

Thursday 13th August Andrew Baddeley

Good morning everyone, good to see you this morning, hope you're doing well. I'm going to pray before we start. Father I want to say thank you Lord for today, thank you for this new day, thank you for new mercies on this Thursday morning and thank you Father for what You're going to show us through Your Word this morning as we have our devotional together.

I was reading in John chapter 10, a very famous verse, verse 10 and it says, 'the thief comes only to steal, kill and destroy, but I have come – this is Jesus – I have come that they may have life and have it to the full'. I want to say to each one of us this morning that we have an inheritance of life that Jesus has given us. That God gave His only Son, Jesus, that we may have life and have it to the full. Before I go on I just feel I want to speak that over us today, that our inheritance on this Thursday morning is that the Father has given us life and He wants us to live life and live it to the full. And receive every bit of life that He has given us on this earth to live in the fullness of life, that is our inheritance. When Jesus died on the Cross He finished the work and He said 'it is finished', it is a finished work, on the Cross He conquered sin and death. There is no power of the enemy that can overtake you in any way. When we got baptised, when we gave our lives to Jesus, we were baptised in to Christ, we were baptised in to the victory on Calvary. So when Jesus says that 'I have come that you may have life and have it to the full', He has already paid that price, that we can walk in the power of that victory this morning. So that is the blessing and that is the blessing I want to bless you with today, be very blessed with the life that He has given us.

In 1 Corinthians, chapter 15 verse 56, 'The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.'⁵⁷ But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.⁵⁸ Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain.' That one line where he says He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, each one of us has the victory in Him and as we remain in Him, as we stand firm in Him, we have the victory. The thing I wanted to highlight to us today is that the first part of the verse, Jesus said, the thief comes *only* to steal, kill and destroy. The thief, the enemy, we have an enemy that is around us in this world, he comes *only* to steal, kill and destroy, there's nothing good that he wants to do. Everything about your life he hates and he wants to destroy everything good that is around us. We are in a battle, especially in these last days it's more evident than ever isn't it, we are in a battle as Christians more than ever. I feel one of the things I want to say this morning is the Lord saying wake up to the fact we are in a battle, but we have the victory. So remember the truth that we have the victory in Christ Jesus, we have the victory so we stand strong. We stand in this battle we have the upper hand, we stand in a place of victory in the battle we are in, we're standing in a place of victory.

We don't go looking for a fight. We're not going to look for a fight in the battle we have to fight in this world. I remember as an early Christian I was looking for a fight with the enemy. I used to pray against every bit of witchcraft, every freemason, walk around on prayer walks digging up every stone looking for the enemy's schemes. And it almost became an obsessive thing. And the Lord warned me really strongly in a dream about my approach to spiritual warfare. Not that *what* I was doing was wrong, but it was my approach, the way I was doing it out of a sense of going for it with everything that I had without being led by the Holy Spirit, without doing it in a place of communion, out of a place of worship. Worship and praise has got to be our key, the centre of everything we are, but I was doing it out of a place of 'I'm going to overturn the enemy in every single corner'. The Lord warned me in a dream and He gave me a picture of a host of believers in a place of praise and worship, worshiping Him and the Light of God was all around them. I was on the edge of that, trying to defeat my enemies in my own strength. That is not our battle, we're doing this battle in the Name of the Lord Jesus. When David went to fight against Goliath, Goliath came with spear and

javelin, every bit of muscular strength that he could bring. David went to fight in the Name of the Lord, and he had pebbles in his hand and a sling shot and he went in the power and the Name of the Lord and the strength of God and he fought his battles. That's my first point.

Secondly, our fight is not against flesh and blood. We know it says in Ephesians chapter 6 'the battle is not against flesh and blood, but it's against the principalities and powers of this dark world'. So we're not fighting against one another. So often I hear stories online where ministries are undercutting other ministries, churches are criticising other churches, brothers and sisters, etc. etc., failing to recognise this is not a fight against one another. We are called to live in peace with one another, blessing our brothers and sisters, not cursing, but living in harmony and peace. But there are principalities and powers that ride on the back of these things and we need to be aware of that. So our fight is not against flesh and blood, but it is against principalities and powers. It's praying for that discernment in the Spirit. Praying 'Oh God lead me in the battle, lead me in my praying', not praying one another down as I've seen and witnessed how it operates, how people operate in this time.

Our battle, attacks from the enemy, can come in different forms over our lives. Even what people say to us, criticism, undermining, and all that; remember the fact of what's behind it, just being aware of that. Even through circumstances, through finances – the other week both my cars went wrong and I was thinking this is not just a coincidence. It just seemed to be one thing after another and felt more of an enemy attack against me and my family through this time. Not being over spiritual about it, or focusing on that, but to say we all recognise we have enemy opposition that's trying to steal, kill and destroy life and goodness from our homes and our ministries, our lives, our churches and everything around us. It's just being discerning, being aware of that and understanding that we do have an enemy and we need to be aware of these things.

But one of the 'go to' Psalms that I use which helps me in my battle, which helps me in my praying, in my everyday walk in the spiritual warfare that we're living in and walking in, is Psalm 35 and I'm going to read a few verses. I often pray this before the Lord as part of my warfare. This is a Psalm of David and he prays this, 'Contend, LORD, with those who contend with me'. So David is saying Lord this is Your battle, that You will fight this fight, contend with those who are coming against me in what ever form that may be and I pray that, I say 'Lord Lord contend with the enemies that are after my life today, who are after my peace, who are after my joy who are after the fullness of life that I have. Lord contend with those who would contend against me, fight against those who would fight against me. Take up shield and armour, arise and come to my aid, brandish spear and javelin against those who pursue me. Say to me "I am your salvation"'.

We are just declaring and even this morning maybe you need to do that in your own life. Maybe you need to declare this Psalm out loud and say "God, contend with those who contend against me". Very often, when I pray this prayer I really find the Lord breaks through so quickly and often I've had the Lord intervene in situations and break off the enemy attacks that would come against me to try and destroy life, as in the promise of John 10 that Jesus has for me.

It's one of the things that God has given us that we can pray, we can ask God, we can ask Him to contend. Now when Jehoshaphat was fighting a battle, when he realised he had an enemy attack that was coming to destroy everything that was around him and all the ministry around him, this is what the Lord said to Jehoshaphat 'Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed at this great horde, for the battle is not yours but God's'. [2 Chronicles 20:15] I think as Christians we need to remember that, the battle is not ours, but it is God's battle. God has called us to be co-workers with Christ, to be co-heirs with Christ that we have the victory in Christ, as I've already said this morning; but to work as co-workers with Christ. That He has had the victory, it's His battle and He has won the

battle, but as we pray it changes the way we pray, Lord that you would contend with our enemies this morning, that you would fight the battle for us. It doesn't mean that we sit back and let it all happen, no we stand up and co-work with Christ, we co-work in our praying. We say in our praising "Lord we praise You, we praise You in this place, that You have the victory, You have the victory this morning, You have the victory over our lives today and Lord we celebrate who You are". We celebrate Him in it. It's almost like we're saying "Lord we're lifting up Your Name over our nation today that You have the victory over everything that we have". The Lord said to Zerubbabel 'The battle is not by might, not by power, but it's by My Spirit, says the Lord' and I just feel like I want to speak that over us this morning: "That it's not by might, it's not by power, but it's by My Spirit and it's by My Spirit that you're going to bring breakthrough in this nation, in this season".

I'll leave at this, but one thing I want to share before I close, as I was meditating on the battle that we're in at this time, the call to prayer at this time, which is so evident, which is rising up in so many prophetic voices over this nation at the moment; that brothers and sisters, we've got to rise up and pray. I saw a picture of the Church, the army of God, rising up over our nation and symbolically joining hands. This is not a competitive battle, this is a battle that we've got to join hands in love as brothers and sisters around this nation and stand up, because we're coming into a time of battle. I saw a picture in Job 39, it talks about the war horse, it describes, almost like Jesus being like a war horse at this time, who's panting and raring to go and whose hooves are striking the ground, raring to do battle over this nation at this time. I feel as saints we need to stand up and pray and declare that the battle is the Lord's and He has won the victory over our nation. We're going to see the breakthrough of the kingdom of God coming in this land.

I feel that we're moving into a time where we need to stand together and do that. On our streets, worshipping in our streets, standing praying around our neighbourhoods, something that I've been trying to do more often. Praying around – let's get out there, let's get out of our houses, let's get of our churches and join together and see the breakthrough over our land. "For He has come to give us life and give it to us to the full". So I bless you this morning. I pray that you have an amazing day and that you would live in the victory that the Lord has promised you this morning. God bless you and I pray the blessing of God over you, over your families, over your churches, Oh God, and over us as a nation, for this is our inheritance this morning. Amen.