
Chapter 5

Won Without a Word

*In the same way [as Jesus] you wives
Be submissive to your own husbands,
So that if any of them are disobedient to the word,
They may be won without a word
As they observe your chaste and respectful behavior.
—1 Peter 3:1–2*

So many of us who are or who have been married have faced the dilemma of our husbands blatantly or secretly disobeying the Word of God through adultery. Maybe your mom has lived through your dad being unfaithful or she has lived with some other sin that your dad won't deal with. It is not only painful, but it can also be frustrating. As wives, we women just want to “do something” or “say something” to make our husbands change or at least see their mistakes.

Right now, before you are married, you need to realize that you can directly influence your boyfriend or fiancé through what you discuss as a couple. However, the Bible says that *after* a woman marries, she may *only* influence her husband by her *respectful* “attitude” toward his position as her husband. I am sure that this is a concept that is totally foreign to you (unless your mother went through *A Wise Woman* and that is how you got this book); nevertheless, this principle is altogether true.

In this chapter, you will learn (through what the Bible clearly says although most women want to ignore it) that once you are married, if there is anything that you feel you must say to your husband, that would be in anyway insubordinate, you must instead say it directly to God and trust HIM with the results.

This is why you must choose whom you will marry wisely. Don't choose your future based on your *feelings* or speculations. Don't join yourself with someone who is not walking for God and do not consider marrying a man just because he's going to church because sometimes young men are there for the wrong reasons. Remember any guy who is cute today may be completely bald in less than ten years! The guy who is buff (packing a six-pack) today may have a beer belly in less than five years! In the same way, there are many guys who go to church, but their fruits say something else. Even a pastor's son can be corrupt and ruin you. It's the ones in the “sheep's clothing” who are the most dangerous. Again, which is why in Chapter 2 we warn you about staying under your parents' authority and protection.

Also, because your mother is also female, she too can be easily deceived. So how can you be absolutely sure of anyone? Because above all you have a heavenly Father who is watching out for you—like we will share in Chapter 6 “Chaste and Respectful.”

The older members of our Restoration Fellowship want you to be *especially* wary [cautious and watchful] of any guy who is more interested in hanging out with his friends or having fun, because that is exactly the kind of husband you will have. Guys that ask you to do things you're uncomfortable doing or go to places or being put in situations where you don't feel safe. A wife can't change a husband—don't kid yourself. Women have believed that for centuries, when the truth is only God can change a man. Only God can change you or me. So, if you believe He needs to change or will change someone you care about now, step back and let Him do it. Do it now.

It could be the guy you really felt was the man of your dreams is a fake or a fraud, charming yes, but that's why the Bible warns us in Proverbs 31:30, "Charm is deceitful..." Though he may seem "perfect" and no matter how popular he is, the person He's chosen for you, the one you are suitable for and that you'll become One with, has not yet come into your life.

Just look at all the failed marriages as proof of how many women got ahead of God, thinking they could change the weaknesses, shortcomings and even sins of a man they chose to marry—which soon ended in a nasty, painful divorce. God is the **only** One who can really change anyone—even you. And the changing needs to take place well before you ever say "I do"!

If you want an awesome guy, then all of our encouragement is the same—run after God and pursue HIM. If you do, we promise you, that the right guy, Mr. Right (or should we say "Mr. Righteous") will run after you! Once that right man is pursuing you, don't look back. Pursue God even more, get to know and fully become the Lord's future bride! If he is a truly good and righteous guy, he will overtake you (and your heart). You will be one of the very, very few, the elect, the blessed, who've chosen to *wait* for Mr. Righteous rather than settling for a life of pain or abandonment.

In this chapter, we will discuss the *truth* about another one of God's principles that most women don't learn about until after they say "I do." Many women have no idea about what God says about anything and are shocked when their husbands fall into pornography, cheat by committing adultery, are abusing drugs and/or addicted to alcohol, and/or no longer support them financially. Our husbands will be **our** authority and our words to them (often times words of caution are authoritative, thinking they should submit to us) are not only useless, but they are also potentially dangerous. Our words can set off a destructive chain of events that will lead to divorce and abandonment. Very few brides are equipped to weather such storms, which is why, again, it's important to be prepared, be fully loved by your Bridegroom, and be willing to wait under your current protective authority.

Wives are clearly told in the Word of God that the *only way* to win a husband who is in rebellion is **without a word!** As if that were not hard enough, it **MUST** be carried out with an attitude of respectfulness, no matter what our husbands are doing!

Though this may seem utterly impossible, it can be done, and is being done in the lives of thousands of women around the world—many who are members of our fellowship. However, all of us have hoped and prayed that our daughters will not enter marriage with the same ignorance that we fell into. That's why we have devoted our lives to spreading the truth to the next generation—YOU.

So, since you are not *yet* married, knowing the truth ahead of time should encourage you to again, **choose wisely.** It is my hope, and the hope of all the other women who are walking or have walked the painful path of adultery, abandonment, separation, divorce, pornography and/or substance abuse, that the wisdom that we share with you will help you choose a different path than the one we found ourselves on.

Though you may not believe it now, there **are** godly men out there looking for godly women to complete their lives. Therefore, **pursue the Lord and the right man will soon pursue you. But, if you pursue any man now, you will be forced to pursue him forever.**

Why Shouldn't I Talk to My Husband About My Concerns?

Without one word. "In the same way [as Jesus] you wives, be submissive to your own husbands, so that if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won **without a word** as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior" (1 Peter 3:1–2).

Therefore, when a husband is disobedient to the Word, a wife must obey God's Word and be determined to "win him without a word." But, is there anything else we can do once we are married? Yes, we can go to the top! We can go to our heavenly Father and appeal to *Him*—pouring our hearts out to Him in our prayer closet. We tell

wives who are facing the other women in their husband's lives, or other painful and impossible situations, to ask God to have the Lord (who is directly over all men) speak to their husbands about what is on their hearts, since this is the order of authority. "But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:3).

Have the proper attitude. "Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, *and those which exist are established by God*. Therefore he who *resists authority* has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will *receive condemnation upon themselves*" (Rom. 13:1). Though you may not agree that your husband is your authority, it doesn't matter since this is the way the universe and its laws were created by God. That is why we women, who didn't know that a husband was a wife's authority (but thought that marriage was a partnership), want you to know the truth before entering into marriage so that you, once again, will choose differently. We want you to choose based on wisdom versus emotion.

Turn, through prayer alone, your husband's focus. When we minister to women who have husbands who are in deep sin, we let them know that *they* are **not** responsible for what her husband does or does not do—he is completely accountable to God for his actions. This is what the Bible tells us, "But each one is **tempted** when he is carried away and enticed by his *own lust*" (James 1:14). And, what is more, anything that a husband does that indirectly hurts you (as his wife) or your children, it will be **doubly** compensated if you keep a good attitude. I know! Though very often I felt just as Jeremiah felt when he said in Isaiah 49:4, "But I said, 'I have toiled in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; Yet surely the **justice** due to me is with the LORD, and my reward with My God'"—My God was faithful.

God says that "Instead of your shame you will have a **double** portion, and instead of humiliation they will shout for joy over their portion, therefore they will possess a **double** portion in their land, everlasting joy will be theirs" (Is. 61:7). And if it is sin that is an issue in your life, let me tell you what God says, "Speak kindly to Jerusalem; and call out to her, that her warfare has ended, that her iniquity has been removed, that she has received of the LORD'S hand **double** for all her *sins*" (Isa. 40:2).

Simply get out of his way. "How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, **nor stand in the path of sinners** . . . But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night" (Ps. 1:1-2). One tactic that so many women try is to block their husbands and even their children when God clearly says that we are to get out of the way—especially when dealing with someone who is OUR authority! The second line in this Bible verse tells us what we are *to do*—meditate on His Word. Any time there is sin in someone else's life, just leave it to God. God is the only One who can change anyone! Let's face it, a husband, boyfriend or fiancé can't change himself any more than *you* can change *you*!

Changes we make ourselves are always temporary. However, when we turn ourselves and those we love over to God and allow Him to do the changing; we see lasting and supernatural results!!

Now, get off his back and pray! You and every woman can help to heal your home by *praying* for others rather than talking about it: "Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and *pray* for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective *prayer* of a righteous man can accomplish much" (James 5:16). You don't need to laboriously pray for God to help you—just **trust** and know that He will. When you make the decision to trust, you will finally sense the peace that has been eluding you. Then, with that peace, you will be a testimony to other women (and your family) of the immeasurable love of God—drawing others into a relationship with Him.

Overcome all evil with good. All Christians need to be careful how we react to evil *when* it occurs (not *if* it occurs): "Do not be *overcome with evil* but **overcome evil with good**" (Rom. 12:21). Again, evil *will* occur in our lives! ". . . knowing that the **testing of your faith** produces *endurance*" (James 1:3). When evil strikes, take it as an "opportunity" to bless the offender (who often is your husband). ". . . not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but *giving a blessing instead*; for you were called for the very purpose that you might *inherit* a blessing" (1 Pet. 3:9). God's plan for evil and insults is so you can inherit a blessing. Unfortunately, most miss blessings that would be theirs had they blessed rather than returned the evil or the insult.

Concentrate on loving the unlovable! When you love and respect those that hurt you (especially your husband who is closest to you) even when he or she is unlovable and unkind, you are exhibiting unconditional love. Unconditional love is the most powerful force in the universe! “For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax-gatherers do the same?” (Matt. 5:46). Give God your hurts—then, let Him fill you with His love that will spill over to all those around you—especially your enemies!

The ministry of reconciliation. As children of God, we are each called to be ambassadors of God’s love and that will draw others to Him. “Therefore we are **ambassadors for Christ . . .** and gave us the **ministry of reconciliation . . . not counting their trespasses against them,** and he has committed the word of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:18-20). Do you waste your time counting the transgressions of others, and thereby miss the greatest opportunity known to mankind? Remember that God’s mercies are new every morning—are yours?

Our first mission field. You may ask yourself, “Why should I minister to my family when they have hurt me so terribly?” This is the Lord’s plan who gives us our home (those closest to us) as the first “mission field” before we can truly be effective with others or save the world. We, of course, want to rush out and be sent around the world before we are truly ready. As a young woman, God has called you to first minister *at home*.

If you have answered the call, as Isaiah did: “Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, ‘**Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?**’ Then I said, ‘Here am I. **Send me!**’” (Isa. 6:8), I promise He will fulfill that desire even if you halfway meant it. There was a song that I sang with passion that said that I would go to the “ends of the earth” and in my mind I always pictured the tip of Africa (though that is not as far south as South America). God never forgot, and one day I stood at the tip of Africa and ministered there! Had I not gotten my home life straight, I would never have had the power or testimony to change any lives. First, He needs to change us, and that changing is through refining, which happens at home. This refining is usually the most difficult to endure.

Did you know that God wants us to learn contentment before He’ll change anyone who is causing us grief? To prove the point further, we can look at Paul’s life as the perfect example: “Not that I speak from want; for I have **learned to be content** in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have **learned the secret** of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.” He goes on to say the verse you hear so often: “I can do all things through Him who strengthens me” (Phil. 4:11-13). Once again, you are not worth anything unless you are willing to be made over through the difficulties you are living now.

Preparing for War by Putting on Your Armor

When there are troubles and crises in our lives, we need to remember that we, as Christians, are always in a battle and therefore need to be prepared. The Apostle Paul laid out guidelines for warring in the spirit. Rather than battling in the flesh as the people of the world do, we are to battle in the spirit where the real war is raging.

The schemes of the devil. “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the *schemes of the devil*” (Eph. 6:10-11). Remember who the real enemy is—it’s not the person who is fighting against you and making you miserable. Don’t lose sight of this or you will be drawn in to fight back, which is just a part of the devil’s scheme.

The full armor of God. “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day” (Eph. 6:12-13). You must resist the *fear* that causes you to run away or give up; instead, having done everything, stand firm. Psalm 37 is good to pray if you are plagued with fear.

Stand firm. “Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth . . .” (Eph. 6:14). Many Christians talk about “stepping out in faith” when often it is better to stop moving and just stand firm in your faith! It may be the

difference between trusting and tempting God. Sometimes we feel like we are taking a “step of faith,” but we are actually throwing ourselves off a cliff, as Satan told Jesus to do.

We must ask the Lord whether to take a “step” of faith or to “stand” in our faith. Our convictions should enable us to “stand” for what is right. If we move, we could be falling off a cliff. If God brings adversity into our lives, our **stand** will be the testimony God will use to draw others to Him. Yet, as you will see later in this chapter, sometimes we are asked to step out and walk on water as Peter was asked to do. What we all need is discernment in every situation we face. One indicator that may help us discern God’s direction is the amount of urgency. Usually our “flesh” brings about urgency. God, however, usually says to wait. Another good way to see if it is God is whether it is something we “want” to do. When it’s of the flesh, it feels good and we want to do it; however, when it is of God we usually don’t want to do it and need the help of the Holy Spirit to carry it out.

His righteousness. “And having put on the breastplate of righteousness . . .” (Eph. 6:14). God is talking about His righteousness, not ours. He tells us in His Word that our righteousness is nothing but “filthy rags” (Isa. 64:6). Very often we think we are really awesome Christians and we fail to see that in ourselves we are nothing at all—it is only in Him and through His power that we can do anything.

Walk in peace. “And having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace . . .” (Eph. 6:15). It says in the Beatitudes (also known as the “Be-Attitudes”), “Blessed are the peacemakers!” Then in 1 Peter 3:15 it says to “be prepared to give an account of the hope that is within you, yet with patience and gentleness.” Treat each person with patience and understanding—especially those who are making your life miserable. Any person in the world can fight back, dish it out, or get caught in the drama, but a person who refuses to enter into these traps can turn each crisis into a blessing for herself and those who are involved. The choice is yours.

The shield of faith. “In addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to *extinguish all the flaming missiles* of the evil one” (Eph. 6:16). You must have faith, not in yourself or someone else. Your faith must be in God and Him alone! Circumstances have nothing to do with faith. Believe His Word alone for the truth about your situation, and then act or react based on that faith. Give everything to God, keep calm and in peace, and watch a blessing come out of every crisis.

Helmet of salvation. “And take the helmet of salvation . . .” (Eph. 6:17). You must be saved; are you? Have you ever given your life to Him? To win the difficult battles of your life you must be one of His children. It’s not difficult or scary to do. It’s as easy as talking to God right now. Just tell Him in your own words that you need Him. Ask the Lord to make Himself real to you. Give Him your life, a life that is messed up, and ask the Lord to make it new. Tell Him that you will do whatever He asks, since He is now your Lord. Ask Him to “save you” from your situation and from the eternity that is waiting for all those who do not accept His gift of eternal life. Thank Him for His death on the cross, His shed blood and the death that He died for you. Once you do, you can immediately believe that you will no longer live alone. God will always be with you and you will spend eternity with Him—that begins right now!

Sword of the Spirit. “And the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God” (Eph. 6:17). This is exactly what we have been teaching you. Use His Word for a battle that will be won or lost, primarily in your mind and heart. When the battle is the Lord’s, the Victory is ours! To renew your mind for battle, write down on 3x5 cards the Scriptures you need to help you. Keep them with you at all times in your purse. When you feel an attack coming on, like fear or the temptation to speak about your problems, you can read the verses that pertain to your predicament. Cry out to God. Stand firm in faith. “Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, and **He** will do it” (Ps. 37:5).

Pray at all times. “With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit” (Eph. 6:18). Pray from deep in your Spirit. Have designated times of prayer, at least three times a day (as Daniel did) when there is a battle raging. Praying was one of the reasons Daniel was thrown into the lion’s den. And don’t worry if you are “in a way” thrown into the lion’s den. God has promised to shut the mouths of the lions!

Be on the alert. “And with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints” (Eph. 6:18). One of the best ways to battle in the spirit is to pray for another person who you know wrestles with fear or some other weakness each time fear or another emotion overwhelms you. Pray this verse for them: “Most gladly therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ’s sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong” (2 Cor. 12:9-10). After you have prayed for someone, give that person a call, or write her an email of encouragement. You will see that instead of being destroyed by your trials, you will benefit from them.

Pray for those who persecute you. God also asks that we pray for someone else—our enemies. Every one of them! Pray for your enemies and ask God to show you what He wants you to do to *bless* them!! It wasn’t until *after* Job prayed for his so-called friends that God restored what Job had lost. “And the Lord restored the fortunes of Job when he prayed for his friends, and the Lord increased all that Job had twofold” (Job 42:10). “But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.” He goes on, telling you why: “in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven” (Matt. 5:44-45). Let me tell you that blessing your enemies is one of the most powerful principles in the Bible—but so few are brave enough or humble enough to try it. Not only do you gain a blessing, but when you do it, immediately any negative feelings are gone. The hurt, the bitterness, the regrets—all of them!

After I read this verse when my husband left me, I asked the Lord to show me a way to bless him. The Lord brought to mind that he was wearing hot leather shoes in the middle of summer. I stopped at a drug store and picked up a pair of 88¢ rubber sandals for him. When I gave them to him, his countenance (which had been quite cold) melted! It was a small gesture on my part, but it spoke volumes to his heart as I obeyed the verse to bless my enemy. Just ask the Lord for how He wants you to bless your enemy the next time someone hurts you. ~Erin

Know God’s Word

His Word will not come back void. You must know and learn God’s Word that will change your life and all the lives around you. You must set out to seek and find the promises of blessings God has for you by reading, then marking them in your Bible. Then, as stated before, write the ones that really speak to your heart onto a 3x5 card to carry with you.

The principle is that when we speak His Word to Him by prayer, His words will not come back void. This is His promise to you! “So shall My Word be which goes forth from My mouth; *it shall not return to Me void* [empty], without **accomplishing** what I desire and without **succeeding** in the matter for which I sent it” (Isa. 55:11). His desire is for you to overcome the evils of this world. You must do what is guaranteed by God Himself—accept no imitations or counterfeits. Use His Word in prayer as His promise to you.

Seek understanding. God says that if you seek, you will find. God’s Word gives us wisdom, so by looking deeply into the meaning of each word, it will give you a better understanding of the truth. “And I say to you, ask, and it shall be given to you; **seek**, and *you shall find*; knock, and it shall be opened to you” (Luke 11:9). Once you know what to do, you can apply that truth to your life. “By **wisdom** a house is *built*, and by **understanding** it is *established*; and by **knowledge** the *rooms are filled* with all *precious and pleasant riches*” (Prov. 24:3-4).

Read the Word with delight and mark the special verses you find in your Bible. “**Delight** yourself in the Lord; And He will give you the desires of your heart” (Ps. 37:4). Take the time to mark these verses in your Bible for quick reference in times of distress or when leading another person you meet to the truth. What did Jesus answer when Satan was trying to tempt Him? “And Jesus answered him, ‘It is written . . . It is written . . . for it is written . . .’” (Luke 4:4, 8, 10). *Use a yellow crayon or specific light colors for different promises.* When the devil assaults you, come against him with “It is written . . . It is written . . . For it is written . . .” just as Jesus did—it works!

Meditate day and night. Memorize the promises you find so that the assurance of them may sink deep into your soul. You must learn and know God's promises if you ever want to depend on Him alone. "But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he **meditates day and night**. And he will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers" (Ps. 1:2-3). *Once again, use 3x5 cards and write out the verses that will renew your mind and change your focus. Keep these wrapped in a rubber band in your purse for the times when you are waiting (at a traffic light, at the doctor's office, or outside school) to gain renewed strength to keep your attitude positive and magnetic.*

Spiritual Warfare by Taking Your Thoughts Captive

Your battle will be won or lost in your mind. "We are **destroying speculations** and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are **taking every thought captive** to the obedience of Christ, and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete" (2 Cor. 10:5-6). Battles are won and lost in your mind; therefore, don't play into the enemy's hands by entertaining these thoughts, which are usually nothing more than speculations. Take your thoughts captive! Speculation is defined as: a conclusion, theory, or opinion based on **incomplete information** or evidence; **reasoning** based on incomplete information or evidence. And rather than trying to gain the facts, keep your eyes on the Lord and give Him the situation. God alone knows all facts, and can even look into the heart of the other person. Let your mind dwell on these things for that peace that is beyond our understanding.

Overcome evil with good. Satan knows that if he can divide, he can conquer. Most of us play right into the hands of the enemy by being overwhelmed when evil strikes. Scripture tells us, "Do not be overcome by evil, but **overcome evil with good**" (Rom. 12:21). This is so powerful! Whenever evil strikes counteract it with doing good, especially doing good or blessing your enemy, and watch a blessing overtake you!

No matter how bad things seem, remember, God is in control. Our comfort is "knowing" that God is in control. We are not in control, nor is the enemy, and this verse proves it! "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has *demanded permission* to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers" (Luke 22:31-32). The enemy cannot touch you without God's permission; so rest in this fact.

Sifting. Jesus knew the outcome, yet Peter still had to go through the "sifting" process to be ready for God's calling on his life. Will you be ready when He calls you? You will if you "let endurance have its perfect result", that you may be **perfect and complete, lacking in nothing**" (James 1:4). For those of you who are going through tremendous trials right now, just remember that it is for your refining. None of us is fit to fulfill the call we have on our lives. It is only through enduring the fires of affliction that we can be tempered to remain strong when we take our place or position.

What "Condition" Must We Meet in Order to Be Heard?

Your desires with His will. There is a condition that each of us must meet before we get what we feel we need or want. "If you abide in Me, and My Words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you" (John 15:7). When your heart rests in Jesus alone and *your will* is centered in *His will*, you have made Him Lord of your life. To know His will you must know His Word. It is His desire to bless you: He actually longs to be gracious to you, and even looks about the whole earth to strongly support you. But each of His promises has conditions.

The condition for the blessing. Each promise given by God has a condition for that blessing. Many Christians claim the blessing portion of the Scripture while omitting the condition. You cannot claim the Scripture and choose to ignore the condition. Here is what I mean:

Condition—"Believe on the Lord Jesus . . .

Promise—and you shall be saved" (Acts 16:31).

Condition—"Delight yourself in the LORD . . .

Promise—And He will give you the desires of your heart" (Ps. 37:4).

Condition—"Train up a child in the way he should go . . .

Promise—Even when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6).

Promise—" . . . God causes all things to work together for good . . .

Condition—"to those who love God . . ."

" . . . to those who are called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28).

Called by My name. ". . . and My people who are **called by My name** humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2 Chron. 7:14). Once you cry out to Him to save you, you will be called by Christ's name: a Christian. A Christian is simply a "follower of Christ," which means that you follow His example, looking differently than the people of the world.

Walk in the Spirit. Being filled with the Holy Spirit will enable you to walk in the Spirit as Jesus did after the Holy Spirit came upon Him in the form of a dove. This means that you no longer will need to give into sin and fleshly desires.

"And I will put **My Spirit** within you and *cause* you to **walk in My statutes**, and you will be careful to *observe My ordinances*" (Ezek. 36:27).

" . . . **walk by the Spirit**, and you will not carry out the *desire of the flesh*" (Gal. 5:16).

Do you want to have more power in your life? Then I would strongly encourage you to seek the infilling or baptism of the Holy Spirit. This is not a denominational issue, but simply a Biblical teaching. Jesus Himself told the disciples that it would be better if He did go so that the Holy Spirit would come and be with them. Then He told them to wait for it. To tell you the truth, I was initially turned off from being Spirit-filled because of the bad things I heard in some denominations, and then later by the arrogance of many Spirit-filled women who acted as if they were somehow more spiritual than I was.

But Darling, if you desire all that the Lord has for you, simply asked to be filled and anticipate a major change in your life. It is that simple, but oh, so worth seeking! This gift (like salvation you can't earn it or work for it) literally changed my life!

Faith. Now that you are filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, begin to increase your faith by reading about different difficult situations in the Bible and identify your situation with them. To learn of His great power read how Jesus stilled the waves of the sea. To know that He can do so much with very little, read how He fed the five thousand with the five barley loaves and two small fish.

So you will never doubt His mercy for you and your situation, read how Jesus cleansed the lepers, healed the sick, opened the eyes of the blind and forgave the fallen woman. You'll find all of these in the gospels, the first four books of the New Testament. Most Bibles have what Jesus said in red print to make it easy to study His Words.

Let's look at a couple of faithful men who showed great endurance in their testing and trials.

Peter, an example of faith. Read the account of Peter in Matthew 14 starting at verse 22. Jesus asked Peter to walk on water. If He is asking you to walk on water, are you going to get out of the boat? Watch: when Peter cries out to Jesus, it is always followed by the word *immediately*. Immediately, Jesus spoke to them and told them to take courage. And then later when Peter began to sink, he cried out to the Lord, and “immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him!” (Matt. 14:31).

Fear. A question I asked myself was, “Why did Peter sink?” It says, “But seeing the wind, he became afraid” (Matt. 14:30). If you look at your situation and at the battle that is raging against you, you too, will sink! Peter took his eyes off the Lord and the result was fear! It says, “He *became* afraid.” If you take your eyes off the Lord, you too, will become fearful.

Your testimony. How did the others in the boat react? (Did you forget that there were others who didn’t get out of the boat?) It says, “And those who were in the boat worshiped Him saying, ‘You are certainly God’s Son!’” (Matt. 14:33). Are you willing to allow God to use you to show His goodness, His loving-kindness, His protection, and to draw others to Him? This is true evangelism. Others will come to you when they are having trouble because they have seen your peace, despite your circumstances.

The wind stopped. “And when they got into the boat, the wind stopped” (Matt. 14:32). Your battle will not go on forever. This test was needed to make Peter strong enough to be the “rock” of which Jesus had spoken. The enemy (and others working for him) will tell you that you will stay in the trial unless you run away, give in or give up. God never intended for us to remain “In the valley of the shadow of death.” In Psalm 23:4 it says that we go *“through* the valley of the shadow of death.” The enemy wants us to think that God intends for us to *live there!* He wants to paint a “hopeless” picture! But, praise the Lord, God sets up hopeless situations in order to show His power to the lost!

Abraham. A second example of faith is Abraham. When Abraham was about 90 years old and was still without the child God had promised him, it says, “He hoped against hope” (Rom. 4:18). Isn’t that so good? I love it! Even when all hope was gone, he continued to believe God and take Him at His Word. We must all do the same.

This verse and its principle of believing when all hope was gone got me through the trials surrounding my divorce the first and second time. The second time, especially, when I faced the real possibility that my ministry and home would fall as a result of my husband divorcing me. But I “hoped against all hope” and the Lord blessed me instead of allowing destruction!! ~ Michele author of Facing Divorce—Again.

If you lack faith. If you lack faith, you should ask God for an added measure since there is a real battle even for your faith. “Fight the good **fight of faith** . . .” (1 Tim. 6:12). “I have fought the **good fight**, I have finished the course, I have kept the **faith** . . .” (2 Tim. 4:7). Without the people’s faith, even Jesus had less power. “And He (Jesus) could do **no miracle** there except that He laid His hands upon a few sick people and healed them. And He wondered at their **unbelief**” (Mark 6:5-6). Act on whatever faith that you have. “And He said to them, ‘Because of the littleness of your faith; for truly I say to you, if you have **faith as a mustard seed**, you shall say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it shall move; and **nothing** shall be impossible to you” (Matt. 17:20).

Imitators of faith. The best way to gain faith is to imitate men and women in Scripture who exhibited faith; take time to read The Hall of Faith in Hebrews, chapter 11. Then we need to **act** on God’s promises by being “. . . **imitators** of those who through **faith and patience inherit the promises**” (Heb. 6:12). There are many women who have followed the principles found in this book who have had victory in broken and hopeless marriages. Their testimonies have been compiled into a book *By the Word of Their Testimony* that is free to read on our website as a member of Restoration Fellowship. If you or someone you know is experiencing a hopeless situation, especially in their marriage, then reading this will encourage you and them to have faith. As the song says, “What He’s done for others, He’ll do for you!”

Double-minded or doubting. You must not be double-minded. Your mind must not waver or doubt God. “But let him **ask in faith** *without any doubting*, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea driven and tossed by

the wind. For let not that man expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, being a double-minded man, *unstable in all his ways*” (James 1:6-8). “I **hate** those who are **double-minded**, but I love Thy law” (Ps. 119:113). If you have trouble with double-mindedness you need to read and meditate on God’s Word (the Truth), and separate yourself from those who tell you something contrary to your beliefs. And speak the “truth” always about your situation rather than what things “appear” to be happening. Faith is always unseen.

Faith without works. “But someone may well say, ‘You have faith, and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will *show you my faith by my works*’” (James 2:18). Show others that you have faith by your actions. If you believe that you will marry a man who will be the spiritual leader of your home, then act like it. Begin by learning to stay under your spiritual authority now, which are your parents or whomever you live with.

If you believe that your future husband is going to be a good provider, then be careful about building a career that will challenge his ability to provide for you. “But are you willing to recognize, you *foolish fellow*, that **faith without works is useless?**” (James 2:20). If you believe that what you are praying for is going to happen, start acting like it! If you believe your friend or mom or dad will become a Christian, act like it. Talk to them the same way you would talk to any Christian. Stop speaking about what has not yet happened, but speak about what you know is going to happen.

Things not seen. Many people love to ask you if you *see* any change when you have shared your faith with them. When they ask, share these Scriptures with them: “Now **faith** is the assurance of things **hoped for**, the conviction of *things not seen*” (Heb. 11:1). “. . . for we walk by faith, not by sight . . .” (2 Cor. 5:7). And when things LOOK like they will never happen—**stay firm in your faith**. Remind yourself of those who overcame and received the abundant life God promised. “But resist him, **firm in your faith**, knowing that the **same experiences** of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world” (1 Pet. 5:9). Just before miracles happen things look their worst; therefore, we can easily rejoice always!

The Word. Once again, how can we gain the faith we need to make it through? How can we increase our faith? “So **faith comes from hearing**, and *hearing by the word of Christ*” (Rom. 10:17). Read His Word, His promise, daily, and read and repeat to others the testimonies that prove God’s faithfulness. You should also surround yourself with faithful **women** who will believe with you rather than friends or family who do not believe.

And, when you hit a hard spot in your walk of faith, the best remedy when you feel like you are almost out of faith is to *give away* what little you have left. Call or email someone else who you sense needs encouragement and give her the rest of your faith. You will soon begin rejoicing because God will fill you full of new and more powerful faith than what you gave away!

Obedience. Don’t forget that obedience to God is paramount to victory. Don’t forget what Jesus said: “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS’” (Matt. 7:21, 23).

In God’s will. If your heart convicts you that you are not in God’s will, that you do not keep His commandments, and that you do not ask for things according to His will, then of course, you will have no confidence or faith to receive your request from the Lord. Ask God to direct your paths and to change your will to His will. “. . . yet not what I will, but what Thou wilt” (Mark 14:36).

Prayer and fasting. Jesus told His apostles, “But this kind does not go out *except* by **prayer and fasting**” (Matt. 17:21). If you have been praying fervently and have purified your ways, then fasting may be what God is calling you to. Did you know that there are different lengths of fasts?

Three-day fast. Esther fasted “for favor” that she needed from her husband, who was a ruthless king. It says that she fasted **three days** “for favor.” “Go, assemble all the Jews who are found in Susa, and **fast** for me; do not eat or drink for *three days*, night or day. I and my maidens also will **fast** in the same way” (Esther 4:16). A three-day

fast (or the seven-day fast) has another benefit. Those who are contentious or who can never stop talking will become too weak to speak. Therefore, you will learn not to argue and you will gain a quiet spirit. The outward talking or turmoil is not what the verse in 1 Peter 3 is about. It is about the inward “gentle and quiet *spirit*, which is precious in the sight of God.” Fasting goes deep into your soul and spirit by quieting the turmoil in your spirit, which shows up in your character that others see, and you feel. And don’t worry if you have to work or you feel something else is inhibiting you from fasting because all the women in our fellowship lead very full and demanding lives but are more than able to fast when the Lord calls.

One-day fast. The day fast begins in the evening after your evening meal. You drink only water until the 24-hour period is complete; then you eat the next day’s evening meal. You fast and pray during this time for your petition. This fast can be done a couple of times a week to stay spiritually strong.

Seven-day fast. There is a fast that lasts for seven days. Seven days appears to represent “completion.” “Now it came about when I heard these words, I sat down and wept and mourned **for days**; and **I was fasting and praying** before the God of heaven” (Neh. 1:4). Usually it will be during great sorrow that you are “called” to fast for seven days. When you are hungry or weak, use that time for prayer and reading His Word. “My knees are **weak from fasting**; and my flesh has grown lean, without fatness” (Ps. 109:24).

A gloomy face. Keep as quiet about your fast as possible. During the fast you are to be silent, never complaining or drawing attention to yourself. “And whenever you **fast**, do not put on **a gloomy face** as the *hypocrites* do, for they neglect their appearance *in order to be seen* fasting by men. Truly I say to you, they have their *reward in full*. But you, when you fast, anoint your head, and wash your face so *that you may not be seen fasting by men*, but by your Father who is in secret; and *your Father who sees in secret will repay you*” (Matt. 6:16-18).

The Lord will fight this battle. Stand and see! Once you know that you have prayed according to what we have been reading throughout Scripture, then do as it says— “You need not *fight* in this **battle**; station yourselves, *stand and see* the salvation of the Lord on your behalf” (2 Chron. 20:17).

**The second time through my divorce, I must confess that I did very little praying and petitioning, but instead, as the Lord’s bride and His beloved, I stationed myself and watched the salvation of the Lord. Instead of warring, I gave it to the Lord of Hosts, my Husband, and used my time and energy to spend time alone, loving Him. I, instead, spent hours gaining the intimacy that the Lord longs for with His bride. I hope you will make this your goal rather than battling. ~ Michele*

No one should boast. God says we are a stubborn people. When a battle is won or when the war is over, let us only boast in Him. Let us remain humble. “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the **gift of God**; not as a result of works, that *no one should boast*” (Eph. 2:8-9). “Do not say in your heart . . . ‘Because of **my righteousness** the LORD has brought me in to possess this land,’ but because of the wickedness . . . that the LORD is dispossessing them before you. It is not for your righteousness or for the **uprightness of your heart** that you are going to possess their land, but *because of the wickedness* of these . . . for you are a **stubborn people** . . . you have been rebellious against the LORD” (Deut. 9:4-7). We all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, so let us remember that when the battle is won; once again, our righteousness is still nothing but filthy rags.

Intensity of your trials is a sign that you are close to victory. Your trials will certainly intensify when you are close to gaining the victory. “For this reason, **rejoice**, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, *knowing* that he has only a **short time**” (Rev. 12:12). **Let’s begin our commitment to winning without a word by praying His Word . . .**

“Dear Heavenly Father, I enter into my prayer closet, and now that I have shut the door, I pray to you, My Father, in secret. As you see me here in secret You will reward me openly. It is written that ‘all things you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.’ (Matt. 21:22) O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee; my soul longs for Thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is. Lord there is no one besides Thee to help in the battle between

the powerful and those who have no strength; so help us, O Lord our God, for we trust in Thee, and in Thy name have come against this multitude. O Lord, Thou art my God; let not man prevail against Thee. Your eyes, Lord, move to and fro throughout the whole earth that You may strongly support those hearts who are completely Yours. Search my heart.

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 strongholds. Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. You have readiness to revenge all disobedience when Your obedience is fulfilled.

O let the evil of the wicked come to an end, but establish the righteous. I shall not be afraid of evil tidings; my heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. My heart is established; I shall not be afraid, until I see my desire come upon the enemy. Let my future husband's fountain be blessed and let him rejoice with the wife of his youth. Let me, dear Lord, be as the loving hind and pleasant doe; let me have the hidden imperishable quality in my heart of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in Your sight. For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the Lord and He watches all his paths.

Abraham hoped against hope, believed in hope, and was not weak in faith; he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God. He was fully persuaded that what He had promised, He was able to perform. For we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what man seeth, why doth he yet hope for it? But if we hope for what we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. I would have fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord; be of good courage and He will strengthen thine heart, yes, wait on the Lord. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint. For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, besides thee, what He hath prepared for Him who waiteth for Him. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Amen.”

Personal commitment to speak to the Lord when I am in trouble or in need. “Based on what I have just learned from God’s Word, I acknowledge that only God can change anyone. I surrender my life, and anyone else in my life I believe needs changing, to God alone and the working of His Holy Spirit. I will instead ‘bathe all my desires and concerns in prayer’ by sharing all my needs, desires, and fears *with the Lord* rather than anyone else. I acknowledge that the only way to win a husband to righteousness is ‘without a word’ and with a respectful and humble spirit.”

Date: _____ Signed: _____

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