

## Christy Wimber: How Praise Defeats the Enemy

by Christy Wimber

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What happens when you find yourself in a situation of battle that feels overwhelming? There seems to be many different ways we deal with those things that we'd rather just have pass us by. Battles are never fun, and of course they're never something we would just pick. However, they're also unavoidable. We are in a battle, and in battle there are times when there is much warfare going on all around us.

I never quite understand when people are surprised that just because they're a Christian it doesn't mean everything is easy – it definitely doesn't mean we no longer have times of battle. We serve a God of seasons as the Book of Ecclesiastes tells us, and times of war are unavoidable. Even in the word warfare we find the word war. It's unavoidable. So the real question is, "How do we battle?" When we're in war, what are the ways to fight? Obviously, we've been given armor for a reason, but if you look through Scripture there are also other ways to battle. It's in Scripture where we find praise that brought great victory to those under warfare.

### Take Time to Be Prepared and Equipped

I believe the Lord gives us ways to battle and battle efficiently. But no matter the battle, we must remember the battle is never ours, it's always the Lord's. I also think it's good to know and be prepared so that when we face different battles, we know how to war.

Too many people are "crisis Christians," and only when something goes wrong is when that they call out to God. But I think it's wise, when you're not feeling a battle, that you use that time to get yourself equipped. There are times when the Lord says to me specifically that there are things He wants to do in me and prepare me for. It's then I know He is equipping me for what's coming. If I don't take these times to get what I need, then I don't have a clear perspective in whatever I end up facing.

One of the great leaders in the Old Testament was Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat was the man who stepped into kingship over Judah after David and Asa passed on. We find in 2 Chronicles 17:3-6 that it speaks very clear about who this man was. He was full of wisdom and understood the importance of going to the Lord, especially in times of battle.

In 2 Chronicles we find that the larger armies want to attack Jehoshaphat. Now remember, these armies hated the prior leaders and now they want to attack

Jehoshaphat when he comes in since he's now the new leader. They want to show him right away what he's not, and they want to make it clear how powerful they are.

Many times when you walk into something, the enemy will try and catch us off guard just to point out that we're not good enough, or that we're not strong enough or wise enough to do whatever it is that's been placed before us. And there are times you will walk into something and you need to clean up or fix some things that you didn't even do, that weren't even your fault. However, there are things that need to be worked on, there are some things in the foundation that need to be fixed. That's the wisdom of Jehoshaphat. He fixes the foundation and tears down those places where the enemy had a foothold. He was wise to get the house in order under the leadership of Christ. Because then the attack came.

### Keeping Our Eyes on God When Attack Comes is Vital to Our Success

Haven't we all had times where this has happened to us? We find ourselves in a situation where we get stuck in something we didn't ask for. Like, It wasn't me that put us in this situation, or my disobedience; but no matter the case, that's what's taken place, and it's here I know I have a choice. Will I get myself ready for what God wants to advance me and others in, or complain that this isn't what I wanted?

For me personally, I used to be so mad that God wanted me to do things that others weren't called into, and why was it God wanted me to do or not do things that others could? It used to frustrate me. However, in the last several years, I have since repented of this attitude. What God has called me into isn't any greater or harder than anyone else, and it's a privilege.

Every now and then I'll say, "Oh Lord, really?" but then that's the end of it. If I live there, I won't advance.

Now remember, these armies coming after Jehoshaphat are very strong and intimidating armies and could easily take Jehoshaphat and Judah out – that is, without God. This would be very similar to when we receive news that seems overwhelming and like there is no way out – there is no way in the natural it looks like you're going to come out on the other side. But in 2 Chronicles, chapter 20, we find how Jehoshaphat handled the battle that came his way.

First, he went before the Lord, and in going before the Lord, he did so before the people. Second, he is also going to remind God of His promise of inheritance to them. Now picture this – he's just been told how great the attack is – but when he gets before the people, he addresses the greatness of God and says to the Lord, "Our eyes are on you." How important this is! Keeping our eyes on God when attack comes is vital to our success.

He then calls an all out fast! This isn't just about Jehoshaphat being saved but rather all the people experiencing freedom. Many times we want our freedom, but we don't want to sacrifice. But the truth is that there's always a cost involved with freedom. And fasting shows a restraint from something we enjoy because we believe in it enough.

Think of the sacrifices people have made so we can have the freedom we have today. The soldiers that fight the battles to give and keep our freedom; the firefighters that protect us from fires burning down our homes; the policemen that protect us from people that don't keep justice and the law, and so on. There are many that choose to sacrifice so we are kept safe in our freedom. However, there are times when we ourselves have to make sacrifices and step up to the plate.

### The Power in Worshiping and Praising God

What so strikes me in this story is how God showed His power and has His Spirit fall upon Jahaziel. Now, this guy is a singer – he's descent from Asaph – and Asaph was like the head worship guy for King David. In fact, it says in Scripture, "David left Asaph and his associates before the ark of the covenant of the LORD to minister there regularly" (1 Chronicles 16:37). So Asaph's descendant here isn't a stranger and he knows the power of worship. It's in his blood!

So God's Spirit falls upon him and he gives the word of the Lord, and Jehoshaphat is able to hear it. He was able to hear from this singer the reminders God wanted to make clear. And then they all fall down to worship. How often do we do that? We get bad news, and our first response is to fall before the Lord in worship? Now they're going to do another amazing thing when they head into battle – they do so in praise! They go before the Lord to praise, and then head into battle with their eyes on God and their hearts full of worship. And God defeats all their enemies. Remember, these are the enemies that were more powerful?

I think we need to remember, it's never the size of the battle, and it's never how great the enemy is, but if we keep our focus on God and how powerful God is – and how faithful He's been time and time again – that this is where we find our peace and rest.

When I Find Myself Talking About How Hard Things Are, I Found I've Just Taken on Something I'm Not Meant to

When Jehoshaphat was done with the battle, he wasn't exhausted and he wasn't saying all these things like, "WOW, that was so hard!" In fact, it was just the opposite. He was at rest. Isn't that amazing? He is at great rest after a full on attack!

This is such a powerful message of the power of praise!

When I find myself talking about battle and how hard things are, this is a sign to me I have just taken something on I'm not meant to. In fact, I honestly feel it's just a sign of immaturity on my part.

The battles we face are the Lord's. Our job is to worship and trust Him. Our victories lie within our ability to trust and praise. So if you find yourself in a battle, don't pray out of the fear from what you see, pray from faith for who God is and what He has already done! Go before the Lord in worship remembering all He has done and how faithful He's been to you already. I've realized that whenever I do this, it takes me to a place of relying upon Him to battle whatever comes my way, and what I get is the peace and rest I so desperately need!

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About Christy Wimber: Christy has been a part of the Vineyard Movement since it started. She worked at Vineyard Ministries International and Vineyard Music as the Director for Worship Conferences and Training until 2001. Christy has released several materials containing John Wimber's teachings and writings during his thirty-year ministry. She has spent the last several years setting up a "Wimber" library at Regent University in Virginia, as well as one at Bethel Church in Redding, California, to be offered in the future.

For 21 years Christy has traveled around the world teaching on the Kingdom of God at various conferences and retreats. In 2006 Christy and her husband, Sean, began the Yorba Linda Vineyard church in which Christy is the Senior Pastor. She and Sean have been married for 20 years, and have two children: Camie Rose and John Richard II. They reside in Yorba Linda, California.

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