

Defensive Power Unleashed in Giving Thanks

December 1, 2016



May the peace of Christ reign in our lives and make this season holy as we gather our families together.

Well, my dearest family, the Lord has truly brought forth His wisdom for this time when families see one another again. We know that for some, this may be the last time we see them on this Earth and so it is a perfect opportunity to heal and love one another.

The enemy, every year, sends out armies of demons to cause division, misunderstanding and wounding in the family. First between husband and wife and then between siblings and relatives. Knowing this ahead of time, we can be prepared both by spiritual warfare and strengthened in virtue, knowing that only love and its fruits will conquer evil.

So, yesterday when I had my communion service, the readings were from Colossians 3, and they truly brought home everything the Lord has been teaching us about our relationships with others and how easily we get seeds of resentment, with which the enemy builds strongholds of unforgiveness. I've been monitoring myself very carefully and notice I have 'buttons' or 'hot spots,' places where I recoil inside and begin grudging and complaining internally. Although I don't let it show externally, most of the time, I feel it inside and it takes the joy out of whatever I was doing.

Paul addresses this very thing in Colossians 3 beginning at verse 12. Because you are God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with heartfelt mercy, with kindness, humility, meekness and patience.

I've had to come to terms with the truth that I am the Lord's Beloved and Bride before I am my mother's daughter, a niece, a sister or mother of children. Therefore, the Lord is calling me to act as His disciple before any earthly office, and my heart must be His towards my family. This calls for exceptional self-control, and/or a healing of memories that are painful and profound forgiveness. You may be the only example of Christ's love in your family. How important then is it to set aside all grudges and painful memories of past misunderstandings and injuries.

The Scripture continues, Bear with one another; forgive whatever grievances you have against one another. Forgive as the Lord has forgiven you.

In addition to this, we are called to demonstrate our love by deferring to one another, showing respect and preference to their concerns. For instance, which home we will gather in, who will make the preparations? I can't count the number of times there was strife over who deserved to have Christmas at their house, Christmas at someone else's house - and how you don't want to leave out one set of relatives for the other - and so on. We can't possibly please everyone, but we can defer to some and give an example of generosity and love.

Over all these virtues put on love, which binds the rest together and makes them perfect.

Without this love, kindness and meekness, even the finest preparations go sour when there is strife and insensitivity. We can pray against demonic strongholds in family members and make their demons wait outside the door while we enjoy sweet fellowship. Make 'em wait outside the door with our own demons! But Christ's peace must reign in your hearts - the Scripture goes on to say - since as members of the one body you have been called to that peace.

The next verse in the Scriptures was what hit me the hardest, and I have a favor to ask of you guys along with it. "Dedicate yourselves to thankfulness." Wow. That really struck me, because thankfulness is the first line of defense against demonic attacks mentally, emotionally. If you're in a state of praise, worship and thankfulness, it's very hard for them to penetrate with resentment, strife, bitterness. It just can't enter when you're in the sweet space of Thanksgiving!

The Lord's even teaching us to give thanks for those resentments and bitterness - things that CAUSE that. And that, in turn, will cause the demons to flee, because they cannot get a foothold in our hearts - they'll look for someone else to bug!

I've been finding that each morning when I come before the Lord to repent of anger, unforgiveness, selfishness and pride that I end thanking the Father for all He has done for us. It just pours out of me, I'm so grateful. During the day, when I am tempted to lose my patience, somehow I begin singing thank you songs!!! I know this is the Lord because my attitude quickly drifts to impatience and thank you is the furthest thing from my mind!

It continues, Let the word of Christ, rich as it is, dwell in you. In wisdom made perfect, instruct and admonish one another. Sing gratefully to God from your hearts in psalms, hymns, and inspired songs. Whatever you do, whether in speech or in action, do it in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Wow! Drive this car to the grocery store, in the name of the Lord Jesus, I won't be cutting people off - I'll be very, very deferring to the traffic around me.

And then the last part is, Give thanks to God the Father through Him. Wow! The really explains why I've been so riveted on the Father in the morning, thanking Him profusely for loving and caring for us.

And of course, this ring that He gave me reminds me of His tremendous kindness.

Knowing the stress that this season can generate, I'm going to ask a favor of you, Heartdwellers. Would you please post all your favorite thank you songs and we will put a "thank you, God" playlist together that you can add to your collection of songs so that you can stay in a place of thanksgiving when the waters get rough. I can't put the songs up, that would be dishonest, but I can at least list the artists and names of the songs. What first comes to my mind is Julie True's song *Thank You*. I find myself singing that when I get up in the morning. I have this terrible habit of singing with my mind and not singing with my vocal chords, which I have to change. But it's really a sweet, sweet song. Once I have collected all the thank you songs together, I will make a playlist in PDF format and we'll put it up on the Website where the other PDF's go.

Let's all sing gratefully to God from our hearts in psalms, hymns, and inspired songs, and stay free from the seeds of strife and bitterness these seasonal demons are out to incite us with, to steal our peace and joy.