

Bonus Fighting Words

BY LYSA TERKEURST

God's purpose is good; therefore, we can trust His process is good. Sometimes we know this with our heads, but when our hearts hurt and life gets really hard, we need reminders of God's goodness. I've found that declaring the Word of God increases my trust in God. As I mentioned in Chapter 10 of *It's Not Supposed to Be This Way*, my friend Ellie Holcomb calls this using "fighting words." Because when we express God's Truth, we depress the enemy's lies.

For those of you, like me, who could use an extra bit of help, here are some more scriptural declarations we can speak over the parts of our lives that are most vulnerable to attacks from the enemy:

AFFECTION—MY HEART, WHAT I LOVE

- The Lord has promised me that when I seek Him with all my heart, I will find Him. He is not hiding from me or ignoring me. He is waiting to be seen by me. And so I am setting my heart's desire fully on Him today — declaring that He is the One I want above all else. He is good and loving. Nothing and no one other than Him can ever fully satisfy my soul. My eyes are open, my ears are listening, and my heart is humbly expectant as I seek to truly know and experience my good and loving God.

You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. (Jeremiah 29:13)

- No matter how disappointed I may feel, I'm choosing to keep my heart steadfast in praising God for who He is. Because I am so sure of His love for me, it's my greatest joy to proclaim my love for Him!

*I love you, Lord, my strength.
The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer;
my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge,
my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.
I called to the Lord, who is worthy of praise,
and I have been saved from my enemies.
(Psalm 18:1-3)*

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ADORATION—MY MOUTH, WHAT I WORSHIP

- When difficult circumstances shout loudly in my ear — daring me to doubt the goodness of God, tempting me to panic and give up hope — I know exactly what I need to do. I need to get loud in return. Turning up my praise. Boldly declaring the truth of who my God is out loud for the enemy and my own shaky soul to hear. Because He is a God who deserves all glory and honor and praise. He is holy and wholly good. He is mighty and faithful, loving and true. A promise-keeping God through and through. And no matter what my circumstances may say, He is forever worthy of my adoration and praise.

*Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;
worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness.
(Psalm 29:2)*

- No matter how brokenhearted or broken down I may feel today, I know for a fact that I am not forsaken or forgotten by my God. I am His beloved daughter, and He is my gracious and loving Father. He strengthens me when I am weak and calls me ever closer even when I fail. His love for me is unshakable, and His compassion toward me is unending. He is a safe place for my every hurt and the perfect match for my every need. And so, while the enemy may want fear, grumbling and complaints to flow from my lips today, I am choosing instead to declare the praises of my ever present, forever faithful, tenderly compassionate God. The One who is worthy of my trust and adoration.

*As a father has compassion on his children,
so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him;
for he knows how we are formed,
he remembers that we are dust.
(Psalm 103:13–14)*

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ATTENTION—MY MIND, WHAT I FOCUS ON

- I fully admit that, many days, my attention is scattered. My mind is so prone to get fixated on the diversions and hardships right in front of me. But my deepest desire will be the declaration of my heart. I am a woman who will wait and watch for God before drawing conclusions myself.

*In the morning, Lord, you hear my voice;
in the morning I lay my requests before you
and wait expectantly.
(Psalm 5:3)*

- My soul feels stuck in the muck and the mire and the hard of this earth. But God tells me I have been raised with Christ. This world is not my home. Its brokenness and hurt is not my destiny. And this pain and heartbreak will not be the end of my story. Today I'm purposefully choosing to lift my gaze. To set my heart and mind on the things above. I have the promise of eternity in heaven — a place where there will be no more tears and no more pain. And I have the sweet assurance of God's powerful presence and His perfect provision in the here and now. I am fixing my eyes on the hope He says is mine. The hope I have in Him.

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. (Colossians 3:1)

This battle has gone on longer than I expected. My heart feels faint. My eyes weak from the countless tears. I am tired — body, soul and mind. But I am choosing to remember today that all hope is not lost. I am turning my thoughts and lifting my prayers to the Lord, reminding my soul of who He is. My Jesus, who is both mighty and tender. He's as big as the universe and yet so incredibly close. He is the Savior of the world and the intimate lover of my soul. He is my sure and steady hope in the midst of this storm. The One who will hear my every prayer and give me the strength I need to press on through this day.

*I remember my affliction and my wandering,
the bitterness and the gall.
I well remember them,
and my soul is downcast within me.
Yet this I call to mind
and therefore I have hope:
Because of the Lord's great love we are not*

*consumed,
for his compassions never fail.
They are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.
I say to myself, "The Lord is my portion;
therefore I will wait for him."
(Lamentations 3:19–24)*

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ATTRACTION—MY EYES, WHAT I DESIRE

- My troubles don't seem light or momentary when I'm in the middle of them. But today I claim that they are shaping my character in ways I can't fathom. The handling of my disappointments is achieving for me eternal glory and rewards I couldn't possibly see right now. So today I will keep my gaze fixed on hope — even hope I cannot see. Because what is unseen is eternal and what is seen is but temporary. And I want nothing more than to move forward with my eyes fixed on eternity. Anything less will leave me disappointed, and that's not how this girl plans to live.

For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. (2 Corinthians 4:17–18)

- It's so easy for my eyes to be attracted to things of this world to ease the aches of my disappointments. But anything that pulls my focus away from God's goodness isn't good for me. Therefore, I will keep my eyes on the Lord and trust Him to take my hand, steady my heart and lead me to His best plans.

*I will praise the Lord, who counsels me;
even at night my heart instructs me.
I keep my eyes always on the Lord.
With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken.
(Psalm 16:7–8)*

AMBITION—MY CALLING, WHAT I SPEND MY TIME SEEKING

- There are so many moments when I forget what is ahead and dwell on what is already behind me. But this way of thinking is contrary to God's ways for me. When I fixate on my past, I place a stumbling block in the way of my future. I declare over my situation that I will look ahead toward the goal and prize of heaven that God has already promised to those who are His. And I am His. This is my future — this is my great ambition and joy. What has been left behind needs to stay behind, what is ahead needs to stay in the forefront of my thinking. I will press on, carry on and lean on Him who has called me heavenward.

Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 3:13–14)

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AMBITION—MY CALLING, WHAT I SPEND MY TIME SEEKING

- My heart is to see myself as God sees me — the One who dreamed me up, formed me and laid all my days out before me. But sometimes I struggle because I'm weak and I see the deliberate details making up the fabric of me as a mistake. I regret how I've wished away portions of my design, but I won't allow those lies from the enemy to control me anymore. On this day I commit to love how God made me. And I acknowledge that He made me with my mission in mind. Therefore, let my mission determine my ambition. I don't want my insecurities to drive me. I don't want my need for approval to push me to prove something. It's for His purposes that I live, not my own. I will praise Him for knowing how I will impact the world for His glory. I will walk in those ways today without doubting God's goodness to me!

*For you formed my inward parts;
you knitted me together in my mother's womb.
I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully
made.*

*Wonderful are your works;
my soul knows it very well.
My frame was not hidden from you,
when I was being made in secret,*

*intricately woven in the depths of the earth.
Your eyes saw my unformed substance;
in your book were written, every one of them,
the days that were formed for me,
when as yet there was none of them.
(Psalm 139:13–16 ESV)*

- In a world where the options are endless and the wide way of living entices, Jesus calls me to live the narrow way, walking through the narrow door of holy living. In the truest place of my heart, this is the way I desire to live on this day and always. Anyone can take the easy way — uncontrolled, satisfying the flesh. But Jesus beckons me forward, toward a beautiful life in Him where my propensity to sin lessens as my love for Him grows. May I always be found in Him — my Savior, my God.

Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to. (Luke 13:24)

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ACTION—MY CHOICES, HOW I STAND FIRM

- There are those who would love to see me fall — those who have evil desires for me and would celebrate my demise. Today I will be on guard against confusion and chaos and those who seek to undermine what God is doing in me and through me. In the face of these trials, I commit to living strong in the Lord, for His strength helps me stand. I will cling to what is good. And as hard as it is, bless those who persecute me by refusing to retaliate and pray for their good. I claim victory over darkness in the powerful name of Jesus.

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. . . . Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. . . . Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (Romans 12:9-10, 14, 21)

- This season of life has left me feeling weak and so battle-weary. But I am reminding my soul today that I do not have to fight the enemy in my own strength. True and lasting strength comes from the Lord. The One who does battle with me and for me. The One who equips me to stand strong against the enemy. So today I lift my prayers and my praises up to Him as I clothe myself with His mighty armor. His belt of truth. His breastplate of righteousness. His shoes of the gospel of peace. His shield of faith. His helmet of salvation. And the powerful and effective sword that is His living and active Word. Yes, I'm fighting a battle of epic proportions. But I am fighting from victory, not for victory. In Christ, I've already won. And Satan is a defeated foe.

Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. (Ephesians 6:13)

- Prayer is the fastest, most effective way for me to draw near to God. But my sin keeps me distant, living in a double-minded way. Today I will walk in right relationship with God whose closeness comforts me. It is by His grace I am granted nearness to God. His grace astounds me and wells up in me a desire to stay pure before Him.

Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. (James 4:8)