

Praise is a Weapon
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Those who know me even a little bit have seen that in the past three weeks I have been sliding down a slippery slope toward depression. That's not like me. I haven't been depressed for years and years. Oh, sure there have been some dark moments that descend on me occasionally. But I'm always able to shake it off and return to my usual cheerful self.

But no so the past three weeks.

It all started after a spectacular spiritual victory. For the first time in the three decades of my speaking career, three weeks ago, I was completely open and honest to an audience. I shared some of my deepest hurts and darkest secrets. I shared how learning to praise God brought me victory from past defeats. It was a marvelous, truly anointed moment.

I should have known that Satan, the enemy of my soul, would not like that. At all.

Within hours after my vulnerable message, I had to hurry and scurry to pack up all my belongings and move from one end of Terre Haute to the other. Satan convinced me to feel sorry for myself because I was so tired and had so much to do. Satan urged me to think I was too busy to be thankful to God for his provisions. Satan suggested it was unfair that we had to make some painful decisions about our "stuff" because our "new" house is so small. On the day we moved, Satan whispered in my ear: "It's obvious you didn't get rid of enough stuff. That's not fair, is it?"

Satan also made me feel angry. Angry because of my possessions: I was ashamed I had too many things, yet all I wanted to do was buy new things for this new house. I was angry because I had shared so openly about my past that I could no longer hide behind my painful secrets. I was angry because I had so many boxes to unpack (still do) and angry because I don't know where to put anything. I was angry because when I woke up in the night to go to the bathroom, I had to struggle to remember just where the bathroom is in this house. I was tired and sore and confused and angry and feeling very sorry for myself. Satan loved every self-pitying moment.

Then I remembered a snippet of a lyric from a song: My worship is warfare, and praise is my weapon.

Then I came back to where I belong: a place of worship and praise. Praise and thanks to God who has provided me a platform to share openly and freely God's redeeming love. Praise the God will destroy our walls of depression as effectively as the Israelites' shouts of praise brought down the walls of Jericho. Worship belongs to the God that provided me a different neighborhood with different neighbors who need to know a God who makes us all different.

When I opened my heart to worship, depression vanished. Instantly. When I opened my mouth to praise, Satan fled Instantly.

Why don't you give it a try, too?