

TOPIC: ALLOWING GOD TO FIGHT FOR YOU

TEXT: 2ND CHRONICLES 20:1-25

INTRODUCTION

My encounter at Ore with the Mechanic

Life is full of battles and there are a lot of battles that we fight daily – they may be financial battles, spiritual battles, relationship battles and all kinds of battles in our daily lives.

In the Old Testament we find that Jehoshaphat, king of Israel got word from a friend that three enemy nations were going against him to fight him. The odds weren't too good because it was three nations against the one nation of Israel. The Bible tells us that these three nations were the Moabites, the Ammonites, and the Meunites.

God put the story of Jehoshaphat in the Bible in order to illustrate to us certain vital spiritual principles in winning the battles of life by allowing God to fight for us.

I. IDENTIFY YOUR ENEMY/ WHAT THE PROBLEM IS

Verse 1 shows us the first principle in overcoming the battles of life. Identify your enemy.

This seems like a rather obvious principle but actually it isn't. Many people simply do not know who their enemy is. They start mistrusting everyone. Often we think the enemy is some other person – even our own family members, but they may not be the ones who are standing against us – but for us. Many times the enemy is our own attitude – the way we handle the situation. Before we can start winning our battles – we have to know who our enemies are. Notice how Jehoshaphat reacted when he heard that these three nations were coming against him. "*Jehoshaphat was afraid.....*" 2 Chron. 20:3

2. DON'T BE DRIVEN BY EMOTION / SITUATIONS

Of course Jehoshaphat was afraid; he had every right to be. Three nations were coming up against him that would be a typical reaction for all of us. But don't let your emotions take control of you.

Some people do that don't they? They let their emotions take control of them. They will get mad – they will get angry – they would be furious – and look out if you are standing anywhere around them when that happens. You can become a casualty of their emotional explosion but look at what the Bible says:

"This you know my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God," James 1:19-2- NASB

The Bible also says: "*For God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.*" 2 Tim 1:7 KJV

All of us are emotional beings – that's the way God has created us but don't let your emotions get the better of you.

3. TAKE YOUR PROBLEMS TO THE LORD/ ALLOW GOD TO HAVE A SAY

Let's look at verse three again:

/Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah/ 2 Chron. 20:3

When Jehoshaphat learned that three nations were coming against him he was afraid – but instantly he “set himself to seek the LORD”.

The third principle in winning the battles of life is to take your problems to the Lord. Prayer ought to be the first weapon we use whenever we face the battles of life, not the last. Usually the last thing we try is prayer – maybe because we want things to work out on our own.

Jehoshaphat prayed and do you know what he said? In effect he said “*God, I know You have helped me in the past, I know You can help me in the future, so please help me now, please take care of our enemies for we have no power to face the vast army that is attacking us. We don't know what to do – but our eyes are upon You*” vv. 6-12

4. ADMIT YOU NEED HELP / ALLOW GOD TO HELP YOU

The fourth principle in winning the battles of life is to admit you need help. Jehoshaphat did when he said:

“We are powerless before this great multitude who are coming against; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are on You”. – 2 Chron. 20:12 NASB

You need to say “*Lord, I've got a problem, and I need Your help with it*”. There's only one kind of person that God doesn't help – that's a person who doesn't think he needs help. When you say, “*Lord, I've got a problem, I need help, I admit my inadequacy*”, then He can work on it. The Christian life is a supernatural life and we need God's power to live it. We can't live it on our own because we have a power shortage. God is willing to help but if we are too proud to ask for it – He will not help us. The Bible says;

“God is opposed to the proud but gives grace to the humble” James 4:6 NASB

5. RELY ON GOD'S POWER / ALLOW GOD TO DISPLAY HIMSELF

Did you notice that after Jehoshaphat admitted, “*Lord, I don't know what to do*” he added, “*but our eyes are on You*” 2 Chron 20:12.

The fifth principle in overcoming life's battles is to rely on God's power. We need to get our eyes on the Lord. Too often we've got our eyes on everything else – on everything except the One who can solve our problems.

Circumstances are like a mattress; if we're on top – we rest easy but if we are underneath, we might suffocate. If we keep our eyes on the Lord we'll stay on top of our circumstances.

6. RELAX IN FAITH / ALLOW GOD TO CARRY ON WITHOUT YOUR INTERVENTION

Notice how God responded to Jehoshaphat's prayer;

"Thus says the Lord to you, do not fear or be dismayed because of this great multitude for the battle is not yours but God's 2 Chron. 20:15 NASB

The sixth principle in overcoming life's battles is to relax in faith.

So many Christians today are totally worn out because they are trying to fight God's battles in our own power.

When we first become Christians we tend to think, *"God, You don't know what a deal You got when You got me. I am going to bring in Your kingdom single-handedly. I'll go out and win the world and really help You"*. So we work really hard but eventually come crawling back on our hands and knees saying *"Lord, I know I've really disappointed You, I'm so sorry, I've really let You down"*.

But God replies; *"No, you didn't let Me down, because you weren't holding Me up"*.

Folks here is a truth; We don't hold God up – He holds us up.

How many of you have heard – God helps those who help themselves? The truth of the matter is – God helps those who can't help themselves.

Now listen to me carefully, I'm not saying we should not try 0 that we should not do our best 0 because we should try – we should give it our best effort but we should also realize that without God's power we have no power at all.

Jesus said it this way:

"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruits, for apart from Me you can do nothing" John 15:5 NASB

God wants us to relax in faith and let Him work through us.

Paul says it this way: *"As you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him" Col 2:6 NASB*

In other words – just the way you became, be sure to live the Christian life the same way. You didn't become a Christian by working really hard – by promising to be perfect – by doing all kinds of good things – by doing all kinds of work for the Lord. You became a Christian by trusting in the work that Jesus did for you. The Bible says that salvation is not of works, it is by the grace of God – through the sacrifice of Christ. You just came to Him and said *"Lord, I believe in you – I give myself to You – let me trust You and live for You"*. The Christian life is a walk of faith. If God says He will take care of it – He will. Has God ever broken His promise? No! Never! So relax and allow Him to be in charge.

Folks – this for me is the hardest lesson learnt. That is because i want to be in charge, I want to do things my way, I have spent a lot of time running around trying to win the battle – but notice what God says to Jehoshaphat – He says:

“You need not fight in this battle, station yourselves, stand and see the salvation of the Lord on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem, do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out to face them, for the LORD is with you”. 2 Chron. 20:17 NASB

What does it mean to stand firm when you’ve got a problem – when you are facing a battle – when you are in a crisis of lie? It’s a mental attitude of quiet confidence that says: *“I’m going to trust GOD”*. If He has promised you that He will take care of it – He will.

7. WHEN YOU ALLOW GOD WIN THE BATTLE / THERE IS ALWAYS A BOUNTIFUL BLESSING.

Here is the Great outcome of the Battle, The Bible says:

“When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take the spoil, they founded much among them, including goods, garments and valuable things which they took for themselves, more than they could carry and they were three days taking the spoils because they were too much”. 2 Chron 20:25 NASB

When God wins the battle there is always a bountiful blessing,

8. THANK GOD IN ADVANCE – vs 26

The eight principles in conquering life’s battles is to thank God in advance for giving you the victory.

The story of Jehoshaphat is fascinating because the way in which the battle was won. After he consulted the people, he appointed men to sing to the Lord – to praise God for His loving kindness.

Now get the picture of what is going on here, there are these two mountains and a valley in between. The battle is going to take place in the valley. On one mountain are the three enemy armies just waiting to devastate the Jews. On the other mountain are the Jews led by Jehoshaphat. He tells his people, *“Here’s God’s battle plan. All of those who can sing in the choir – I want you out front, I want them to lead the battle line”*.

So they go marching to battle with the choir in the front of the army – singing praises to God.

Who would fight a battle like that? Wouldn’t you put your best soldiers out front? Wouldn’t you let your strongest men lead the way? That was not God’s plan, He wanted the choir out front.

Did God’s plan work? Yes it did, The Bible tells us that the three enemies got confused and ended up killing each other! They defeated themselves. All God’s people had to do was to divide up the plunder.

Why did God do it this way? As a visual object lesson to teach us the praise Him in faith even before the victory – even before the battle was won – even before the battle was fought – we need to praise God. When God gives us a promise we need t praise Him – because a promise from God is a sure thing!