

*Our
Neglected
Weapon*

by Dale Rumble



Preface

Can you imagine a warrior going out to battle with his helmet on, carrying his shield on one arm but having only a table knife in his other hand? He would certainly represent little threat to his enemy!

Unfortunately, this is a picture of many Christians in America today. They lack the weapon that God has specifically provided to destroy the works of the devil, Jesus commands us,

. . . take . . . the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. (Ephesians 6:17)

It appears that this deficiency is the long term result of gospel; messages that focus on what we can get from God, rather than obeying His call to discipleship and warfare.

The gospel of the kingdom of God is a call to warfare! The Bible calls us the army of God—and an army is made up of warriors!

There are two primary goals when training a warrior for battle. First, he must come to have *confidence* in his weapon. Second, he must develop *skill* in using it. Let us consider how these two objective are addressed in being trained to wield the sword of the Spirit.

Confidence in Our Sword

Certain truths are essential foundations for other truths. An example of such foundational truth is the origin, authenticity and authority of God's word. This is the basis of having confidence in *all* that the word declares to be true. The following scripture truths provide the basis for why one can have absolute confidence in the word of God. This certainty must be woven into the mind and heart of all who wield the sword of the Spirit.

- God's word has existed *from eternity* and has its *origin in God*. Jesus is called, "The Word of God" (John 1:1-3).
- All things were *created* by the word of His mouth (Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 11:3; 2 Peter 3:5).
- All created things are *held together* by the word of God (Hebrews 1:3).
- The word of God is not open to debate; it is *settled* in heaven for God has taken His stand upon it (Psalms 119:89).
- God *honors* His word as He does His own name (Psalms 38:2).
- God's word is *eternal* and will not pass away (Matthew 24:35; 1 Peter 1:25).
- God's word *always accomplishes* that which He sends it to do (Isaiah 55:11).
- The living word of God is an imperishable seed through which we are born again into His family (1 Peter 1:23).
- The word of God is spiritual food for His children (Matthew 4:4).

Training with the Sword

As a young Christian, the Lord impressed me to memorize scripture. By obeying Him, I found it possible over many years to do secular work while also carrying a primary responsibility for ministering the word in church. This is a good discipline of training for all Christians. One's faith in the word will grow within us the more we hear, study and meditate upon it (Romans 10:17).

Thy word were found and I ate them, and Thy words became for me a joy and delight of my heart . . . (Jeremiah 15:16)

There are *two* key aspects of training that involve discipline on our part. One is to *learn* the word of God, and the other is to *obey* it. Memorizing scripture is a good place to start. It is like committing a spiritual road map to memory; it shows us how to walk before God.

Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. (Psalms 119:105)

Thy word I have treasured (i.e. hid) in my heart that I may not sin against Thee. (Psalms 119:11)

How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Thy word. (Psalms 119:8)

The word of God is not a magic formula where we expect results by simply believing and proclaiming certain scripture as truth. There are rules of conduct, three in particular, that we must learn to observe in order to wield the sword effectively.

First of all, we must never *dishonor* the word by conduct that is contrary to the word (Titus 2:5). We are to live what we preach!

All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Second, we must not *adulterate* God's word with our personal interpretations and ideas (2 Corinthians 4:2).

Finally, we must not mix religious tradition with God's word so as to *invalidate* what He has declared to be truth (Matthew 15:6).

It is said that practice makes perfect; as one learns the word of God and practices doing it he will become skilled in wielding the sword of the Spirit.

But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. (James 1:22)

The blood of Christ cleanses us from sins we have committed; obeying the word of God will keep us clean from sinning (John 15:3-5; Ephesians 5:25-27). Remember how the Lord has prayed for us:

Sanctify them (His disciples) in the truth; Thy word is truth. (John 17:17)

Remember that, at the end, we will all be judged by the word of the Lord (John 12:47-48).

Wielding the Sword in Battle

The following verse is an excellent expression of success in wielding the sword of the Spirit:

*So the word of the Lord was **growing mightily and prevailing**. (Acts 19:20)*

The following are a number of reasons why the church in America today does not have such success despite the great communication technology at its disposal.

- A superficial, subjective gospel is often preached which is deficient in calling converts to true repentance and to come under the Lordship of Christ.
- Some ministers who preach godliness do not always live it. God's kingdom cannot be built by those whose hearts are disobedient toward the Lord; and Satan knows who they are. Those who love the Lord will keep His word (John 14:23; 1 John 2:5).
- Some ministers have been set apart by religious bodies to proclaim their particular emphasis, and they may not be man approved by God. Such ministry serves to divide the body of Christ. God must approve us as His laborers.

*Be diligent to present yourselves **approved** by God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling **accurately** the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15)*

- Some ministries have replaced spiritual truths with psychological goals of building self-love, self-esteem and self-potential in their audience. They seek to move people in the realm of their souls by feeding their intellect and stirring emotions. They seek to exalt one's self-life rather than proclaiming the message of the cross which declares that our carnal self-life was crucified with Christ (Galatians 2:20; Romans 6:6)

For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. (1 Corinthians 1:18)

To counter such errors, we must wield a sword that is sharp! Persuasive arguments, even with correct words, are not enough. The power of the Holy Spirit must endorse our words. Words alone only affect the mind; no permanent good can come unless hearts are touched.

For the kingdom of God does not consist in words, but in power. (1 Corinthians 4:20)

And my message and my preaching was not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power, that your faith should not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God. (1 Corinthians 2:4-5)

The Spirit of truth reveals the word of truth to all whose hearts are open to receive it (John 16:13-16; 1 John 2:27). We are to be filled with the Holy Spirit so that His unction is upon the words we preach (2 Corinthians 3:6). Our gospel should always exalt the Lord Jesus for it is called the gospel of the glory of Christ (2 Corinthians 4:3-4). The word made alive by the Holy Spirit is the law by which we live and move and have our being in Christ (John 6:63).

For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)

The word of God not only destroys the works of Satan by redeeming lost men and women, but is also builds up, strengthens and sanctifies believers in Christ. As character and wisdom grow in those who obey the word, there will come an unction of the Holy Spirit upon them to impart truth through body ministry to others (Proverbs 15:1-2; 16:21-24; Romans 15:14; Ephesians 4:15, 25, 29; Colossians 4:6; James 3:17-18).

*Let the word of Christ **richly dwell within you**, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your heart to the Lord. (Colossians 3:16)*

And we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ. (Colossians 1:28)

*What is the outcome then, brethren? When you assemble, **each one has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation**, let all things be done for **edification**. (1 Corinthians 14:26)*

*Let us consider how to **stimulate one another** to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but **encouraging** one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near. (Hebrews 10:24-25)*

But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called “today,” lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. (Hebrews 3:13)

It can be said of those who have faiths and steadfastly do the word of God, that His word abides in them. This is the mark of a strong warrior for the Lord!

. . . I have written to you, young men because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you and you have overcome the evil one. (1 John 2:14)

If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask what you wish, and it shall be done for you. (John 15:7)

Finally, whoever is of God will hear the word of God (John 8:47). Therefore, our responsibility is to always preach the pure word and not prejudge who will respond to it.

Conclusion

This tract is not only a manual of instruction, it has also been written as a tool. Every scripture, whether quoted or referenced, has been selected because it expresses an important truth.

I challenge readers, especially the youth and new converts, to commit these verses to memory. They have been arranged below in the order of books from which they were selected:

- Psalm 119:8, 11, 89, 105: 138:2
- Proverbs 15:1-2; 16:21-24
- Isaiah 55:11
- Jeremiah 15:16
- Matthew 4:4; 15:6; 24:35
- John 1:1-3; 6:63; 8:47; 12:47-48; 14:23; 16:13-16; 17:17
- Acts 19:20
- Romans 6:6; 10:17; 15:14
- 1 Corinthians 1:18; 2:4-5; 4:20; 14:26
- 2 Corinthians 3:6; 4:2-4
- Galatians 2:20

- Ephesians 4:15, 25, 29; 5:25-27; 6:17
- Colossians 1:16, 28; 3:16; 4:6
- 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:16-17
- Titus 2:5
- Hebrews 1:3; 3:13; 4:12; 10:24-25; 11:3
- James 1:22; 3:17-18
- 1 Peter 1:23, 25
- 2 Peter 3:5
- 1 John 2:5, 14, 27



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