nature of man. This is Satan's disguise. He hides within the selfish and independent attitudes in man.

In other words, he operates in that compulsion within all of us that's so eager to assert itself. You can recognize it as the tendency to want to talk when someone is talking or tell of your experiences or ideas when someone else is describing his. We all have these tendencies. At heart, left to our own device, we all pay homage and worship at the altar of SELF.

If the devil had his preference, I'm sure he would like to experience public worship and adulation. And there are places and times that man has stooped to this level of darkness. But the devil will gladly forego public worship if that will help hide his true purpose — that is to nullify and cancel the life and effectiveness of the Christian. You see, all the enemy has to do is deceive believers into "living for themselves" and he's succeeded in frustrating God's plan. This way, on the surface, it doesn't seem like there's any overt rebellion at all. Surely a believer doesn't look like he's 'serving Satan' in his lukewarm Christian life. But from God's perspective, that's living out of the same spirit of independent exaltation that characterizes the devil. Satan's finest disguise is the disguise of self. What a believer would never do in

the name of the devil, he'll do all the time for himself. If you were to put Jesus or Satan before a believer and ask him to choose, he'll choose Jesus every time. But if you make it a matter of choosing between Christ and self, with Satan's deceptive power behind the self, the unsuspecting believer will choose self almost every time.

Jesus said that if anyone would follow Him, he must "deny himself" and take up his cross. It's convicting to realize that we need to equate 'living for self' with 'living for Satan.' We don't like to think about that, yet that's exactly what the Scripture says. In Romans 8:7, the apostle Paul says that living for yourself makes you an enemy of God. In Galatians 5:19, he lists the satanic results of a self-oriented life.

Can you imagine a Christian filled with the spirit of Satan? No, you can't believe this, you say! But the truth is, you probably see it every day. In fact, you yourself might from time to time be guilty of such a thing. How can this be? When you begin to fully grasp the nature of Satan's disguise within the self, then you'll agree it's a brilliant maneuver to keep people from God's true Spirit-filled life. When Satan fell, he apparently lost none of the intellectual sharpness and brilliance of an archangel. However, these attributes were twisted and perverted to be used against God's highest creation - man. But in God's higher and infinite wisdom, He allows the devil to continue his deceptions in order that He might develop a race of tested citizens. God is using Satan for His own ultimate purposes in bringing His sons and daughters to maturity.

RESISTING THE DEVIL

Many believers faithfully quote verses from the Bible believing that by doing so, they are providing a 'scriptural shield' around themselves from the attacks and onslaughts of the devil. Many believe that because of these promises in the Bible, they are provided with an automatic defense system against the enemy. In other words, if they just stay close to Jesus and read His Word, they won't have to worry about being deceived or harassed by Satan. Nothing could be further from the truth!

Actually, the closer you get to Jesus, the greater the intensity of the attack on your life. Why is this so? Simply because when you're abiding in God's presence, you are a greater threat to the enemy and his works. So naturally, he'll endeavor all the more to deceive or undo your consecration to the Lord through allurements and enticements of the flesh or the world. John tells us in his epistle that

"Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world." (1 John 4:4)

This is a glorious truth, but quite useless unless applied through resistance and active spiritual warfare. This verse is nothing more than an encouragement to fight! In other words, don't be intimidated by the enemy or his wiles; you have Jesus with you! But it doesn't end there. You must fight! James tells us in his epistle:

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." (James 4:7)

We see two important principles in this verse. Both must be integrated into your experience if you hope to see success in the spiritual war. First, submit yourself to God. This comes before doing anything about the devil. Why? To resist Satan you must do so in the Spirit. To try to resist the him from the flesh is a hopeless endeavor. As we've seen, Satan hides in the flesh and controls it through suggestive manipulations. You're no threat to him in that realm.

But when you submit yourself to God and receive the anointing of the authority of His Son, then Satan is terrified of you. When he looks at you in that posture, he sees Jesus standing behind you. When you resist Satan in the name of Jesus, you're in uniform. When you tell him to flee, it's as though Jesus is saying, "Be gone!" This is why you must submit yourself first; it's to put on the uniform. We all cringe at the sight of some uniforms. What's your first feeling when a uniformed police officer pulls you over and walks up to your car? That's exactly how Satan feels about you when you're operating under God's anointing and authority.

The second principle in this verse is to resist the devil. There are many believers who submit themselves to God but know very little about what it means to resist the devil. Most are quite helpless in this area because of their scant knowledge of the enemy and his ways. They've been taught that if they just remain

faithful to God and serve others, they'll be safe. That's dangerous logic. Most believers are like a young girl who is devoted to her parents but ignorant of boys. Her submission to her parents won't protect her, though, from the young man who knows how to take advantage of her female ignorance. Ignorance of sex is dangerous in a parked car! Ignorance of Satan is dangerous in this evil world!

There's only one thing that will cause the enemy to flee: you must personally resist him. Your parents can't do it. Your pastor can't do it. Your spouse can't do it. Nor can anyone else. Even God won't intervene for you here. He's given you the authority in His Son to do it for yourself. Until you learn to stand up and fight the enemy of your soul, you'll forever be in bondage. But once you begin to resist the enemy in your life and in the situations you encounter each day, a whole new realm of spiritual power and victory will open up for you.

THE "YOU GO FIRST" CONCEPT OF FAITH

There's a certain principle in the Spirit that every believer must understand. It's the "you go first" concept. James tells us in his epistle to

"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." (James 4:8)

As you initiate things in your relationship with God, His power and presence follows. This is the way it's always been. You were saved when you chose to yield your will to God. Then He came into your spirit with the cleansing work of His blood. When you choose to worship the Lord in spirit and truth, His anointing and blessing come as a result of your initiative. Even in the Great Commission, the Master said,

"Go into all the world, and I'll go with you." (Matthew 28:20)

You go first! When you speak, He responds and moves. When you begin to resist the enemy in the name of Jesus, God's full authority and power will back up your words and have their effect in destroying the works of darkness. But you must do it first.

So many believers sit around and passively complain (at least in their hearts) that if God loved them, He'd come to their rescue and do this or that. They are simply ignorant of one of the basic laws of the Spirit. God is waiting for you to initiate action so that He can back you up with His power and presence. I know people who've spent years wondering why God hasn't performed some supernatural work or miraculous healing in their life. Yet at the same time, they've rarely taken the initiative to spend time in earnest intercession or healing prayers. What presumptuous creatures we are! No wonder the psalmist asked the Lord to protect him from presumption lest he should be responsible for much greater transgressions (see Psalm 19:13).

COUNT THE COST

Satan is the god of this world. His mission is to deceive and destroy as many as he possibly can before Jesus returns to end his rule. Only those who are called by the name of Christ are equipped to take on this terrible being. Effective spiritual warfare, however, is a costly venture. Jesus tells us in Luke chapter 14 to count the cost before engaging in a war with a mighty foe. Don't kid yourself. When you enter the realm of aggressive, offensive spiritual warfare, all that you are and have will be tested. Satan doesn't take kindly to those who dare wield a sword against him. But, before you hesitate in your decision to enter the battle, let me tell you the good news. Though the enemy may rage against you, you will find an intimacy and closeness with Jesus that you previously only imagined. Your Christian life will cease to be boring and commonplace.

I've known the Lord for some twenty three years as of this writing and have been in the offensive battle for only the last twelve years. Those first eleven years were good, and I was excited about my relationship with Jesus. But they don't even compare with the ever increasing excitement and drama of these recent years where I've learned to engage the enemy in direct combat. Praise God! That which is cheaply bought is cheaply regarded. That which is purchased with a high price is a prize for all eternity.

FOUR STEPS TO ENTER WARFARE

The following four steps are absolutely necessary for anyone considering a lifestyle of aggressive warfare:

STEP 1) RECOGNIZE

Ask God for wisdom and light concerning the ways the enemy deceives, entices and tempts you. Ask Him to expose the methods the enemy uses to continue tripping you up in the area of your easily besetting sin.

STEP 2) REPENT

Surrender all of these areas to the Lordship of Jesus and ask Him to send the Holy Spirit's fire to burn out your passive and fleshly tendencies. Cry out to Him to continue His cleansing process and to ignore your protests when the fire might seem too hot. Remember: the three Hebrew men, Shadrach, Meshech and Abednego, saw the Son of God in the fire only after it was heated up to its hottest level (see Daniel, chapter 3). What's it worth to you to see a clear manifestation of the Lord's presence?

STEP 3) RESIST

Determine to begin to fight the enemy with all of your heart from this point forward. If you find yourself unable to initiate the fight from within, ask mature believers to pray for your deliverance and freedom.

STEP 4) REJOICE

Develop a daily, disciplined habit of praise and worship. Nothing terrifies the enemy more than a believer who keeps the fire in his spirit hot by coming often to the inner courts of the Lord in adoration and humility. This is truly the secret behind any successful warfare in the spirit.

ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLES FOR THE BATTLE

In conclusion, carefully consider the following principles and seek the Lord for wisdom as to how to practically apply them in your own life.

- Remember...it's not how long nor how loud you pray, but that you pray every day. This is one of the least understood yet possibly most important principles of spiritual warfare. Resistance, consistency, "stick-to-it-iveness" will ultimately bring down any stronghold of the enemy.
- Satan responds and will yield to godly authority. If you pray offensively against him with your life out from under God's properly ordained authority, you risk dangerous retaliation. Independent and rebellious believers are of no use in this war. See to it that your heart and life are properly submitted.
- Before you begin taking on the principalities and powers that rule over your city or neighborhood, be sure you've first cleaned up your own heart before the Lord. The principle here is to fight spiritual warfare first for yourself, then for your family, then your church, your job, your neighborhood and on outward. As you become proficient in the smaller things, God will bless you with the faith to take on bigger things.
- Always remember to pray before you go to sleep at night. The enemy will often seek to attack you in your subconscious when he's been thwarted in your conscious life. The following is a good model for night-time prayer:

Lord, I submit my life and my family to your safekeeping. Please post warrior angels around us tonight. Satan, I forbid you, in the name of Jesus, to attack or distract us in any way as we sleep. Amen.

Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. (1 Tim 6:12)