

Introduction

Deliverance is not the Goal

For as long as I can remember, I was always afraid of the dark. Since I was the oldest in my family, I was the first child to have my own bedroom. But I was afraid when the lights were turned off. Even when I was a youth pastor, having to lock up the church late at night, I would run from the door to my car with my heart beating wildly. I would check the back seat just to make sure that Jack the Ripper wasn't sitting there waiting to kill me.

After I got married, my wife and I moved into an apartment. Like any normal apartment, there was no ceiling light in the living room. One Saturday night as we were having dinner in the kitchen, I started to feel something was not right in the living room. In fact, I thought I saw a spirit-being quickly flashing in the dark, and it made the hair on the back of my neck stand up. As I turned away from looking into the living room to look at my wife, I squeezed her hand really tightly. Lana noticed something was not right. She asked me if everything was okay. Of course, I wasn't about to admit that I just got scared of the dark.

When dinner was over, she turned off the kitchen light, and we went to the office where she would paint and I would finish the final touches on my sermon. Guess what my sermon was about? Victory over the devil! I was

preparing a sermon on victory, and yet I was scared of the dark. This fear of the dark had been in my life for as long as I could remember. I even asked God to remove it, but it always seemed like God wanted me to resist it.

Suddenly out of nowhere, my wife asked me if I would go and bring her some water from the kitchen. Now keep in mind this meant that I would have to go down the hallway, through the living room, and then into the kitchen with all the lights off. This may sound funny to some, but I was scared to death. I felt that something creepy was in the living room, and it would kill me if I went in there. I tried to persuade my wife to get her own water, but she insisted that she couldn't because she was painting. I should just go and bring her water.

I decided that, since there was no way I would tell Lana that I was afraid in my own apartment, I would go and get the water, even if I had to die in my living room. My plan was simple. I would run as fast as I could to reach the light switch in the kitchen, turn on the light, get the water, and then leave the lights on. She would later turn them off before we went to sleep. I was about to leave the room and race to the light switch when I heard the Holy Spirit say, "Do NOT turn on the light; you are the light." I felt him speak loudly to my pounding heart, "I will not remove your fear of darkness because I have empowered YOU to resist it." Yet in my mind, it was like, "that's easy for you to say God, but here I am scared and I am going to die." Well, I decided, enough is enough! My time had come. I had to face what I've been fleeing from all my life. With my heart thumping like crazy and feeling every ounce of fear, I walked into the living room. Without turning on the light, I positioned myself in the middle of the living room and this is what came out of my mouth: "Darkness or whatever you are, you have no place in this

house anymore. I pay the bills here so get out now!” Faith was released in my spirit. Immediately, fear left and whatever demon was masquerading behind that endless fear was gone---forever. I have never had that kind of fear again. My fear of the dark has become a thing of the past.

I prayed for deliverance from fear, but God had another plan. He wanted me to exercise the undiscovered dominion over the fear that I already had in Jesus. I wanted freedom from fear; God wanted me to fight it. I wanted God to remove it; God wanted me to resist it.

Now I can see there is a shift taking place in the Body of Christ where the Holy Spirit is empowering everyday believers to operate in the authority that is already theirs through Jesus Christ. *“Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand; To execute vengeance on the nations, and punishments on the peoples; To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; To execute on them the written judgment— This honor have all His saints. Praise the LORD!”* (Psalm 149:6-9).

God wants us to have praises in our mouth and His sword in our hands. Spiritual warfare doesn't work if our mouth is full of complaining and admitting defeat. Our mouth speaks or reveals what is in our hearts. We were created to worship, and we are now called to engage in warfare. Warfare and worship go together. The high praises of God must be coming out of our mouth and our hands must securely hold onto the double-edged sword which is none other than the Word of our God (Hebrews 4:12). This sword of the Spirit is to bind and execute punishment on the enemy. We are used to only being delivered from bondage. Instead, God is now preparing a mighty generation to put the enemy in bondage, to put

chains on the forces of darkness through the authority of Jesus' name.

As Jesus said, *"How can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house"* (Matthew 12:28); the roles have been reversed. The enemy used to bind us; now we can bind him through the victory of almighty Jesus who is invincible.

This is more than just being freed from the enemy; this is being empowered to successfully fight the enemy. I love this part: *"This honor have all his saints."* Victory, dominion, and a fighting spirit are an honor. This honor to take dominion, to trample upon forces of darkness, to bind the enemy has been given to all his saints. This honor belongs to all of God's children. Victory is not just for a few but for all. Authority over the enemy belongs to all believers. *"Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound."* (Matthew 18:18).

God is building up a dynamic church that will not tolerate the torments of the devil but instead will torment his demons. The time has come for demons to cry out as they did during the days of Jesus, *"Have You come here to torment us before the time?"* (Matthew 8:29). I'm sure you know some people who are tormented by demons, who are in bondage and in desperate need of deliverance. But did you know that you are the one called and entrusted to bind the enemy, to bring torment to demons just as Jesus did? You were called not just to receive deliverance but to walk in dominion. Don't just wait for God to cast out every enemy, but walk in the power of the Holy Spirit to actively resist whatever He has not yet removed.

The first book I wrote, *Break Free*, focused on how to get free and stay free from Satan's power. Most of the book

emphasized the reality of the spiritual realm and how to obtain freedom through Jesus. *Break Free* has been translated into several languages and I have received many amazing testimonies from all over the world of healing, freedom, and salvation.

In this current book, I want to build on that foundation of deliverance and to go one step further, showing that God's ultimate goal is not just deliverance but dominion. As a pastor, I lead the Hungry Generation Church where we pray for healing and deliverance every week. Once a year, we hold an international conference called Raised to Deliver where people come from all around the world to receive their touch from Jesus. However, my heart is broken for the folks who get delivered but don't learn how to walk in victory, and soon they're back again seeking deliverance. They constantly feel like there is more that needs to be cast out of them. I don't want to downplay the need for a total, complete deliverance; I want to highlight the importance of walking in victory as the only way people can get their full deliverance.

There is a danger in not moving toward absolute dominion after receiving deliverance. It can cause us to end up seeking deliverance again and again. We begin to go from deliverance to deliverance, instead of from deliverance to dominion. The United States of America, the country where I am currently residing, has a huge problem with bondage. We have about 5% of the world's population yet have around 25% of the world's incarcerated prisoners.¹ Having so many prisoners in

¹ Lee, Michelle. "Does the United States Really Have 5 Percent of the World's Population and One Quarter of the World's Prisoners?" *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 30 Apr. 2015, 7:00am, www.washingtonpost.com/news/fact-checker/wp/2015/04/30/does-the-united-states-really-have-five-percent-of-worlds-population-and-one-quarter-of-the-worlds-prisoners/.

prison is a gigantic problem, but prisoners returning to the same prison is an even worse crisis in the USA. A study from the Bureau of Justice Statistics called "Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 30 States in 2005: Patterns from 2005 to 2010" found that 76% of prisoners released from state prisons were arrested again within 5 years of their release.² This study tracked 69,279 prisoners for 5 years and found that most of them were arrested again within their first few years of freedom. When I used to preach in jail, security guards would tell me that most of the men there were not there for the first time. And for many of them, that would not be their last time being imprisoned either.

Instead of moving from deliverance to deliverance, God intended for us to move from deliverance to dominion. Let's take Israel for example. God didn't plan for them to keep going back to Egypt for more deliverance after things got hard in the wilderness. Instead, led by the cloud each day and by fire at night, God expected them to move forward to become fearless soldiers. God was not just taking slaves out of the land of bondage, but He was leading them to conquer the land of promise. Israel was tempted to go back to Egypt many times. They talked about it, complained about it, and even threatened God and Moses about it. At times, life in bondage seemed better than a life of freedom in the desert. They failed to understand that even though freedom is free, learning to walk in victory takes time, effort, adjusting, and training.

God's plan of getting Israel out of Egypt was not the final goal. It was only a means to the goal. The goal was for them to take possession of the Promised Land; God

² Durose, Matthew R., et al. "Recidivism Of Prisoners Released In 30 States In 2005: Patterns From 2005 To 2010 - Update." *Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS)*, 22 Apr. 2014, www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=phdetail&iid=4986%2B.

didn't just give it to them. In Egypt, they received deliverance by doing very little, but in the Promised Land, they would have to fight to take possession of it and keep what was promised. In fact, the children of Israel only possessed what they fought for, not what they wished and hoped for. What was true for them is also true of us today. God delivers us from the cruel Pharaoh, but He expects us to conquer the wicked Philistines. The Promised Land was different from Egypt. The Israelites were delivered from Egypt, but the Promised Land required taking dominion. That's what Israel did and that's what we must learn to do as well.

Battles are not the same as bondage. To engage in battle is the designated privilege of free people. Bondage is bad; battle is good. Bondage makes you a slave; battle makes you a soldier. We have to renew our mind that battles are not bad. They are the keys to breakthrough. It's time to move on from freedom to fighting. God set us free from sin but not from warfare.

When you get saved and delivered, battles don't stop. In fact, in some ways, they only begin. In deliverance, God works for you, but in dominion, He works through you. King David knew this about his God, "*Blessed be the Lord my Rock, Who trains my hands for war, and my fingers for battle*" (Psalm 144:1). God does not deliver you from battles, but He trains you for them. Because of the cross, we don't fight for victory; we fight from victory to victory. Like it or not, we must fight. Israel finally entered the Promised Land, but they still had to fight to take and maintain possession of it.

I believe by means of this book you will be trained to reign victoriously in your personal life. We will dive into the story of Esther and see the simple yet powerful process that takes us from deliverance to dominion.

It's time to fight back.



Thoughts to Share

Use #fightbackbook #pastorvlad hashtags.

God has anointed you to resist that which you are asking Him to remove.

We were created to worship; we also were called to warfare.

Bondage is bad; battle is good. Bondage makes you a slave; battle makes you a soldier. Bondage happens in Egypt; battles take place in the promised land.

In deliverance, God works for you, but in dominion, He works through you.

God delivers us from demons but not from battle.

Thank you for reading!

Fight Back book will be available on October 1, 2020 on all platforms.