

NEVER LEAVE THE ENEMY IN COMMAND OF THE BATTLEFIELD



A BOOK FOR MEN BY **RUFUS M. PARKER**

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Chapter I

THE WEAPONS OF OUR WARFARE

In warfare, you must never leave your enemy in command of the battlefield. When I speak of the battlefield, I refer to your mind. You must never allow your adversary the ability to command and direct his force against you to a successful mission accomplishment. In other words, you must keep him confused and distracted. You must not allow him to fight another day. You must not allow him to dictate what he will do to you or when he will do it on the battlefield. You must always use the element of surprise against him.

Prior to the Vietnam War, America always destroyed her enemies or made them surrender. But during that conflict, she allowed sympathizers to join the enemy in protest against her, and she began leaving her enemies in command of the battlefield. When the enemy is in command of the battlefield, he controls the tempo of war.

As long as the Philistines could command and control the battlefield with their champion, Goliath, they kept Israel in fear, shock, torment, and depression.

- For forty days he tormented their minds.
- For forty days he called them degrading names and swore against their God.
- For forty days no one would even dare to fight him

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because they were fearful of his stature and what seemed like insurmountable strength.

But when David heard the challenge, he was not about to permit the opposing warrior to command and control the battlefield. David knew that God's people had a valid cause to remove the rival. He realized that if this enemy was allowed to stand and torment Israel, Israel would be defeated. David wasn't about to give him the time to play on his mind as he had already done to the army of Israel those past forty days. The longer you allow the enemy to play on your mind, the more you suffer from anxiety, depression, oppression, and weakness. No, sir, you must not allow him to gain command and control of your mind.

Absalom wanted to command the battlefield by deception and underhanded tactics against his father. He began to play on the people's minds, making himself to be someone special who cared for them more than his father, David, did and someone who would listen to them. Many of the people fell for his deception, but Joab recognized his guile and would not allow him the ability to command the battlefield or the minds of the people any longer. Though King David had commanded that Absalom's life be spared, Joab knew that if he did not remove him from the battlefield, Absalom might live to fight again another day. In that case, he may kill not only David but also himself with his men and their families and children.

You cannot sit back and simply allow the enemy to command and control your mind. You must take action to remove him. You must recognize what is going on in your head. Unchecked thoughts left alone will grow roots and

can then defeat you. Therefore, you must not allow the enemy of your soul to control you or to dictate to you how the battle will be fought in your mind. You must take command and control the battlefield of your mind. If the enemy can dictate to you what you will and will not do, he will defeat you. If he can provoke fear in you and doubt about your abilities, he has arranged for your defeat. If he can get you to think that you have no power against him or that you cannot defeat him, he commands you. Then, when you face other battles, you will be like others and fear him.

As I said, the battlefield is your mind. The apostle Peter admonished us, *Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ* (1 Peter 1:13). You have to prepare your mind.

- Prepare your mind for what may be difficult, hard, and challenging for you.
- Prepare your mind for unforeseen battles.
- Prepare your mind for rejection, discouragement, pressure to behave unethically, loneliness—those things that may cause depression, stress, confrontation, and hardship.
- Prepare yourself for losses: loss of friends and loved ones, loss of strength, loss of health and employment, and times of grief.
- Prepare yourself for what God, your pastor, your spouse, and your employer may ask you to do.

Job is a good example of preparation for the battles that may lie ahead. Scripture says:

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There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil. And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters. His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east. And his sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them. And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually (Job 1:1-5).

Job prepared himself early each day. Scripture said that he gave offerings to the Lord continually. As a result, when the enemy attacked him and he lost everything, he could still worship God. When his health was attacked, he was able to retain his integrity. When his friends accused him of sin, he could declare that he had not gone back from the Word of God, and even though he could not find God or feel God, God still knew where he was. Daily, Job knew something could happen to his children and himself, so he rose early and sought God. Then when the trouble came, he was able to stand until God brought him relief. The whole scenario of Job shows us how the enemy will do anything

and will sometimes use others against us to play on our minds so that he can control our thoughts to destroy us. But like Job, we, too, must prepare in advance to prevent his taking control over us and our minds.

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; and having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled (2 Corinthians 10:3-6).

What are some of our non-carnal weapons of warfare that may help us to remain strong on the battlefield of life and to keep our minds intact when the enemy comes against us? First is our attitude.

1. Attitude is a settled way of thinking or feeling about someone or something. Typically, the concept is reflected in a person's behavior. It's your view of things and how you react to them. It's your opinion, mind-set, perspective. IEduNote.com posits that attitudes have three components:

- 1. Cognitive Component:** Your thoughts and beliefs about the subject.
- 2. Affective Component:** How the object, person, issue, or event makes you feel.
- 3. Behavioral Component:** How it influences your behavior.

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Attitudes are not positive or negative; they are either good or evil.

- You will either win or lose on the battlefield of life based upon your attitude.
- If you do not understand how your attitude (conduct and actions) plays a part on the battlefield, the enemy will defeat you. You must keep your head in the game.

Gird up the loins of your mind, Peter said. *For as [a man] thinketh in his heart*, Solomon explained, *so is he* (Proverbs 23:7).

Notice, it's all about how you think!

An attitude adjustment may be the very thing we need to combat and overcome the things coming against us. The way we think and act in an evil or unpleasant situation can spell victory or defeat, life or death, courage or fear, self-edification or self-destruction. It's all about our attitude.

Right now, how do you see yourself? Are you strong or weak? Do you live based on what others think of you or on what you know about you?

How do you see your family? Are you comparing them to others? Is the enemy telling you that your children are bad and that you could have done better with some other woman? If the woman you married isn't what you want, help her become that person by encouraging her, praying with her, loving her, and doing those things you did with her that caused you to want to marry her in the first place. Then, you will find that she is the same girl whom you fell in love with and walked to the altar to marry.

How do you see the church? I've heard folks say, "Oh, our church is small." That's the enemy playing on your mind. If one can put a thousand to flight, and two can put ten thousand to flight, who's in control? Start looking through a different lens and see what changes you can make to adjust your way of thinking.

How do you see your pastor? Don't allow the enemy to play on your mind so that you are not supportive of your pastor. The quickest way for the enemy to defeat you is to convince you not to support the leadership God has given and placed over you.

A good attitude starts with your seeing things through the lens of God, the Word of God. The power of His Word enables you to view others and things differently.

Attitude is a little thing, but it makes a big difference (Winston Churchill).

Ability is what you are capable of doing. Motivation determines what you do. Attitude determines how well you do it (Lou Holtz).

Your ability to command the battlefield rests upon how determined you are to defeat the enemy of your mind (Rufus Parker).

In 1 Samuel 13:5-14, we see that King Saul allowed fear to capture his mind. He told Samuel:

Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the days

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appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash; therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the LORD: I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering (1 Samuel 13:11-12).

He allowed fear to control his thoughts, and he forced himself to do something outside the limit of his duty. When the enemy can make you think that your problem is bigger than it is, he knows that you oftentimes will not wait on God but will take matters into your own hands. That type of response can destroy your faith in God. Just a massive show of force by the enemy caused Saul to forget who defended him. Even though the Israelites had God on their side, fear tormented them.

When you show fear in your ability to lead and to discipline others, people will depart from you (Rufus Parker).

- Fear in battle shows that you are not disciplined or well trained.
- Fear in battle displays a lack of courage and faith in your ability to lead, as well as fear of others.
- Fear in battle gives the enemy the advantage and control.
- Fear will cause you to lose command and control of the battlefield.
- To defeat fear:
 - You must change the way you see things.

- You must always display an attitude of strength and courage before your followers.
- You must never display signs of weakness to your enemy.

You must adjust your attitude and how you think. Paul admonished the church at Thessalonica: ***That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand*** (2 Thessalonians 2:2, my emphasis).

- Don't become agitated or troubled.
- Don't let people drive you crazy and out of your mind. I read a good guideline, "People can only drive you crazy if you give them the keys." The only way the enemy can defeat you is if you give him the keys. Adjust how you think.
- Don't allow what others do and say cause you to lose faith and hope in God and what He may be calling you to do.
- Don't allow what people tell you or the things you see taking place around you, which you know are not right, cause you to lose command and control of your mind.

You were chosen to be in command and control of the battlefield. You have to control yourself and your thinking. Therefore, you must change your way of thinking and the way that you see things that appear real but are not. Don't be shaken or troubled through social media. If the enemy can inflict fear in you, as he did to Saul, through sight,

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sound, or seemingly insurmountable odds, he knows he can control the battlefield of your mind. You must keep your faith mixed with the Word of God. As the Lord promised through the prophet Isaiah:

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness (Isaiah 41:10).

No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD (Isaiah 54:17).

How is it that so many can say that they have read the back of the Book (the Bible) and see that we win, yet they live day in and day out in fear and uncertainty? As we read in Psalm 42, the psalmist presented a bleak picture of his current situation. But then he adjusted his attitude and way of thinking to avoid defeat in his mind. Listen to his words:

As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God? When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God,

with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday (Psalm 42:1-4).

He was troubled and shaken in mind because warfare drained him of his endurance and stamina. But notice, if you will, that he recognized his need to adjust his way of thinking. He prayed:

O my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar. Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me. Yet the LORD will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life. I will say unto God my rock, Why hast thou forgotten me? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God? Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God (Psalm 42:6-11).

You must always keep God in the equation on the battlefield. He is not going to leave you or forsake you. You were chosen to be in command of the battlefield over your enemy, not vice versa. Change your way of thinking and the way that you perceive things. You may ask, "How do I do that?" Paul counseled:

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Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things (Philippians 4:8).

Anytime you start feeling depressed and defeated, make an attitude adjustment. Refocus your mind on Jesus, and He will keep you in perfect peace. Your attitude must not be carnal, or it will make you an enemy of God. Carnal thinking always produces carnal results. You want your attitude to be well-pleasing to God. You always want to be able to reason and think clearly in the heat of battle, so keep a good attitude. Notice what the Lord said to the prophet Jeremiah:

If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan? (Jeremiah 12:5).

“If you can’t deal with it when it is easy,” God asked, “what are you going to do when it gets hard?” Prepare yourself now for the battles ahead. *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus*, Paul said (Philippians 2:5). Start thinking like Christ, and gird up the loins of your mind. Come on, get the mind of Christ!

2. Truth. The next weapon not made by mankind that I would like us to focus on is truth. Jesus prayed: *Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth* (John 17:17).