



LOVE AS A WEAPON



As we walk through our daily lives we are faced with many formidable situations. Anger, strife, bitterness, anguish and even despair surround us. We feel it as we walk through the streets and sometimes as we sit in our own living rooms. It comes in through the television, conversations with friends and difficult encounters with those we love.

When people lash out at us from their pain, which may or may not have anything to do with us, the natural, human reaction is to strike back. At this moment, when our own pride, image, or feelings come under attack we have a choice. We can retaliate like the world – or we can look up for help.

A wise saint taught me years ago that the key was to use God's principles and ask for Jesus' help.

When people were acting ugly, or the issues seemed too difficult, she said she would ask Jesus to love the person through her because at that moment she couldn't even really like them or their behavior. She knew that in and of herself the flesh would rise up and she would be tempted to strike back. But she had learned over the years to hold her comments and not react as she sought supernatural assistance. With her eyes on Jesus and His life as a model she was able to be love through extremely challenging encounters.

By spending time in the Word of God, prayer, and trusting to implement Biblical ways this dear spiritual leader developed faith and an ability to help teach a different perspective. She knew the war was for the souls for God's Kingdom and the battle could best be won through love. As she submitted to God's ways and asked for help to truly understand the root of the need driving the negative behavior The Lord was faithful to give her prayer strategy and uncommon success drawing people to Him.

Healing of deep wounds was often possible over time through the love she showered on each of us. She had the ability to make each person feel special as she listened, prayed, laughed and found common ground with each one. Through her relationship with Jesus she was able to see the people the way He did – with love and compassion. If He was willing to meet the people and offer forgiveness and mercy for truly repentant hearts then so would she.

By the love each felt from her others could hear the truth of God's Word and know it was safe to trust to change their behavior, words, and perspective. God is love. ¹ God loved them. And those who learned to temper their choices and reactions to reflect the love they had so freely received were victorious.

Proverbs 15:1 ² tells us that our reaction to situations and the unkind things people do or say can determine whether it escalates or dissipates. A gentle, kind, loving answer softens the atmosphere. But retaliating with a string of angry outbursts only leads to more anger.

Think on those times when we have been stressed and upset because of a great disappointment. It may have even been a true injustice that has caused us to feel rejected or undervalued, taken advantage of or disrespected. Often the anger that rises up within us is not only about the issue at hand but rather old wounds that have not fully healed that get thrown in to the mix of our emotions.

Marriage and parenting are two areas that these challenges of reacting versus intentionally responding in love, patience, kindness and self-restraint are tested daily.

If we could just come up higher and see from Jesus' perspective we could implement His battle plan to win the war for the hearts, minds and souls of those we care about and work with. He would help us see beyond the words spewing out of their mouths in to the great need for more of Him for He is love. More of Him and His love is the answer for both the other person and us. ³

There are times my husband turns the tide for me by just looking at me with love in his eyes and a smile on his face as he chooses not to react to my moment of frustration. By his demeanor and a little humor with a hug he helps me hear my words and change my approach. His gentle words sooth and calm me so that I feel true remorse at bringing strife into our relationship. At that moment I can truly see that "being right" about "the issue" I was so upset about is minor compared to us working together toward a solution in unity and love. Even if we do not agree with each other's position we come closer to hear each other's point of view when the atmosphere is full of love. It becomes safe to air our difference of opinion.

The flip side to this scenario are the countless times we have chosen to exchange barbs and become entrenched in our own stance while barely listening to each other. The damage done by unkind words can take a long time to repair. And being disobedient to the ways of God allows a door to be opened to grant access to evil to enter in thereby exacerbating the already strained relationship.

The difference is where we focus our attention and what we place our trust in – eyes on Jesus and operating from His point of view – or eyes on self while blaming the other.

If the goal is to live our lives with the most possible joy, peace, and integrity then Jesus offers us a time-tested path. It is not easy and requires very intentional choices. We can win the war by choosing to walk in unity and love within our sphere of influence. We can model a life of consciously choosing to serve Jesus while using His tools.

The love, blood and name of Jesus are powerful weapons for the tearing down of strongholds. ⁴ Battles fought through prayer, praise and love can change hearts, lives and relationships both now and for eternity.

Love through Jesus brings the victory for our hearts. ⁵

And His love seen in our lives can offer a new way to live to others.

2016_0324_WEB_5.2_LOVE_Weapon

From the heart with all praise to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

Donna Turpin
In Christ Alone

¹ *Holy Bible KJV*, BibleGateway.com, [1 John 4, v. 8](#), King James Version (KJV), www.BibleGateway.com, Scripture taken from the **King James Version (KJV)** by [Public Domain](#). <http://bit.ly/1Un2RI1>

8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

² *Ibid*, [Proverbs 15, v. 1](#), <http://bit.ly/1ZvScU5>

1 A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

³ *Ibid*, [John 3, v. 30](#), <http://bit.ly/22HVG80>

30 He must increase, but I must decrease.

⁴ *Ibid*, [2 Corinthians 10, v. 3-5](#). <http://bit.ly/1UOd9JI>

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:

4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

⁵ *Ibid*, [1 Corinthians 13, v. 1-13](#). <http://bit.ly/220Ne3q> Note: charity in KJV is translated love in many other versions.

1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

8 Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.