

# FORM Faith Faith

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## DRESSED *for* SUCCESS

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## *Hi Partners and Friends*

Spring is here, and we are excited about a year of the Holy Spirit and Fire in our lives and the body of Christ.

Join with us in making a fresh commitment to “press to possess” (Phil 3:12) all that God has for us and all He has us for – our destiny and assignment.

We are living in the end times and the devil knows it and is doing all he can to slow it down and slow us down as the Church. He can't defeat us because Jesus has brought him to naught but if he can deceive or fool us into quitting or giving up or just stop trying, we become ineffective and unproductive.

When you unplug a battery it does not mean it is powerless but it's power cannot do anything rendering it ineffective and unproductive. As we stay plugged in and abiding in Jesus and His Word we are powerful and are ready to be effective and productive for the Kingdom of God and bring glory to our great God.

Let's learn how to dress for success in the Kingdom of God while we are at war – and win in these last days.

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Proclaiming the Word of Faith unto Soteria - Rom. 10:8-13

# DRESSED *for* SUCCESS

By Jeff Loewen

*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Eph 6:12*

*For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God 2 Cor 10:4*

*This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare 1 Tim 1:18*

*No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier. 2 Tim 2:4*

Let's not fool ourselves, we are in a spiritual war - warfare is presently in progress in our lives as we can see from the above scriptures.

If you are not fighting and reigning in your life through Jesus Christ, then satan is operating illegally and unchecked in your life. Therefore you must know and understand his strategies in order to shut him down and live in victory.

Just as winning teams are aware of their opponent's plays, strategies and modes of operation we must also know and understand *who we are* and *what we have* **In Christ** to win this battle.

It is time to find out what the bible says about spiritual warfare without the fleshly sensationalism that has accompanied some of the teaching on this subject.

Eph 6:10-18 tells us about the armor of God - the boots, pants, jacket, helmet, sword and shield. Paul was using the best armor of his day to

illustrate his point. Armor has advanced a long way since then and Hollywood is even beyond that and yet nobody has even come close to what God has given us. (For more on the armor visit [www.jlmin.org/media](http://www.jlmin.org/media) and look for the Dressed for Success series)

We not only need to know about our equipment but how to use it - the **rules** and our **authority** which will produce confidence and boldness in this spiritual fight.

Getting dressed and wearing the right armor or clothes is not enough to succeed - it is a part of our success but not a guarantee. For example you can have on the right clothes for the interview or to be a mascot but you better have something more than just the look to be successful.

Let's look at our clothes for a moment. The bible also calls the armor of God the armor of righteousness (2 Cor 6:7) and the armor of light (Rom 13:12). We are clothed or cloaked in this armor of God, righteousness and light.

Ps 8:4-6 says we are crowned with glory.

*What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet*

The word *angels* in the Hebrew text is the word *Elohim* which is translated *God* (Genesis chapter 1 is a great example). So God made us a little lower than Himself and crowned us with glory. The word crowned means encircled (for attack or protection) - so God has encircled or clothed us with His glory.

Adam and Eve were clothed with light, the glory of God and after they sinned they lost it and knew that they were naked, made bare and experienced nakedness for the first time.

The Holy Spirit through Paul tells us in Rom 3:23 that sin caused us to come short of the glory of God also. The phrase *come short* means destitute, lacking, in want, underneath, below, an inferior position or condition, to be worse. This is what sin has done to us and has robbed us of our position and our clothing.

The good news is that Jesus has redeemed us back to the glory - He gave us our clothes back.

*Hebrews 2:9-10 NLT*

*What we do see is Jesus, who for a little while was given a position “a little lower than the angels”; and because he suffered death for us, he is now “**crowned with glory and honor.**” Yes, by God’s grace, Jesus tasted death for everyone. God, for whom and through whom everything was made, chose to **bring many children into glory.** And it was only right that he should make Jesus, through his suffering, a perfect leader, fit to bring them into their salvation.*

Thank God we are crowned, clothed and cloaked in the glory, the armor of God, righteousness and light once again.

In this article I will talk about 3 things: satan’s strategies, thoughts and meditation.

Let’s talk about satan’s strategies. Most people think his strategies are the actions or events that we read about in our newspapers, social media feeds, radio and tv spots BUT they are not.

In Prov 20:18 we are told “Don’t go to war without good or wise advice, guidance, instructions and intelligence.” We need to gather good intel in order to win “...lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.” 2 Corinthians 2:11 NKJV

Other ways devices can be translated are - schemes, plans, wiles, intentions, designs. Then we read in Eph 6:11-12 that we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against the wiles of the devil.

What are the wiles or strategies of the devil? First off we must understand that they are not, let me say this again – they are not people and what they do!

**People are not your problem** - 2 Cor 10:3-6 KJV tells us what is.

*For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) 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; And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.*

We are to take captive **thoughts**, cast down imaginations and pull down strongholds - these are the devices, wiles or strategies of the devil.

It all starts with a thought. As we think on the thought it takes on color and becomes an imagination or reasoning. If we keep playing this imagination over and over in our mind it will eventually become a stronghold. Depending on what the thought and imagination is determines if the stronghold is good or bad.

Most people think strongholds are bad because that is all they have heard about from the pulpit but it is not so. When we are instructed to meditate or think on the Word of God it is so we can allow the Word to become a stronghold in our life. This then makes us very difficult for the devil to push around.

Thinking the devil's worldly, secular ungodly thoughts connects us to him, death and the curse. Thinking God's thoughts and His way of doing things from the Word of God connects us to Him, life and the blessing. The choice is ours individually.

We don't fight the symptoms (how we feel, how it looks, what the report is) we fight the wiles.

When sickness attacks you, don't focus on how you feel but on what the Word says about you - "by Jesus stripes you were healed." Quoting the verse or having someone pray for you and then looking to your body to see if the *symptoms* have changed is a distraction, a wile or strategy of the devil to keep you from receiving. Because he will say "if you were healed you wouldn't feel this way" which is a lie but if you believe it you are defeated.

So what is the problem – the way you feel or the lie? The lie – the wile or strategy is the thought that we are not healed because of how we feel. Therefore, we don't fight the symptoms but the thoughts that contradict the Word of God regardless how we feel or what it looks like.

We cast down the thoughts to doubt and accept unbelief (I doubt that, that doesn't work for me, there is no way) concerning what God has said. We also cast down the thoughts to give up because we are under pressure.

Our fight is to stay in faith and not against the symptoms. We fight to stay in faith, stay in the rest of believing what God has said. This is called the good fight of faith. What we choose to believe affects our thinking.

Next let's talk about our thoughts. Thoughts are powerful because they produce our actions which produce our results.

The reason most diets don't work or last over the long haul is because people focus on changing the action through will power or a coach which temporarily changes the results. But over the process of time the old way of thinking begins to produce it's old actions and then the same old results. There is a word for that and it's called yo-yo dieting. When the person gets the results they wanted then they start thinking "oh goodie I can start eating such n such again" and over a period of time here comes the weight back.

The problem is not the actions but that the root of the actions was never dealt with and completely changed – the thoughts. If we don't change our thoughts or our thinking we will continually gravitate back to our old actions and get our old results.

I would like to quickly break sown Mark 4:14-20 for you. (the whole message can be viewed on our media page)

Mark 4 gives us 4 types of thinking that produce different results. Here we see that the sower sows the Word into the ground or our heart. This is also talking about or referring to renewing our minds with the Word of God. What we choose to believe affects our thinking → acting → results.

Verse 15      #1 Wayside thinking

When people *don't understand* the Word they heard.

- Satan can steal it from them.

Verse 16      #2 Stony Ground thinking

Action based on an emotional experience ("I'll try that"). Satan then *applies pressure* (symptoms) in their life.

- They get offended and fall into satan's trap and say "that stuff doesn't work" and give up.

Verse 18      #3 Among Thorns thinking

They get *distracted* by worry and fear, money and other things (symptoms).

- The Word is choked and becomes unfruitful.

Verse 20      #4      Good Ground thinking      Luke 8:15

They *hear, understand, believe and act* on the Word. They *persevere in doing* the Word with a *joyful and rejoicing* heart.

- They produce 30, 60, 100 fold fruitfulness or results in their life.

We get to choose our thoughts. We know this because the Word tells us that we can take a thought by saying it (Matt 6:31), that we are to think on these things (Phil 4:8) and to cast down the thoughts that are contrary to the Word of God (2 Cor 10:5).

Lastly, I want to touch on meditation of God's Word.

We find the Spirit of God saying in Prov 23:7 as a person thinks in their heart so are they and Phil 4:8 we are to think or meditate on these things. The AMPC reads this way "think continually on these things [center your mind on them, and implant them in your heart]."

Joshua 1:8 says "meditate the Word day and night to see how to apply it." The word meditate can also be translated as to ponder, imagine, mutter, roar, speak, study, talk, utter, to roll over in your mind, chew on (as a cud).

What this does is it changes our thinking → our acting → our results.

This is called the renewing of our minds in Rom 12:2. We change our thinking by the renewing of our mind and it causes us to demonstrate God's will in our lives.

We meditate the Word of God to see how to apply and act on what God said and then the blessing or our success is the result of our willing obedience and doing of that Word.

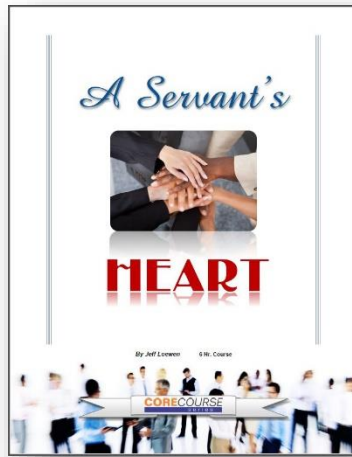
In conclusion I want to remind us what was said at the beginning of this article.

If you are not fighting and reigning in your life through Jesus Christ, then satan is operating illegally and unchecked in your life. Therefore you must know and understand his strategies in order to shut him down and live in victory.

Winning teams are aware of their opponent's plays, strategies and modes of operation therefore we must also know and understand *who we are* and *what we have* **In Christ** to win this battle.

Understanding satan's strategies, our authority over our thoughts and the amazing opportunity to get to meditate and renew our minds with the Word of God leads us to win, prosper and succeed in life.

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## DO YOU KNOW YOUR AUTHORITY?

*By Audrey Loewen*

You and I have more power and authority in our lives than we know. You and I have the power of choice, the power to choose what to believe, and the power to act – God has given us that ability. God gave all power and authority to people. God legally can't just jump in however and whenever He wants – there is a spiritual legal system in place – and neither can the devil. Both need a legal right to act in our lives. If you've ever wondered how come you didn't get the help you needed or why there is havoc in your life, you need to learn about the spiritual legal system that even God has bound Himself to. Just like there are natural laws in nature, laws that govern things in our world, there are spiritual laws that also govern in our lives. The authority given to mankind explains why there is lack and need in the world and also explains why God doesn't just do something.

When God made man, He gave him dominion over everything He had created. Over all the birds, the fish, the cattle, the bugs, every living thing on the earth, in the water and in the air – in our atmosphere. When God blessed Adam and gave Adam the instruction to take care of the garden, He was trying to warn him that there is an enemy out there who could take it from you. Use your dominion to rule over it, don't let anyone take it away.

When you read your bible and start back at the beginning in Genesis, there isn't any mention of what the devil had done or was doing. God didn't look out at the darkness and go "oh no what happened? Did you see what the devil did?" He just started creating and making things nice again. He made everything good, and He put life into the earth again and then made man. He made a being that is in His image and just slightly below Him in spiritual authority (Hebrews 2:6-8). And the devil did not seem to be around. Notice that the devil didn't have a problem until God blessed mankind. Up to that point everything was cool. But once God spoke the blessing over man, the devil got upset. The devil

and angels are also created beings, not in God's image but still a creation of His and God just gave man, created in His image, authority over all created things!

So the devil had to come up with a plan to trick Adam and Eve into giving up their power. So while the devil was successful in causing the spiritual downfall of mankind, he still does not have the out and out authority to take over people's lives. He still has to trick and deceive each person somehow into giving up their God given blessing by believing some kind of lie that will give the devil dominion in whatever area. And believe me, he is working on every area. Just because he has fooled you in one area does not necessarily mean he has entrance into another area.

Everything God created works by a law or multiple laws that control how they function or operate. There are laws of gravity, physics, mathematics, chemistry, biology, moral and criminal laws etc. In the spiritual realm there are laws of sowing and reaping, law of blessing and cursing, obedience and disobedience and the spoken word. I am going to focus on the power of the spoken word as God has a lot to say in the bible about the types of words spoken, whether they are blessing or cursing and the creative power of speaking that changes the atmosphere and circumstances around us.

Words have power and authority in them, whether good or bad. The bible starts out with God speaking in order to create and change the circumstances. From the beginning God led by example and spoke to His mountain, to the darkness and lack of life that was in the world from before we were here. Then when He created us in His image, He made us speaking spirits, He gave us the creative power to speak things into being, to change things that need changing.

Speaking is not just about communicating but it is more about creating. We get to use our words to create. The bible has a lot to say about the words that we speak and the resulting effect on our lives. One example is Psalm 34:12-14 "Who is the man who desires life, and loves many days, that he may see good? Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit. Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it." Our actions are a result of words we speak that result from beliefs that we have. The beliefs we have are a result of the thoughts we have been thinking on.

So one of the important truths that is beneficial to us is knowing how the legal system works in the spirit realm. In order to live a successful

life on earth, we need to know how to co-operate with the natural legal laws here like the law of heat. For example, fire can be a good thing, a lifesaving thing. When used in a controlled manner, it can keep us warm, it can provide nice hot food for us, it can give us light. But when it is out of control, it is very destructive. Fire can destroy a lot of things and take away life. Electricity is also a great thing when it is controlled in protective conduits. When it has a safe conduit to travel through it produces light, power, life. Our bodies even use natural electrical impulses to run like the natural pacemaker in your heart or the impulses along your nervous system are like an electrical charge. However, if it is not working properly, if it gets out of control or escapes a safe passage, damage or harm can result. Fire can be caused from electrical problems; your heart can go too fast or too slow if the natural pacemaker stops working properly; lights don't work if there is an electrical problem. Likewise in the spirit realm we will have problems to some degree or another if we are lacking knowledge in an area.

Therefore we need some light, God's truth and knowledge so that we can live life to the fullest the way Jesus said. In John 10:10 He told us the thief comes to steal, kill and destroy but He has come to give us life, an abundant, superior in quality kind of life. One of the primary ways we give either God or the devil legal access in our lives is by the words that we speak. In Mark 11:23 Jesus said we could have whatever we say. And the implication in that verse is what you continually say, keep speaking to your mountain until it disappears. Part of that involves believing that we would have it, not doubting, having faith in God. So who does the speaking? Is it God, Jesus? No, He did NOT say that whatever God speaks we could have. No, He said whatever you would say, you could have it. He told YOU to talk to that mountain, you is the understood subject. The onus is on you to believe, to speak, to refuse to doubt, to act on the word yourself, walk in the light you have.

Prov 18:21      *Death and life are in the power of the tongue*

Deut 30:19      *I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that you and your descendants may live*

James 3:10      *Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so.*

- Matthew 12:37 *For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned*
- Rom 4:17(b) *God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did*
- Matt 18:18 *Assuredly, I say to you whatever you bind on earth is bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth is loosed in heaven*
- Eph 4:29 *Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers*

These are just a handful of scriptures but I am sure you can see the point about the power of the words you speak and how we are speaking both blessing and cursing and therefore all that we are speaking is not the desired result. Notice when Jesus spoke to us about the power of binding and loosing? He went on to say that wherever two or more agree, that it would happen. How do we do that? We do that by the words that we speak. We get to use our words to bind the devil's tactics and evil plans and we get to use our words to cause good things to come to pass in our lives. We want to learn how to speak only the desired result. Once we tap into the power of this we will start seeing results faster and faster because we won't be fighting our own words. The words that we speak that are opposite to the desired results we would like are hindering us in our beliefs, our results and our actions.

Think about when you want to go somewhere, what do you usually preface it with? I am going to go to the store; I am going to do such and such. I am going to have lunch, read a book etc. You even preface your actions by your thoughts. Listen to how most people speak, they speak the symptoms, the problems, the lack, the struggle, this went wrong and that went wrong. Really they are speaking the curse. I don't feel well, I am tired, it never works out for me, this stupid car always breaks down at the worst time, I still have the same problem, the government can't get nothing right, etc.

Well according to Jesus, who is our reference guide to the truth, whatever we are saying and believing is what we are getting. It is so subtle the difference that just tweaking a few words can make. Instead of I feel so sick, nothing's working – you could say it is getting better; I have been fighting such and such but the healing power of God is working or just say I am healed by the stripes of Jesus, no need to

even mention the symptoms. I am learning to dial it down, like you would the scope on a rifle, dial it in to sharpen the view.

So what would happen if you used your words on purpose to your advantage to only speak the blessing over your life and your family's lives? What if you called your children free from the influence of the devil, free to serve God, free from drugs, free from wrong choices? What if you told your body "Yes you are well, you are healed, every cell works perfectly in the name of Jesus?" I am strong in the Lord and the power of His might; I am always increasing because the blessing rests on my house, the house of the righteous. What if you told yourself "Everything works out right because I have God's wisdom from above, I know the right thing to do, I make the right decisions."

One of the things I have learned is to not talk about what the devil is doing. I might be tired but I sure am not going to give the devil any credit for it. He hates it when we don't give him glory for whatever disturbance he has caused. Even worse when we just laugh at what he is doing. He brings this thought and you just start laughing. He'll say what are you laughing at? I am laughing at you. Why? Cause you are a liar, (quote a scripture that refutes his lie). I don't want to waste my time or a single word talking about the devil and what he is doing, I want my words to glorify God and what He is doing. I want my words to reflect the victories going on, not the problems from the curse. I want my words to magnify all the good things God has done for me and my family. I give praise to God who has given me the victory etc. I won't even talk about the attacks anymore while they are going on – I wait till I have the victory and then I share what great things God is doing. I testify about what God is doing, what He has done, not anything the devil is doing.

Can you see it? What are you saying that is in line with what you are believing for? What are you saying that you would like to change? Your words, my words rule over our lives. There is authority and power in our words whether good or bad and we have the right to use them for our advantage.

God will back up words that line up with the blessing but the devil will use the words of the curse to his advantage. Listen to your words and judge them as to whether they are helping or hindering you. If it helps you write down your rebuttals, the scriptures that you need to adjust your conversation and practice keeping a watch over your words. Then give God the glory for your victories!

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