

# THE UNSEEN HEROES OF THE CHURCH



## WE HAVE AN ADVERSARY

As we look into Scripture, we understand that much of the battle we fight in life is not a battle fought in *the flesh* or the **physical** realm, but a battle fought in *the Spirit* in the **spiritual** realm.

### EPHESIANS 6:12

*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.*

In the Bible, we also learn that we have an adversary.

There is an enemy of our soul that seeks to destroy everything Godly and righteous in our lives.

The devil will do everything he can to rob you of your faith.

- **Revelation 13:7** says that the devil has the power to “*make war with the saints*, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.”
- **Revelation 12:7** illustrates that the devil is enraged with God’s people and seeks to “*make war* with us, our remnant, all that keep the commandments of God, and those who carry the testimony of Jesus Christ.”
- **Daniel 7:25**, speaking prophetically, says that Satan and his antichrist shall “speak great words against the most High, and shall *wear out* the saints of the most high.”

By this, we understand that the devil does not seek to destroy the church because of our own efforts.

No. In fact, he seeks to destroy the church because of **the name** we all carry!

- Simply because we *belong to Christ*, he makes war with us!

That's why we **cannot** and **must not** attempt to win this battle in the flesh or by our own human efforts!

- If we are to win, we need a fresh touch of God
- If we are to win, we need a fresh **baptism** of Holy Ghost and fire!

Simply because we have allegiance with Jesus, a target has been placed on our backs.

**As the church, this is a battle we are called into to fight on behalf of our city!**

- **1 Timothy 1:18** – “This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightiest **war a good warfare.**”
- **2 Timothy 2:3** – “Endure hardship, as a **good soldier** of Jesus Christ.”

Here, Paul states that we must have the attitude of a soldier.

And we must be willing to fight in the Spirit to oppose every stronghold that opposes the church!

- The attitude of our heart must **not** be an attitude of compromise!
- Rather, the attitude of our heart must be one that will not accept the devil's tricks, lies, and schemes.

We must be *bold enough* to **take back** what the devil has stolen from us!

In the Old Testament, when a warring nation came and destroyed a city belonging to David and his troops...

- And after all the wives and treasures and livestock had been taken...

David went to God and prayed, “**Lord, what do I do?!**”

- And God's answer was simple! **PURSUE.**

In other words, don't sit back and accept the attack.

**Don't allow this to make you numb and cold.** Don't let the pain you feel take away your courage.

- Get up from where you are and **PURSUE**. FIGHT. WAR.

**GET BACK** WHAT THE ENEMY HAS STOLEN FROM YOU.

DON'T LET THE ADVERARY **MESS** WITH YOUR FUTURE.

DON'T LET THE ADVERSARY **DIVIDE** AND **DESTROY** YOUR FAMILY.

## ARROWS FOR THE BATTLE

We see a similar message in the story of **King Joash** in the Old Testament book of 2 Kings.

**The prophet Elisa had fallen sick.** And as he lay on his deathbed, a warring nation steps onto the scene and *calls for war*. In fear, King Joash goes to Elisa and asks for help from God.

Elisha eventually commands the King to take (**arrows in his hand**) and to strike the arrows onto the ground...

...with the knowledge that with every strike of the arrows, God would strike back the attacking nation opposing his people.

### 2 KINGS 13:18

*And he said, Take the arrows. And he took them. And he said unto the King of Israel, Smite them upon the ground. And he smote thrice, and stayed.*

And seeing the King strike the ground only 3 times, **Elisha rose up in anger.**

### 2 KINGS 13:19

*And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, You should have smitten five or six times; then you would have smitten Syria until you consumed it: instead, it will only be smitten three times.*

We see here that rather than strike back against the adversary opposing the people, the King took a **passive** stance and *only did enough to get by*.

He lacked a sense of *desperation* and *urgency*, even with an opposing nation at the door of the palace.

- With bloodthirsty soldiers sharpening their swords and straightening their spears and knowing full well the consequences of his actions, the King could not muster a **will** or **passion** for fighting.

When he could have struck the ground 5 or 6 or **10** times, he chose only 3.

- And by his actions, a pagan and evil enemy was pushed back – **but not destroyed!**

You see, the arrows in his hand represented the potential of God to fight *with* him and *for* him.

- **As a weapon in his hand, they represented his thirst for victory and his desire for triumph.**

And when the King did not fully utilize what he had at his disposal, his actions told God that he would rather **GO THROUGH THE MOTIONS...**

...than to strive for victory truly and completely.

And this kind of complacent, satisfactory, and “just enough” attitude disappointed and angered God.

## **PRAYER IS A FIGHT**

Now, I am reminding you of this story to explain that a certain element of prayer is a fight.

I know, at times, prayer is a quiet, peaceful, and tranquil conversation with Jesus – as you sit in the early morning in your rocking chair, delicately holding a steaming cup of coffee, sitting next to a Hazelnut Blueberry candle burning on the side table.

- But, there are also times in prayer when God uses our prayers to **FIGHT**.

And for you, as a believer, to bring down strongholds that rise against the church. . . you must, at times, be willing to **FIGHT** in prayer.

- **There are moments in our prayer time when we whisper our prayers and pray out of sincerity and quietness.**

But there are also moments when God, through His Spirit, calls us to lift our voices and pray aloud with a fierce attitude.

Sometimes, some breakthroughs in prayer ONLY COME when we *lift our voices* unto the Lord.

- **THERE IS SOMETHING ABOUT SPEAKING OUT LOUD IN FAITH** that stirs the Spiritual realm.

You see, the devil would like you to feel defeated, lost, broken, messed up, and HE DESIRES TO LEAVE YOU IN SOME QUIET CORNER, FEELING INTIMIDATED.

- Scripture compares him to a roaring, fierce lion.
- And so, some attacks must be met with a FIERCE attitude of faith!

#### **ISAIAH 58:1**

*The Lord has urged us to use our voices to “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet.”*

#### **ISAIAH 40:9**

*O Zion, herald of good news, Get up on a high mountain. O Jerusalem, herald of good news, Lift up your voice with strength, Lift it up, do not fear...*

## **FIGHTING ON YOUR KNEES**

You see, God wants his church to WIN.

It is his will that his church grows and conquers and *expands its territory*.

- It is his will that **EVERY** stronghold falls.

And it is up to us, as his church, to battle and to fight and to war and **PUSH** his Kingdom forward! We must not allow the enemy to stand at the gates and intimidate us.

We have weapons provided to us straight from the throne room of God!

#### **2 CORINTHIANS 10:3-5**

*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.*

We see here that Scripture speaks of the “weapons of our warfare.”

- **You see, “in the flesh” is where spiritual battles are lost.**
- **But “in prayer” is where spiritual battles are won.**

The greatest need in the church today is not more skill, it’s not more talent, it’s not more knowledge or new ideas.

- The greatest need in the body is for people *willing* and *able* to fight **on their knees.**

In Scripture, there are many different types of prayer.

But ultimately, one of the highest levels of prayer is what’s called: **intercession.**

## **THE POWER OF INTERCESSION**

**As he taught, Jesus often spoke of prayer and intercession.**

### **1 TIMOTHY 2:1**

*Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men...*

### **EPHESIANS 6:17-18**

*17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; 18 **praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit,** being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—*

In Acts, we see the New Testament church intercede on a number of occasions.

- **DEFINITION:** To “intercede” means to *come in between.*

An “intercessor” is one who stands and fights in the Spirit for a specific need.

- It’s when you pour out your soul in **intense, heartfelt** prayer.

IT'S WHEN YOU PRAY WITH THE ATTITUDE OF A FIERCE SOLDIER ON THE BATTLEFIELD.

- It's you stepping **in the middle** of a person and their situation.

In Isaiah 59, God was displeased with his people because he looked around and could not find an intercessor...

...there was no one to **STEP IN THE MIDDLE OF HIS PEOPLE.**

...No one to come "in between" his people and the coming judgment.

## STANDING IN THE GAP

### **EZEKIEL 22:30**

*So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one.*

In THIS INSTANCE, THERE WAS NO one to **stand in the gap** and TAKE PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR VICTORY!

Intercession is more than a simple prayer.

- It's when you go to God and fervently, **passionately** seek him and war in the Spirit.

Intercession is when you go to God in prayer, and you take your spiritual arrows, and you strike the ground **OVER AND OVER AND OVER AND OVER AND OVER AND OVER AGAIN!**

- True intercession is when we push past every distraction when we ignore the clock, and it's when we *persevere* in prayer.
- Some spiritual battles are only won when you push past your comfort zone of prayer.

In this way, we lay down our own personal desires in order to **LEARN MORE ABOUT THE DESIRES OF GOD.**

- Intercession is the ability to "**CONTINUE IN PRAYER**" until the battle is won.

- It's when we strike the ground of the Spirit *until* the stronghold is completely destroyed.

Intercession is when you go to God and pray not just for yourself but for somebody else.

It's when you step into someone else's battle and fight *with* them and *for* them.

- In **Exodus 12:13**, after his sister Miriam developed leprosy in her body, "Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee."
- In **Luke 22:32**, Jesus declared to Peter, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."
- In **Acts 7:60**, as the apostle Stephen was being stoned to death, he prayed for his accusers with a loud voice, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge!"

Intercession is when you, **through prayer**, come in between a person and that which opposes them.

- It's when you **seek God for the needs of someone else.**

## UNSEEN HEROES

In Scripture, we are challenged to "**pray always in the Spirit** (Ephesians 6:18)."

- 1 Corinthians 14 *assumes* that the church prays **with the Spirit** in unknown tongues.

Praying in the Spirit is when God gives you a special **anointing** and **power** in prayer.

Whether with words or in tongues, "praying in the Spirit" is when you, BY FAITH in prayer, call forth God and his angels to act on your behalf.

- It's when you **plead a cause** in prayer *so intently* that you call into action the supernatural.
- It's how you **gain ground** in the spiritual realm.
- It's **not** praying *without* a purpose and simply getting overcome with emotion, but rather it's targeting and fighting for a **specific** need.



**Romans 8:26** speaks of a level of intercession when the “Spirit makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.”

- It’s when we pray with such intensity that *words are not enough...*

...and it seems all we can do is **groan** in the Spirit.

In intercessory prayer... we **give birth** to the promises of God!

When it seems that all is under attack, **the intercessors must rise**, and they must **STEP UP** to war in the Spirit...

...and they must pray **strength** back into the body!

Those who intercede are spiritual warriors, and by their prayers, they call **heaven** down to **earth**.

...

**INTERCESSORS ARE THE UNSEEN HEROES OF THE CHURCH!**