

Every one of you are engaged in a spiritual war against the devil, the world, and your own sinful nature. And on top of that, wrestling even with God. You see Jacob, moves off his family to protect them, alone, he's fearful to meet Esau after 14 years, who now has a mighty army, then wrestles with the Lord, Jesus. Thus to strengthen Jacob to confess: the Lord is with me, my deliverer, what shall I fear? He will keep me, keep His Word, His promises.

More wrestling with God, the daughter of the woman with the demon, the Lord reveals to her the reality we're all in: trouble, danger, thus how to direct our prayers. The reality is we are fighting this war, and we need spiritual weapons and training. Training, God uses crosses, wrestling with His will, to train us, to teach us what matters, to prepare us for the fight. In all of scripture, this women is 1 of the greatest examples. 1 of only 2 people who receives praise of faith from Jesus. She and the centurion, both gentiles, both outsiders, both believed, that they lived only by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.

She issues the same prayer as blind Bartimaeus in Jericho, **Lord son of David have mercy upon me**; recognizes Jesus as the Messiah. And in response, our Lord seems to ignores her, to test her, but she prays and prays, believing every word that proceeds from the mouth of God is the word of life. She clings to it, finally turning his own words against him not out of cleverness but in faith. If I'm a dog, it's good for I must then be his dog at his table.

Consider the blessing that crosses, burdens cause us to pray more. I expect much of our prayers on Monday morning, we pray because we've this pain, this problem, help for a stressful, busy day, short on time, running late, pray traffic isn't bad, get a good parking spot or what do you have for supper.

Those are legitimate prayers because we come as dear children to their dear Father but think, how most our daily prayers are for material goods, easier life, less problems, less broken things and bills to fix it, more time, our own health or health of loved one, praying about conflicts with others. That is good, yet

Rarely we pray Monday morning, just to praise God or ask for stronger faith. We need to learn to pray for spiritual weapons along with material goods and the best antidote to this is pray the Lord's Prayer everyday, recognize what Jesus teaches us to ask. Then actually ask him for them.

Then pray the Psalms, as Jesus did. Psalms mostly don't ask for material things, but for deliverance from spiritual enemies, the dangers of life, for remembering (that's the liturgical day today, Reminiscere, remember God's law, remember what happens to the unrepentant, remember God keeps His word, remember whose you are, remember God is with you to defeat your enemies, keep you, deliver you.

We need to recognize our prayers are part of how the battle is waged, a weapon in this war against Satan, to use prayer to drive off the demons, as we do, when we pray **deliver us from the evil**.

When we're praying we ought to think like the American soldiers at Bastogne, the Battle of the Bulge. When they're almost freezing to death, surrounded by greater forces, under siege for over a week, little food, and what do they ask for? What do they say drop in on us? More ammunition, they want to finish the mission, they want to defeat the enemy, they do not want to be overrun. The 101st Airborne courage under fire, focused in the fight, insisted they did not need rescued when Patton's 3rd Armored division finally arrived.

We need weapons in the spiritual warfare, for faith to believe, ask for the strength to resist sin, ask for the courage to confess who Jesus is to the world, to witness to our neighbors and coworkers, to our families, to tell the truth and to suffer the consequences.

Believe as this faithful woman, you do live by every word from the mouth of God, which means we need to use the Bible, as we engage the enemy, overcoming temptation, resisting sin by the word of God even as Jesus did in His temptations desert against the devil last week. Using the word of God to speak against the world and against the devil for what is true.

As prayer is conversation with God, then God needs a time to talk, He speaks in Scripture, that His word shapes us, shapes our prayer, forms our words to speak to others and against evil.

And this battle mostly takes part in your home and work, where your vocations are, this is where you could actually impact the world and make a difference. You have a part to play in this, a sacred duty to one another, as we carry out this warfare, clinging to the word of God and believing that He is good.

Of course this training, the weapons needed, takes place here -preaching, liturgy, Sacraments, in the fellowship of believers. We need this place, we need one another. We've been set apart from the world by God; He set us apart -to be together. That we encourage one another, help one another, shepherded by our Lord, so He sends your pastors.

We come here for renewal, refreshed, to be in the presence of God, where He would have us be, in His house. We come for forgiveness, encouragement, for healing, for joy; but also come here...that you are better prepared to fight; for strength to endure and suffer what we must. That God works in you, through you, honoring you, giving you a part to play in His Kingdom. You've been called to this, enlisted in this fight, warfare. He has given to you various duties, placed you with that spouse, that child, that parent, that job, that home, in this place intentionally.

Fight. Don't give up. Pray for more ammunition. **Whatever you ask in My name I will give you.** This is a promise from the God who cannot lie, take hold of His Word, Sacraments, prayer -weapons of your warfare. Your Lord does exactly what He promises and there is joy, mercy, your enemies defeated. Your prayers perfectly answered.