

WINNING THE REAL WAR



Imagine for a minute that the town where we live has become a war zone.

The big bombs have done their work and now two armies are battling for control of what's left. Those of us who have survived are staying in our houses and apartments. Food and water are in short supply. We're trying to get up enough nerve to venture out and see if some abandoned house might at least have a little rice or flour or a can of beans.

But the chatter of automatic weapons and the rumble of exploding shells frightens us....

"Maybe we better wait and stretch out what little food we have left."

Suddenly, in the middle of all this chaos, we hear singing. We pull back the drapes and look out on the street. And to our amazement we can see an old truck piled high with sacks of potatoes and rice and fresh fruit and corn. Behind it is another truck with jugs of water.

Men and women, singing at the top of their lungs as if there were no war at all, are carrying food and water from the trucks to each house ... and singing all the time.

"They'll be dead by the time they get to the end of the block," someone says.

"But how come they got this far?"

"Where did they get the food?"

"And how can they be singing?"

There's a knock on our door.

There stands a man loaded down with food. Behind him is a woman with a jug of water.

"Here, take this," they say, and head back to the trucks singing their hearts out.

Suddenly a burst of automatic fire ... the woman is hit.

From out of a house across the street two women run to take her place. By the time the food trucks reach the end of the block, the army of helpers has doubled in size ... still singing.

Two armies are battling for control ... both of them are pawns of Satan the Prince of this world.

A third army comes up the street without a gun

**... this is the army that will conquer
because it is overcoming evil with good, even at the price of death.**



The One Who Brings Peace
courtesy of Minid Oaten
mindioaten.com

Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they were defeated and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world --- he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. Rejoice then, o heaven and you that dwell therein! But woe to you, o earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!"

Revelation 12:7-12

We could sit down and discuss for the rest of our lives why God, if he is all powerful, should permit any opposition from men or demons. Why does he allow this war to go on? But that wouldn't change the fact that there is a struggle in the realm of spirit, of which the political, military, economic wars being waged at this hour, are only a dim reflection.

Evil is not just the absence of good ... like cold is the absence of heat.

Evil is not just something inside our heads.

Evil exists outside of us as well as within us.

- Evil is intelligent.
- Evil is personal.
- Evil is organized.
- Evil is a kingdom.

If we survive all the wars that will ravage the earth in the coming years but allow our hearts to be conquered by evil, we've lost the real war. The real war is between good and evil ... between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan ... and every one of us has to choose which side we're going to be on.

"I came to cast fire upon the earth; and would that it were already kindled! I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how I am constrained until it is accomplished! Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division; for henceforth in one house there will be five divided, three against two and two against three; they will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against her mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."

Luke 12:49-53

These are the words of a man who never carried a sword, never raised his fist, never gathered an army, yet he came to divide the earth ... and he did.

And each of us has to decide whether we're going to surrender our lives to the kingdom of evil or surrender our lives to Jesus, and by his power conquer evil.

- We don't conquer evil by hiding in the house with the drapes drawn.
- Nor do we conquer evil by picking up a gun and going out there shooting.

- We conquer evil by joining the army of the Lamb.



Sacrificial Lamb
by Chuck Wilkinson courtesy of Betty Wilkinson
chuckwilkinsonart.com

Observe how the Lamb, Jesus, overcame evil: by walking right into it!

"Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written of the Son of man by the prophets will be accomplished. For he will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon; they will scourge him and kill him, and on the third day he will rise."

Luke 18:31-33

He went up to Jerusalem and laid down his life and conquered Satan. And so we overcome the kingdom of evil not by running away from it, but by walking straight toward it.

And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death."

Revelation 12:10-11

They conquered him....

1. By the blood of the Lamb.
2. By the word of their testimony.
3. By loving not their lives even unto death.

Thank God there are no shells exploding out there.

But to pretend there is no war going on is to be willfully blind.

The dragon and his angels have been thrown down to the earth ... and things are out of control and there is not a man or a nation that is able to bring things under control again.

Yet the simplest child of God can go out there like David before Goliath and conquer.

We are not helpless victims on a sinking ship.

We are sons and daughters of the most high God. And we are given everything we need to conquer the lying spirit which has captured this earth. We conquer him,

- by the blood of the Lamb,
- by the word of our testimony,
- by defying the fear of death.

We conquer Satan by,

1. The blood of the Lamb, which brings peace into our own hearts.



The Blood courtesy of Anthony Falbo
falboart.com

In order to win the battle on the outside we first have to win the battle on the inside. You win this inner war by getting your sin covered.

*Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven; whose sin is covered.
Psalm 32:1*

... "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

Satan only has scope within us when he has sin-ground to stand on.

Call for the blood ... the ground drops away and Satan sinks.

- By the blood of the Lamb we put away the old nature.
- By the blood of the Lamb we call for the Spirit and put on the new nature.
- By the blood of the Lamb we end the war inside us by driving sin, guilt, fear of death and Satan himself out.

In mercy the Lord has instituted the meal we call Communion so that we can come together and renew our vision of his atoning death, confess our sins, repent of them and join ourselves, with thanksgiving and praise, to his broken body and his shed blood.

- Now we have peace.
- Now we can handle the battle on the outside.

We conquer Satan by,

2. The word of our testimony



Singing Rainbows
courtesy of Eric Holmlund ericholmlund.com

.... they sang as they went down the street feeding the hungry.

Thou art my hiding place, thou shalt preserve me from trouble;

Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance.

Psalm 32:7

When the war zone around us begins to hear those songs of deliverance ... begins to hear a word of testimony, Satan will be driven back in defeat.

And what is the word of our testimony?

Our testimony is that Jesus of Nazareth is the Savior of this world.

- He alone is its healer.
- He alone is its hope.
- He alone is its peace with a holy God.
- He alone is the escape from the false God of this world.

Jesus is Lord!

Jesus is King of Kings and Lord of Lords now ... and we need to confess this to him, to each other and to the world.

We don't conquer Satan by just being respectable and proper.

We conquer Satan by a strong, clear, bold Spirit-anointed word.

Lord God! Open our mouths and give us tongues to speak your burning truth until it sets fire to the earth!

We overcome Satan by,

3. Loving not our lives even unto death.

Who of us can deny that far too long we have loved our lives to death?

- We loved our lives so much,
- we played it so safe,
- we pampered ourselves so much worrying about dyingwe were dead.

Help us now, Lord God, to throw away the fear of death and all the fears that hang with it.

God help us to go out into the streets of the city of this world with the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony...



Step Out courtesy of Mindi Oaten mindioaten.com

... and feed the hungry, and free the captives, and conquer Satan.

If in the process we lose our lives ... praise God ... what better way to die?

Whether we like it or not,

- there is a war going on.

Whether we like it or not,

- we're in it ... on one side, or the other.

God help us to see clearly who the real enemy is and to conquer him,

by the blood of the Lamb,

by the word of our testimony,

by loving not our lives even unto death.

Prayer: *Lord Jesus we bow before you, seeking your strength to overcome evil with good. In these times and the coming times, dear Jesus, keep us singing of your beauty, your perfection, your peace, your hope, your healing, and of your love. May we joyfully, without fear, join the army that truly conquers. We are not helpless victims. We are your beloved sons and daughters, equipped to conquer. Holy Lord, help us to see who the real enemy is, and may by your power we conquer that real enemy. Lord be merciful to us, cover us, drive this sinful nature out of us so we may go forward with a new nature, so we can face the true battle outside. May your truth burn so strongly on our lips that satan is rendered defenseless and that fire is set to this earth. And yes Lord, help us to throw away the fear of death and all other fears, so we may courageously win the real war.*



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WHO WAS SLAIN
HAS BEGUN HIS REIGN