

Upright Woman



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The Battle Within

by Denise Surles



Denise is married to Greg, graduate of SWSBS, for 29 years. They currently work with the North Main congregation in Weatherford, TX. They have 4 children, Gregory, Jessica, Hannah, and Payton. Denise loves volunteering at summer camp, teaching, loves doing crafts, cooking, playing games, and spending time with family.

A battle wages within all of us. It's like an internal tug-of-war. My struggles and temptations may be different from yours, but the fact remains that everyone must deal with this battle within. In Romans 5, we learn that God's grace is greater than our sin. In chapter 6, Paul explains why it would be inconsistent with our identity in Christ to sin more for grace to abound. The apostle illustrates baptism as a burial and resurrection. Through it, we died to sin, and now we are alive to God because we're striving to be like Jesus. We should no longer desire to sin because we understand the consequences. "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23). Chapter 7 begins by using marriage as an example. Much like when your spouse dies, it frees you from the bond of marriage, we die to the law so we can belong to Him who was raised from the dead – Christ. Is the law sinful? Of course not! Yet, Paul said he would have not known sin without the law. He uses the example of covetousness. When you tell a child that they cannot have something, what do they usually want? If I told you not to think about ice cream, what would you instantly think of? Ice cream! When our son was little, we had a TV with buttons on the bottom front edge. He wanted to check them out because he was naturally curious. Once we told him not to touch them, though, that was all he wanted to do.

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The law equals the righteous standard. Sin is seizing an opportunity to fulfill an evil desire. When we long for something we know we cannot or should not have it can be sinful and sin separates us from God (Isaiah 59:2). Just like Moses on Mount Sinai said to the people, “if you follow God’s commandments, you’ll live. Choose life.” Sin will use what is good to arouse my desires so that sin through the commandments might show itself sinful. The law sets the standard, so it points it out for what it is – sin. Our desires compared to the standard will either show them to be righteous or sinful.

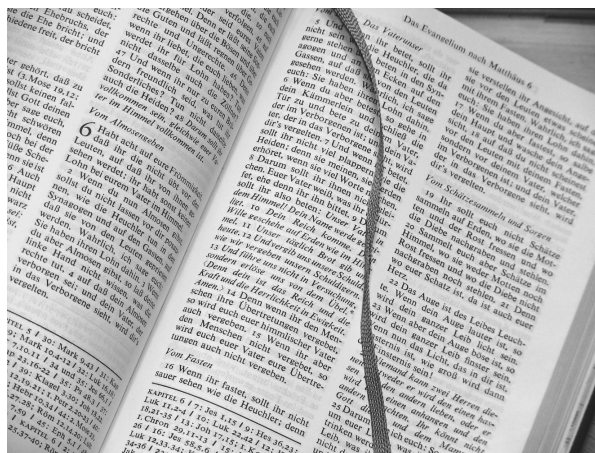
There was a Native American man explaining to his grandson that there is a battle within us that is like two wolves – one good and one evil – both fighting for control. The grandson asked him which wolf wins and he told him that it’s the one you feed. Our ultimate enemy is not people. It’s the evil forces within us. So how do we combat them? What can help us with this battle? Ephesians 6:10-17 tells us the answer - by putting on the whole armor of God! In Mark 14:37-38, we see that even the disciples struggled. Their spirit was willing, but their flesh was weak. We must continue in the things we’ve learned (2 Timothy 3:14). We can be equipped to fight this battle within us. May we lean on God and each other and WIN!

Strength in Numbers

by Val Lloyd

Strength in Numbers is a phrase often used in business and sports communities to reflect a philosophy that there is more strength in groups than in individuals. Strength derived from a collaborative effort of working together toward a common purpose or goal is a powerful focus.

However, the church recognizes Strength in Numbers as a divine principle that has been taught from the beginning. When God said, “It is not good that man should be alone” (Genesis 2:18), he knew that Adam needed a helpmeet and companion so he created Eve.



The Old Testament also teaches from the pen of King Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, about the value of teams (Eccl. 4:9-12). Solomon’s insight into the model of the triple braided cord is a clear picture of strength which emphasizes the effectiveness and importance of human relationships. The individual who works all alone is futile in his efforts because even with success, there is no one with which he can enjoy the fruit of his labors. It is clear that strength comes when two or three persons work together. Isolation is miserable and meaningless (Eccl. 4:7, 8). An enemy might overpower one person, but two people can stand together and defend themselves. A rope woven of three strings is hard to break. One man said, “having one friend is good, but more friends are better.”

The principle of the three-fold cord can also be seen in the New Testament when using the phrase “the tie that binds.” New Testament Christians relate to each other through a spiritual fellowship found in our common faith, hope, and love. When someone feels alone and isolated because of sin or circumstance, the love conveyed from one Christian to another is a connection to a strength that can only come from God, the source of all comfort (2 Cor. 1:3).

The principle is also illustrated in Galatians 6:2, where Paul writes to the church, his body. “Bear one another’s burdens, and in this way fulfill the law of Christ.” This is how we discover a strength undiscovered by the world—the love of God through the church (Ephesians 4:14-17). You may not want to be a burden and share your problems, but God’s wisdom teaches we are stronger through the encouragement of our Brothers and Sisters. Proverbs instructs us to give wise counsel (Prov. 27:9). By recommending difficult but sound advice we are being the kind of friends that help each other go to heaven.

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God is all powerful. His word highlights how He strengthens us through our relationship with Him. His strength is a part of His character and is illustrated over and over through His mighty works and promises toward us.

After a careful consideration of the character and qualities of God, we can most confidently say along with Paul in Romans 8:31, "What shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?" As humans we acknowledge that we are weak. Second Corinthians 12:10 teaches that our strength is not in ourselves. It is in the power of God. The road is easier with a shared purpose built on what unites us rather than what divides. We are focused and united in our belief in God's word.

I Can Win

by Taylor Speir

1 Cor 10:13 states that we will never be tempted above what we are able to bear and that God always makes a way to escape, so why is it still so difficult sometimes? Why do we feel ashamed and vow 'never again', only to struggle with the same thing the next day or week or month?

The truth is, many times we never explore all of our options. Sometimes we let temptation build until the last second before attempting to say 'no', and while this is still possible, it's no doubt the hardest way to defeat temptation. Here are several strategies for avoiding and overcoming temptation before it reaches full strength:

1. Keep your mind on things that are pure, lovely, etc. (Phil 4:8) and it will be harder for your mind to wander where it shouldn't. We have to bring every thought into captivity (2 Cor 10:6) and "set no wicked thing before mine eyes" (Ps 101:3).
2. Put on the whole armor of God (Eph 6:10-17), making sure to wield the sword of the Spirit every day, "which is the word of God". Hide that word in your heart to keep sin at bay (Ps 119:11).
3. Let others help bear your burdens (Gal 6:3). If we never let at least one close fellow Christian know that we are struggling with temptation, they will not know in what area they need to exhort us (Heb 3:13) or pray for us (Jas 5:16).
4. Bring your body into subjection to God's will (1 Cor 9:27). The word Paul uses in the original Greek text is *doulagoeo*, meaning 'to enslave'. This isn't a one-time decision where a switch flips and you never struggle again; this is something you have to choose to do every day!

If we are truly to overcome temptation and sin, it comes down to our mindset; how do we, deep down, feel about God's commandments and about sin? We should not treat commandments as a chore and sin as a forbidden fruit that we wish we had. Our attitude toward these should be as the psalmist said in Psalm 119:127-128: "Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold. Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way."

"We will never be
tempted above
what we are able
to bear"
1 Corinthians
10:13

Upcoming Events

October 12

Ladies Day (Rachel Lane)

Killeen COC, Killeen, TX

November 9

Ladies Day

Southwest COC, Austin, TX

Please send any upcoming women's events in the central Texas area to:
uprightwoman@gmail.com

Our Reward

by Darlene Stanley

As Christian women, our responsibility to one another is to educate, encourage, and promote faithful living to help one another reach our reward. The problems we each face as Christian women are different and unique, but most of those problems can be lessened with love and care for one another. "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; and whoever loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith. And who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God". (1 John 5:1-5)

As women of God looking back upon our lives, many things will come to our remembrance. While it can be a difficult challenge to

live in this present world and be true to our Christian faith, we do have our fellow Christians to lean upon as we step in and out of the many pitfalls Satan lays in our path. Our mainstay must be the same advice and assurance that the apostle Paul gave to the Corinthians in his first letter, that a way of escape will be provided. (1 Cor. 10:13)

As we mature and draw closer to that reward promised to the faithful, the scripture assures us each day and we can truly say: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge will give me on that Day, and not to me only but all to all who have loved his appearing."

About Upright Woman

The Upright Woman publication is intended to educate, promote, and encourage the women of the church to strive for righteousness in every aspect of life. It is the mission of this publication to provide women an opportunity to study the word and share articles about various issues and topics to encourage us to be upright women in an upside down world.

**"FOR THE LORD IS RIGHTEOUS; HE
LOVES RIGHTEOUS DEEDS; THE
UPRIGHT SHALL BEHOLD HIS FACE."
PSALM 11:7**



We pray that with every issue and with every article all glory is given to God.