

***“But the Lord is faithful; he will strengthen you and guard you from the evil one.” - 2 Thessalonians 3:3***

*“If you haven’t locked horns with the devil recently, you’re probably running in the same direction!”*

A life that is devoted to the King and His Kingdom is one that is without a doubt going to face relentless opposition. When Jesus began his three years of earthly ministry, it shouldn’t surprise us that immediately after His baptism, He was led by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil in the wilderness. If you’re running in the will of God, don’t be surprised when it feels like you’ve suddenly had the crosshairs of the enemy painted on to you as well as those people and things you hold dear in life.

**What are some of the battles one may face?**

These can include family pressures; perhaps challenges in marriages and with your children. Our finances are a huge test of trust with the Lord. Often, it’s how we respond to attacks on our health. To be honest, our enemy will, over time, attack every area of life, seeking a vulnerable spot in order to gain a foothold which, if left unchecked, in due course, will develop into a stronghold.

For too many years as a Christian, I assumed that I had no part to play in this battle; that God was going to do what God was doing to do with regards to protecting my life but, over the past decade, I have learned that I most certainly do have a responsibility to play my part.

In the Lord’s prayer, doesn’t Jesus teach His followers to pray, “Deliver us from the Evil One”? Whether it’s provision of our daily bread, forgiveness of our sins, or positioning ourselves for divine protection, it’s clear we’re called to ask God in prayer.

In Ephesian 6, we’re not only warned of this spiritual battle - one not of flesh and blood - but also told that there are pieces of armour to actively put on and a posture that we are to maintain in the battle,

***“A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on all of God’s armour so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil.” - Ephesians 6:10-11***

**What is this armour comprised of and how do we use it to position ourselves in the Lord for protection during the battle?**

**Belt of Truth** — Live anchored in God’s truth, rejecting lies and embracing honesty and integrity.

**Breastplate of Righteousness** — Guard your heart by walking in Christ’s righteousness and choosing what is pure.

**Gospel Shoes of Peace** — Stand firm and move forward with confidence, ready to bring Christ’s peace into every situation.

**Shield of Faith** — Trust God’s character and promises, extinguishing doubts and spiritual attacks with steadfast belief.

**Helmet of Salvation** — Protect your mind by remembering your identity in Christ and the hope of your salvation.

**Sword of the Spirit (the Word of God)** — Speak and apply Scripture to confront lies, temptation, and spiritual opposition.

**Praying in the Spirit** — Stay in constant, Spirit-led prayer, remaining sensitive to His guidance and dependent on His strength.

**Stand Firm** — Hold your ground with courage and perseverance, refusing to yield to fear or darkness.

Every single day, I make it my habit to pray for divine protection over my own life, that of my family, and also the church. In addition I weaponise sung worship.

The quickest way for me to start to impact the war that is going on in my mind - which I believe is the primary battleground of the enemy - is through sung worship. I may not, on some occasions, initially be up to singing myself but simply by listening on YouTube to these songs, not only does the atmosphere change but, even more importantly, the presence of God manifests in my life and I have a confidence and certainty that I am once more positioned and abiding in “the shelter of the Most High”. As the old chorus picking up words from the Psalmist says, “You are my hiding place, you always fill my heart with songs of deliverance, whenever I am afraid I will trust in You.”

There are specific songs that have been written to help us in the battles which declare the truth and fill us full of fresh faith in the Lord. My first choice these days is **“In the Mighty Name of Jesus”**. Here are some of the lyrics that have really helped me recentre myself in Christ and lifted my head.

***... I pray into the atmosphere**  
Spirit of God, You’re here  
You have all authority  
I pray over my heart and mind  
I am healed by Your stripes  
Your blood declares that I am free*

***... In the mighty name of Jesus, I pray**  
Calling on the power of Heaven, I proclaim  
Every weapon formed against me, must break  
In the mighty name of Jesus*

***... I draw a permanent boundary line**  
The enemy has no rights to come near my family  
No scheme could ever undo God’s plans  
No matter the circumstance  
The cross has sealed my destiny*

***... In the mighty name of Jesus, I know**  
All the power of fear and darkness, must go  
He’s every key to every victory, I hold  
In the mighty name of Jesus*

***... I will not fear, I will not fear**  
When the enemy comes near  
On the door frame of my life  
Is the blood of Jesus Christ  
I will not fear, I will not fear  
There’s an army of angels here  
I’m protected on all sides  
By the blood of Jesus Christ*

Take a few minutes right now to declare the words of this song over you and, piece by piece, to put on the full armour of God. Make that your daily habit in this new year.

***“Yes, and the Lord will deliver me from every evil attack and will bring me safely into his heavenly Kingdom. All glory to God forever and ever! Amen.” - 2 Timothy 4:18***