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Praise the Lord, and a happy Fourth of July to all of you. I realize I am a few days late getting this month's newsletter out, but I am racing against a book deadline (July 15). I decided I would submit a chapter of this new book as this month's newsletter. I hope you enjoy it.

God bless you!

Fear Destroys Trust

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. I John 4:18

We need to begin to move more in the spiritual authority that Jesus Christ has given us. In order to move in that kind of authority, we must be delivered from fear. To be delivered from fear, we must be grounded in love. We grow in authority, as we lay down our lives daily. As we daily take up our cross. As we give our lives for the sheep. His sheep.

Young David marched out on the battlefield and dared to stand before the fearsome Goliath, but before he did that he had prepared. Let's go to I Samuel 17. Saul had just got through telling David that he could not go and fight that giant—after all, he was but a youth. David begins his response in verse 34: And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear..." David had killed both a lion and a bear. He had done that while alone in the pastures, out of love for the sheep. No one else was around. He could have turned his head the other way. David had no way of knowing he would one day square off against Goliath and needed this preparation. No. David did it because of his love for the sheep. He could not bear the thought of even one little lamb being ripped apart!

The tiniest little mother will do the same thing. She will fight for her young. One of Julie's journal entries expressed this very clearly. Mothers everywhere share in these sentiments—No matter how big and ugly the aggressor is—come after my kid and you'll be sorry. Mothers will tear into the enemy because of love. They might be fearful in other areas of their lives, but perfect love casteth out fear...

We cannot expect to march out and battle the enemy of our souls without preparation. We prepare by growing close to God. The closer we get to God—the more we know and love Him—the more His love can flow through us and to others. And the more love we have, the more power.

Let's go on with this passage, taking up at verse 38. *"And Saul armed David with his armour, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail. And David girded his sword*

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upon his armour, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him."

Now when we begin to step out in trust and to fight the enemy, we must use the weapons we are familiar with. The ones we have tried and tested. This is what David is saying here to the king. He had not proved, or "tried and tested," the king's armour. This job was far too important to take a chance on untried weapons.

In Luke chapter 4 we have the account of Jesus in the wilderness. Three times the enemy came to him, and three times Jesus used His weapon: the Word of God. Each time, Jesus fired a dart of scripture at the temptation. Get your Bible down and read the account for yourself. Hebrews 4:12 tells us that the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword. But you see, this is why staying in the Bible is so vital. In order to use a weapon, we have to know that weapon. A soldier does not go onto the battlefield without having first had target practice.

Simply put, the more love we have, the more authority God can entrust us with. I hear of people all the time going out to "claim their city." They have read in a book somewhere that this is the way to go. I've known people who couldn't stand the city where they lived and yet they were going out to battle its territorial spirits. If we don't love our city (or our family, or our home, or whatever it is God has placed in our care) we had better not go out and engage in this kind of battle. Spiritual warfare must be waged in the spirit of love. Our motives are extremely important. It doesn't matter if we do the greatest deeds and works if they come from an impure heart. Impure motives can give the devil a foot in the door.

A good exercise would be to get your Bible and go through all four gospels. In these accounts, we get to see Jesus in action. We see how He did things, how He worked, so to speak. He went about doing good. He healed and He taught and He bestowed blessings on others. He received all the little children. He cast out demons. When you analyze these things, I believe you'll see that Jesus Christ did everything in the spirit of Love. One of my most fervent prayers has been to be able to look into His eyes. Just His gaze could melt the hardest sinner. Just one look could send the demons flying. Those eyes filled with love of God—which is God! Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever. When we have the Spirit of God living within us, anything is possible for us.

Spiritual Warfare

When we set out to engage in battle with the enemy of our souls, we must abandon the old ways of doing things. We have to give up the old patterns of thinking. We have to relinquish the old mindset of defeat. Our victory ultimately lies in obeying and speaking out the Word of God. Jesus did it in the face of the enemy in Luke 4. David did it when he faced the giant. Goliath could not read David's mind. The devil cannot read ours. The devil is not a mind reader. He is not omniscient—God is! The devil knows us, because he has been stalking us for years. He pretty well knows how we'll respond to something. He knows which buttons to push to get an ungodly reaction out of us. The devil knows human nature. So in that respect, he can pretty well assume what we might be thinking.

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When we want the devil to know what you're thinking, speak it out. When we want him to know that we are no longer accepting the garbage he's trying to dump in our minds—speak it out. We don't have to argue with him, or carry on a conversation. A simple declaration is all we need. Then let's be sure we follow it up by responding in a godly way.

The devil speaks a thought into our minds. He expects a certain reaction. The more we grow in grace and strength and courage, however, the less we will react in the old predicted ways. One day he dropped a thought of depression into my mind. My first temptation was to receive the thought as my own. But then I recognized its source. "I refuse that thought," I said out loud. And then I also spoke aloud thanks and praise to my God who has all power in heaven and on earth. Then, instead of sitting down to mull over how depressed I felt (as I had done in the past), I set about accomplishing a task I had been putting off. Speak out the Word, dear one! Let it ring out loud and clear! The whole point here is the power of the spoken word! It will conquer fear every time if we let it

We Must Prepare

Now what did David do? He did not march out against Goliath merely thinking about how strong God was. No, he let the enemy—and everyone else within hearing range—know! Go to verse 44. *"And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field."* The enemy knows how to threaten us, doesn't he? He knows how to rant and rave and try to terrify us into paralysis. But let's see how David responded: verse 45, *"Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands."*

David had the word of the Lord. All the long and lonely days as a shepherd gave David plenty of time to commune with the Great Shepherd and to get to know Him. He had learned his Shepherd's voice. When God spoke, David knew it. When God speaks to us, we'd better be able to recognize His voice. There are so many voices in the world today clamoring for our attention. God's voice can be small and still, we must listen attentively. We read in John 10, *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one."*

Do we believe His Word, my friend? If we really, deeply believe it—we shall have trust in abundance. We began this chapter with I John 4:18. Let's conclude it with the next verse, verse 19. *"We love Him because he first loved us."* We can rest and trust in His love. Before we even knew there was a God—He loved us, and made provision for us.

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It brings God sheer pleasure and delight when we trust in Him. Julie recalls once getting into an elevator in a nursing home where she had gone to minister. One of the elderly ladies perched at the elevator hesitantly. She was afraid to get on. She teetered there at the door for several minutes and the people waiting inside were growing impatient.

Finally, Julie stepped forward and took her by the hand. "It's all right," Julie assured her. "You needn't be afraid." And so the older woman, clinging to Julie's hand, stepped into the car and up they rode together. She knew Julie and so she trusted her. Julie was thrilled that the older woman trusted her, and she would go to the ends of the earth not to betray that trust. That's how God is. He is thrilled when we trust Him.... and will go to the ends of Heaven not to betray that trust.

We can trust God! He will do us good all the days of our lives. We can rely on Him totally.
"Trust in the Lord with all your heart...!"

God bless you,
Your friend,
Lynda Allison Doty

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