

WEAPONS & TACTICS

A HANDBOOK ON PERSONAL EVANGELISM

JIM WILSON

Jim Wilson, *Weapons & Tactics: A Handbook on Personal Evangelism*
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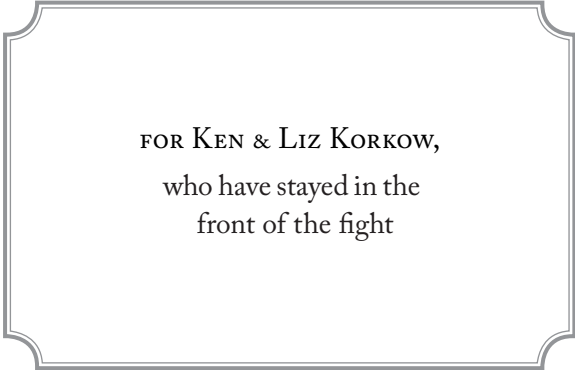
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FOR KEN & LIZ KORKOW,
who have stayed in the
front of the fight

Also by the author

Principles of War

How to Be Free from Bitterness

Christ in Relationships DVD

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PREFACE

W*eapons and Tactics* was written to give methods for implementing the principles laid out in my earlier book *Principles of War*. This book has many scriptural passages and some examples. I hope the scriptural quotations alone will hit you hard. I have quoted Scripture extensively, and have drawn your attention to certain parts of those passages by means of italics. The italics are not my attempt to make Scripture stronger, but are simply a way of pointing to what the Lord is saying to all of us.

The first half of this book speaks of the *weapons* that God has given us for the part of the spiritual war related to evangelism. The second half is on the use of these weapons, that is, the *tactics* of evangelism. It follows the principles of war, but on a personal level, illustrating methods for putting those principles into effect. I would encourage you to read *Principles of War* as preparation for this study, as what I have written presupposes that.

You may have already learned and practiced much of this. If any of it is new and fresh to you, please pray that God will give you an opportunity to practice what you have learned right away. Do not wait to finish the book. There is no substitute for obedience now.

There is a simple command in Ephesians 5 which, if followed, would make all of the evangelism described in this book both normal and easy:

Be filled with the Spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. (Eph. 5:18b–21, KJV)

Keep on being filled with the Spirit. May God use you greatly as you participate in this great war that God launched to liberate the souls of men from death and from the fear of death. If you find anything biblically false, certainly write to me.

I am grateful to the staff at Community Christian Ministries who have put up with me and helped put this book together. *Particular thanks should go to Lisa Just for her essential labors in assembling this material.* I would also thank Debbie Hulbert, Jen Miller, Naomi Adams, Colleen McGarry, Heather Torosyan, and Amy Bakken. Thanks also to Tom Banks and the many other proofreaders who offered their kind suggestions.

In the Lord Jesus Christ,
JIM WILSON
January 2012

PART 2

TACTICS

As was stated earlier, the principles of war were covered in my first book on evangelism. But the principles have to be remembered at the points of application. This section presupposes that you have already read and understand *Principles of War*.

THE OBJECTIVE

An army needs to understand in what direction it is supposed to march.

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore go and *make disciples of all nations*, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and *teaching them to obey* everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Mt. 28:18–20)

Jesus’ first statement in the Great Commission is indicative: “All authority in heaven and earth has been given to Me.” That authority is absolute and comprehensive. This results in an imperative: “Make disciples!”

He told them, “This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these

things. I am going to send you what My Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.” (Lk. 24:46–49)

This is the means of making disciples. Jesus Christ’s work was to suffer for sins and rise from the dead. The disciples’ work was to preach with the authority of His name. They were to preach repentance and forgiveness of sins to all nations, starting in Jerusalem, and they were to preach it with power from on high:

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be My witnesses in *Jerusalem*, and in all *Judea* and *Samaria*, and to *the ends of the earth* (Acts 1:8)

Jesus’ operational order is clear: 1) The apostles are to make disciples, 2) beginning in *Jerusalem*, 3) via *adjacent countries*, 4) to the *ends of the earth, all nations*.

When He saw the crowds, He had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field.” (Mt. 9:36–38)

Christ commands the apostles to pray for more harvesters. If it is still true that the harvest is plentiful and the laborers are few, then this prayer is still necessary today. If it is still true, then there are more non-Christians ready to become Christians than there are Christians who are ready to help them believe and repent. To be blunt, there are more people who want to get into the Kingdom than there are Christians who want them in.

I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them to *open their eyes* and *turn them from darkness to light*, and *from the power of Satan to God*, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me. (Acts 26:17–18)

This is the great commission given by the Lord Jesus to Saul of Tarsus, making him an apostle, a “sent one,” and this happened the instant he became a believer. This is the One who has been given all authority in heaven and earth giving instructions on evangelism to one of His greatest followers. Let us look at those instructions:

1. Open their eyes.
2. Turn them from darkness to light.
3. Turn them from the power of Satan to God.

Paul had to do those three things in order to get two things for the people he witnessed to:

1. Forgiveness of sins
2. A place among those who are sanctified by faith in Him

This is the essence of the battle plan assigned to man for the conquest of the world.

Here is the command stated again:

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, *and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you*. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Mt. 28:18–20)

All new Christians are to be taught to obey everything Jesus commanded, including this command. This means that

the Great Commission is self-perpetuating. Each generation of Christians is supposed to hand it off to the next generation.

On that day a great persecution broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and *all except the apostles* were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria . . . Those who had been scattered *preached the word wherever they went*. (Acts 8:1b, 4)

In the first century, thousands of Christians left Jerusalem, preaching the gospel everywhere they went. But the apostles (the official “evangelists”) stayed in Jerusalem.

We would be concerned if we knew that there were active terrorists in every neighborhood. What we don’t realize is that the Enemy *has* such spiritual terrorists everywhere. Is the *world* concerned that we have *active effective* evangelists in *every neighborhood*? If we did have them, believe me, the Enemy would take every means to silence them. We do have them, but they are not being effective. It seems that our sleeper cells went to sleep.

I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you. (Acts 26:16)

Go! This man is a chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. (Acts 9:15)

At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the son of God. (Acts 9:20)

The common element in these three verses is that the Apostle Paul was sent as an evangelist at the time of his conversion. His position as an evangelist is one of the reasons the Bible gives for his conversion, and upon being con-

verted he became that evangelist without further training or growth in the Lord. We might conclude that Paul was unique in this and that the rest of us cannot, nor are we expected to, follow this pattern. Or we can say this is God's requirement for us *all*. The apostle says exactly that in his second letter to Corinth:

And he died for all, that *those who live* should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, *if anyone is in Christ*, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself *through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation*: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the *message of reconciliation*. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Cor. 5:15–21)

When Paul speaks in verse 15 of "those who live," and in verse 17 of, "anyone in Christ," he is clearly not speaking of himself alone, but of all believers. He goes on to say this: "who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and gave us the *ministry* of reconciliation." The "us" is "anyone in Christ." Therefore, anyone who is in Christ, as soon as he is in Christ, is immediately commissioned in the ministry of reconciliation at his conversion. The ministry of reconciliation is not only given to reconciled men: it is given at the moment of reconciliation. The demon-possessed man Jesus healed is an example of this:

As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. Jesus did not let him, but said, “Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.” So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed. (Mk. 5:18–20)

God has given us the *ministry* and the *message*. We are to preach the Word everywhere, just like the new Christians in Acts.

DECISIVE POINTS

A decisive point is a place where, if a battle were fought and won there, it would be a decisive victory, one that influences the whole war.

In the war for souls, the battles must be fought in every location on earth because our Lord Jesus Christ sent us *everywhere*.

Therefore go and make disciples of *all nations*, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. (Mt. 28:19)

He told them, “This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to *all nations*, beginning at Jerusalem.” (Lk. 24:46–47)

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the *ends of the earth*. (Acts 1:8)

However, some places in particular are decisive points, and taking them will get the message to all places faster. If we

want to reach the whole, then we should know what sort of places to concentrate on. Two questions determine whether a point is decisive: 1) Is it important? 2) Is it feasible?

Here are two biblical examples. First, in Ephesus:

Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God. But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way. So Paul left them. He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. This went on for two years, so that *all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia* heard the word of the Lord. (Acts 19:8–10)

In Thessalonica:

You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. *And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere.* Therefore we do not need to say anything about it, for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath. (1 Thess. 1:6–10)

These two cities were important and feasible, and they were therefore *decisive* in the effect they had on Asia, Macedonia, and Achaia.

Many years ago when praying about where to minister, I knew I wanted to go to a decisive point. There was no question in my mind that taking New York City would be decisive. If it could be taken it would mean that Wall Street, Madison Avenue, Broadway, NBC, ABC, CBS, Fox News,

and ten million people would be saved. It would shake the world. It would be the greatest revival in history. However, I did not have the resources to bring the principles of war to bear on this stronghold of Satan. In other words, New York City could have been decisive, but it was not feasible. Without feasibility, a point is not decisive.

The Lord led me to small towns with major universities. The university makes such a place important. The small town makes it feasible. These are decisive points in any given state. Every student generation moves throughout the state and even the country upon graduation, and they can carry the message of Christ with them as they go. As in Ephesus, the battle can be fought in one place and win the whole state.