The Indispensable Weapon

Isa 65:24

And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

• Hill 488
  o On the evening of June 13, 1966 an eighteen man Marine Recon Patrol was positioned on top of Hill 488, approximately 25 miles southwest of Da Nang, Vietnam.
    ▪ Their mission was to observe the Hiep Duc Valley and report any enemy troop movements to the 1st Marine Division Intelligence Office.
    ▪ During the next two days the platoon sighted significant enemy activity and directed several artillery fire missions into the valley.
  o However, on the evening of June 15th the Marine patrol received a report from an Army Special Forces Unit that an estimated battalion size enemy force was in their area and could be headed their way.
    ▪ The platoon was placed on 100% alert and manned listening posts at strategic positions around the hill.
  o During that night and the next morning every member of the Recon Platoon was either wounded or killed.
    ▪ The enemy paid a high price as well.
    ▪ The sixteen Marines, two Navy Corpsman, and their close air support wounded or killed approximately 200 of the enemy force.
    ▪ When relief arrived the next morning, around 10:00 am, forty-three enemy dead lay within 5 - 20 yards of their hill top perimeter, some as a result of hand-to-hand combat.
    ▪ Some reports say that the Recon Platoon was out numbered by twenty to one.
    ▪ One source said it was like the Alamo, only with survivors.
    ▪ Readers Digest reported the story in May 1968 and stated that the platoon was the most decorated unit for its size in 195 years of American Military Service.
      • In addition to the eighteen Purple Hearts for each platoon member, there were thirteen Silver Stars, four Navy Crosses, and one Congressional Medal of Honor given for the battle of Hill 488.
  o A few years ago I read a book written by one of the men who survived that desperate fight.
    ▪ When everything fell apart and that platoon was cut of from all assistance
      • and, essentially, making their last stand on that rocky hill top,
      • their radio was their only lifeline to the greater military force waiting to assist them from other areas of Vietnam.
• A statement was made in the book about the importance of the radio.
  • Specifically, it was said, “I would go into that fight again without my gun, before I’d go without a radio”
  • The reason is simple, the radio is capable of calling in a much greater defensive force than the men on the ground could ever put together.
    o The simple radio is capable of summoning much greater firepower than any weapon they had on the ground.
      ▪ Through that long, dark night, in their desperate fight for their lives, the men of that Marine recon unit understood that their radio was their one indispensable weapon.

• Tonight, for just a few short moments I want to remind you about the power of Prayer
  o It is our indispensable weapon
    ▪ We can go without a lot of things but we can’t go without prayer
  o We have an unlimited resource available to us when we pray.
    ▪ Prayer is powerful
      • Because it invokes God
        o He is Omnipotent -- All powerful
          ▪ Everything is subject to Him
        o He knows all and sees all
          ▪ Nothing in your life escapes his awareness.
        o He knows right where you are,
          ▪ knows exactly what you are facing
            • and he already has an answer for your situations before you even pray!
  o Prayer summons a much higher power to the battle.
    ▪ It brings God’s infinite power into our finite world
  o When we pray we move beyond our limitations
    ▪ Get beyond our helplessness
      • We are Elevated past our circumstances
  • When we pray we look to Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith…
    o He has all power
      ▪ And, when we pray his vast resources are at our disposal!
    o I may not know the exact battle that you are fighting tonight.
      ▪ I may not know the exact struggles that you are facing.
        • But I do know the power of prayer.
          o When you pray it has the capacity to dramatically change things!

• Philiplans 4:19 “My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in Glory by Christ Jesus!”
• It is difficult for us to grasp the greatness of God
  o His size and strength are beyond our comprehension
  o His power is beyond our ability to fathom
    ▪ But when we pray…
      • We project that greatness into our situation

• Prayer is our Link to Him,
  o God is a spirit and we are flesh, we inhabit a different realm than God
    ▪ He has given us a link from our world to his
      • That link is prayer
        ▪ Prayer projects the glory of heaven into earthly situations
  o Anybody can use it
    ▪ Regardless of age or social status
      • Name or education
        ▪ Anybody, anywhere can pray!
    ▪ God is always listening
      • He told Solomon “My ear will always be attuned to the cry from this house…”

• Prayer is our indispensable weapon
  o When we call upon his name, he hears!
    ▪ Isa 65:24
      ▪ And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.
        ▪ Before you call, I will answer
          ▪ While you are still speaking, I will hear
    o There is a constant line of communication open between the believer and God!
      ▪ God is so anxious for you to use it that he said
        ▪ Before you even finish praying your prayer
          ▪ Already I am moving to answer it

• Prayerlessness Wreaks Havoc in our lives
  o Someone wrote a book called “When we pray”…
    ▪ I’m tempted to write one called “When we don’t pray”
  o Because when we don’t pray absurdly simple things distract and derail us
    ▪ Small storms become major catastrophes
  o When we don’t pray…
    ▪ Weaker enemies blind us and confuse us
      ▪ Small molehills become spiritual mountains
  o When we don’t pray…
    ▪ Things that we should have overcome long ago
      ▪ Hinder our spiritual growth and bind us to a past that is already under the blood of Jesus!
• Can I give you a newsflash?
  o God never intended for us to go it alone
    ▪ In Matthew 6 when Jesus introduced the disciples to the Lord’s Prayer, He didn’t say “If you pray…”
    ▪ He said when you pray!
  o Jesus understood that when we don’t pray
    ▪ We will find ourselves fighting battles we can’t win
    ▪ Against enemies we can’t defeat
  o When we don’t pray
    ▪ The enemy steals our joy, robs us of our victory
  o When we don’t pray our vision dims
    ▪ Our outlook is altered

• A leading denomination conducted a study to see how much time it’s ministers spent in prayer each day.
  o They discovered that the average minister in their denomination spent only 7 minutes a day in prayer!
    ▪ Seven Short Fleeting minutes to get God’s guidance
    ▪ Seven short minutes to ask for his assistance
      ▪ Seven short minutes to procure his help

• How often do we pray? If it’s only 7 minutes a day
  o No wonder so many struggle to overcome
    ▪ No wonder there are so many casualties on the battlefield.
  o

• It has been said that Satan trembles, when the weakest Saint goes to his knees in prayer.
  o Satan knows the power of prayer
    ▪ He will do anything to keep you from it

• I’ve come to tell someone, You must take up this indispensable weapon called prayer
  o You must bring it to bear in the day to day battles of your life

• I’ve come to join ranks with the prophet who stood on the hilltop with his servant that morning when the mighty armies of his enemy had surrounded him
  o If somehow my voice could echo with his
  o I’ve come to tell you that he that is with us is mightier than they that are against us
    ▪ When you begin to pray you tap into a vast resource beyond your wildest imagination
    ▪ God is just waiting for you to call
      ▪ He is prepared to show his might
      ▪ He is standing at the ready on full alert just waiting for the request
        ▪ Before you even get it out of your mouth…
          ▪ He’ll be moving to answer it!
• Doesn’t the scripture still say, you have not because you ask not!
  o It’s time to ASK!
    ▪ We need to ask!

• It was an exhausted, weakened man who separated himself from the dark tree line and stepped into a small opening on that moonlit night.
  o 6 ½ days ago he had been the pilot of a highly sophisticated fighter jet
    ▪ One of America’s Best.
  o But a Sam missile battery had blown his F-16 right out from underneath him as he patrolled the No-Fly Zone in Bosnia on June 2, 1995.
    ▪ Although he had safely ejected from his aircraft he still drifted down from the skies into territory owned by his hostile enemies.
  o Pursued like a rabbit, running by night and hiding by day Captain Scott O’Grady managed to evade his would-be captors.
    ▪ On two different occasions armed search parties walked within 5 feet of his hiding place but by some small miracle they failed to see him.
  o Daily Hind Helicopters manned by enemy soldiers flew over his position searching for him
    ▪ So, finally, on the sixth night he reached his destination, a hilltop high enough to possibly provide line of sight for his small hand held radio.
      • And, from that vantage point he made a desperate call with the knowledge in mind that, as long as he was missing, someone would be monitoring that channel 24/7.
  o That call saved his life.
    ▪ It unleashed a rescue effort that would not be denied.
      • And Captain Scott Grady was carried off to safety
      • All because he knew the value of making that call.

• Some of you are involved in some intense struggles.
  o Some are fighting for your own survival.
    ▪ Others are concerned for the salvation of a lost loved one, a child or a spouse.
      • Still others are watching a dear brother or sister in the Lord as they struggle in their walk with God.
  o I want to remind you tonight that you have the ability to connect with a far greater power.
    ▪ You can do more on your knees in fervent prayer than you could ever accomplish by your strength or might.
  o God is waiting, eagerly listening for your cry.
    ▪ 24/7 he is ready to come to your assistance.
  o Why don’t you lift your voice to heaven tonight and turn some things over to him.
    ▪ He is able to do what no man could ever do!
Close

- A pastor friend shared this story this week.
- It happened in a mid-week service.
  - The service was winding down,
  - it was time to dismiss
  - and he asked the church to bow their heads so he could pray a dismissal prayer.
- When he went to pray, the Holy Ghost spoke to him and said "I'm not done with this service",
  - so he told the church that God wasn't through and asked them to raise their hands.
- About ten minutes went by, with no spectacular move or anything,
  - so he asked them, again, to bow their heads.
- When he started to open his mouth to pray,
  - God spoke the same thing to him a second time.
- So, he turn to his wife, on the piano, and asked her to start playing and sing something.
  - After about 15 minutes of the church watching him pace back and forth, just waiting on God and refusing to end the service,
    - the doors opened and a man, woman and little girl walked in.
- The woman came straight to the altar, crying.
  - The pastor approached her in the altar and asked her who she was and what was going on.
    - She told him that she and her boyfriend were driving past the church
      - and he slammed on his breaks and looked at her
      - and said " God told me to go inside that church right now!"
- The boyfriend was standing at the back wall crying so the pastor went to him and asked if what she said was true
  - and he nodded with tears streaming down his face.
- The pastor proceeded to tell him that the reason God told him to stop and come into the church was because He wanted to fill him with the HG.
  - They started towards the altar and the man was repenting the whole way
  - Just moments after arriving at the altar he was speaking in tongues!
- After it was all over the man testified that he'd been on meth for five years
  - And that, on that night, he had planned to drop his girlfriend and daughter off
    - and go kill himself
    - but on the way to do that he just happened to drive by the church.
- The story doesn't end there.
- When he finished praying, he told the pastor that he needed him to call his grandma.
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