

Guarding the Minds of Our Children

By Kim Butts

Author, Stormie O'Martian, in her book, *The Power of A Praying Parent*, says, "The battle for our children's lives is waged on our knees. When we don't pray, it's like sitting on the sidelines watching our children in a war zone getting shot at from every angle. When we do pray, we're in the battle alongside them, appropriating God's power on their behalf." She also says, "Whenever you pray for your child, do it as if you are interceding for his or her life—because that's exactly what you are doing. Remember that while God has a perfect plan for our children's lives, Satan has a plan for them too."

We have an enemy who wishes to damage our children. He wants their hearts and their minds. We are in a battle for the lives of our children, and, as quoted above, the battle can only be waged on our knees in prayer. We can't wish the enemy wouldn't bother us, or hope he will go away. We can, however, defeat him by the power of the Word of the Living God. Read carefully and claim the mighty message of Ephesians 6:10-18: "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 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. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of

righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.”

We can defeat the enemy because we are enabled to be strong in the Lord and in HIS mighty power. We can put on the full armor of God in order to take our stand against any scheme the devil might attempt to throw at us, at our children, and at our families. This armor will allow us to firmly stand our ground. It will allow us to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one, and it will allow us to defeat the enemy as we wield the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God!

Have you noticed that the sword of the Spirit is the only offensive piece of the armor? Every other part is used to defend against the enemy; however, the Word of God is used to defeat him—just as Jesus did when the enemy was tempting Him in the desert. Jesus defeated the enemy using the Word whenever Satan began to tempt or try to do Him physical harm.

“Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, ‘If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.’ Jesus answered, ‘It is written: “Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.”’ Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ‘If you are the Son of God,’ he said, ‘throw yourself down. For it is written: “He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.”’ Jesus answered him, ‘It is also written: “Do not put the Lord your God to the test.”’ Again, the devil took

him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. 'All this I will give you,' he said, 'if you will bow down and worship me.' Jesus said to him, 'Away from me, Satan! For it is written: "Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only."' Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him." (Matthew 4:4-11)

His example should be our own, because the enemy's tactics are still at work today. Satan wishes to cause our children to fall morally and spiritually. He desires to poison the minds of our children so that they will be unable to be of service to the Living God. As parents, grandparents, teachers, youth workers—and others with children in our sphere of influence—we must stand firm against the enemy and declare that he cannot have the minds of our children. We must fight for them in faithful prayer and teach them to fight for themselves! It is foolish and dangerous to ignore the schemes of Satan, for he is powerful, and looking for every weakness. This is a lifelong battle, and we must never let down our guard. We must diligently pray and teach our children how to pray the Word of God as a sure defense against the one who continually seeks to destroy. Only through the powerful Word of the Lord can victory be won over our sinful natures.

Teach children how to pray for protection by putting on the armor of God daily. Then, teach them to guard their minds with the Word of the Almighty God! Here are some specific ways to pray the Word of God into the lives of your children or grandchildren:

- Pray that your child's mind will be controlled by the Holy Spirit so that he or she can be pleasing to God and filled with life and peace. "Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind

controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God" (Romans 8:5-8).

Sample Prayer: Holy God, give my child the mind of the Spirit, set upon what the Spirit desires so that his life will be characterized by life and peace. Help him to fight against the sinful mind that the enemy would seek to place within him so that he will live a life submitted completely to You.

- Pray that your child will continually ask the Lord to examine his heart and mind so that he will be able to walk in truth and purity. "Test me, O LORD, and try me, examine my heart and my mind; for your love is ever before me, and I walk continually in your truth" (Psalm 26:2-3). "You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar" (Psalm 139:2). "Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Psalm 139:23-24).
- Pray that your child will use his mind to understand and search out wisdom so that he can recognize the stupidity of wickedness. "So I turned my mind to understand, to investigate and to search out wisdom and the scheme of things and to understand the stupidity of wickedness and the madness of folly" (Ecclesiastes 7:25).
- Pray that his mind will be steadfast as he trusts in the Lord. "You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you. Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD, is the Rock eternal" (Isaiah 26:3-4).
- Pray that your child will keep the greatness of the Lord's faithfulness always in his mind, so that he will have hope. "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" (Lamentations 3:21-23).

- Pray that your child will love the Lord with all of his heart, soul and mind. "Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind'" (Matthew 22:37).
- Pray that your child will not be conformed to the pattern of this world, but will be transformed by the renewing of his mind. "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will" (Romans 12:2).
- Pray that your child will always have the mind of Christ. "But we have the mind of Christ" (1 Corinthians 2:16b). "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you" (Philippians 4:8-9). "Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess" (Hebrews 3:1). "We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5).
- Pray that your child's mind will never be led astray, and that he will always have a sincere and pure devotion to Christ. "But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ" (2 Corinthians 11:3). "Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not

think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature” (Romans 13:14).

- Pray for your child to be made new in the attitude of his mind, and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. “You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness” (Ephesians 4:22-24).
- Pray that the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard the heart and mind of your child in Christ Jesus. “And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:7).
- Pray that your child’s mind will be set on things above—not on earthly things. “Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things” (Colossians 3:2).
- Pray that your child’s mind will always be prepared for action, so that he can live out a life of holiness. “Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: ‘Be holy, because I am holy’” (1 Peter 1:13-16).
- Pray that your child’s mind will always be aware of the enemy’s attempts to tempt him into sin. “These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come. So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall! No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that

you can stand up under it” (1 Corinthians 10:11-13).

Now that you have the Lord’s perfect strategy for keeping the mind of your child protected from Satan, be diligent in your prayers. Be consistent in your teaching of the Word, and in your personal study and devotion. Most of all, be a godly example for your child to follow as he or she matures in Christ.

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