

# Spiritual Warfare Series - Why Must We Fight?

by Jim Cymbala

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*Spiritual warfare is permitted by God and works for our good, purifying our faith and making us cling to Him.*

**Duration:** 44:05

**Scripture:** Ephesians 6:10

**Topics:** "Spiritual Warfare"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a personal story about walking with his granddaughter when she was four or five years old. They encountered a group of tough-looking individuals, and the little girl became fearful. However, when she held the speaker's hand, she relaxed because she trusted him to protect her. The speaker uses this story to illustrate the concept of faith and how it can help us overcome fear and rely on God's protection. He also mentions the biblical example of Peter taking his eyes off Jesus when he was arrested, emphasizing the importance of keeping our focus on the Lord even in moments of elation or despair.

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## Transcript

We started a series on spiritual warfare. We want to continue today, but I want to take it from a different aspect each week, not the typical, just let's go through the pieces of armor that the Bible mentions in Ephesians 6, which are involved as our helps in this thing called spiritual warfare. I want to take some different approaches.

Last week we talked about our adversary, Satan, and how to overcome him. We've only covered one article of the armor, which was a few weeks ago, the sword of the Spirit, which is the what? The Word of God. So I want to look at it, yet a different aspect, and just been asking God to help me to say something helpful to you.

In fact, I just want to say something personal to you all if I could. I was reading something in my own reading, my own devotions, and Paul is talking, I believe it's in 2 Corinthians, and he says, talking about the authority that God has given him to the church at Corinth. He founded the church and he was kind of like the pastor of the church.

But some people had come in after him and were trying to badmouth him and really mislead the congregation. But he says this sentence, he says, But you know who I am, and the authority that God has given me in relationship to you, spiritual authority, authority to build you up and not to tear you down.

Because these other people had come in after him, they were robbing the people, wanting themselves, making believe they were somebody important, taking the people's money, abusing them.

But that phrase struck me and I dropped my Bible and I started to pray because the authority that God has given me as the pastor of this church, it's only an authority to build you up, never to pull you down. And I prayed as God is my witness, God, don't let me open my mouth unless I'm going to build the people up. Do you understand why we're all here today? We want to build each other up.

Can we say amen to that? You know why Carol says something in the microphone, or you know why the choir sings? To build you up, not to entertain you. I'm speaking today, I'm a nobody, but I'm here to build you up, to encourage you, to strengthen you. And if I've ever done anything other than that, forgive me, have mercy, but I'm here every Sunday to try to build you up.

And I want to do it today. Let's go to the familiar passage that we've been looking at, and we're still at it. We can't get past verses 10 through 12 in chapter 6. Let's look.

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle, it's actually the word for wrestling.

It's not long-range combat. It's hand-to-hand with the thought of throwing the other person down. It's intimate, it's close, the word that's used there for our struggle.

It's not our struggle as in the Vietnam War, or in some other war where you're throwing missiles at each other only. This is up close and personal. Our struggle is not against flesh and blood.

They're not our enemy. Satan can use people, but they are never the enemy. People are never the enemy.

Satan can use people, but we're to pray for all people. Even as Jesus prayed from the cross, Father, forgive them. They don't know what they're doing.

It's against our struggle, rulers against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. That, again, tells us that our enemy is Satan, and Satan has a legion of evil spirits. Some think they're the fallen angels.

I tend not to believe that. I don't know what the origin is of demonic powers. Bible's not clear on that, but they can inhabit people, and no angel can inhabit a person that we know of from Scripture.

But these are all his emissaries, and there's authorities and powers. There's a ranking. So one says, and the other one moves.

And Satan is the mastermind, the most cunning, a spiritual enemy with awesome power, who cannot be defeated except by God's power. Only since he's an evil spirit, only a good spirit can overcome him, a holy, perfect spirit. Amen? So that's why it says, be strong in the Lord.

Be strong in the Lord. That means two things, ladies and gentlemen. It means in the Lord, in terms of the Lord's power, but it means also be strong in your communion with the Lord.

If you don't have communion with the Lord, you can't be strong in the Lord. You can't live 100 yards from God and then be using his power. You have to walk with him.

I have to walk with him. We all have to walk with him. So that's one of Satan's strategies, is to separate us from intimacy with Christ, because how can I be strong in the Lord if I never think of the Lord, I never open my Bible, I never pray, but I just quote, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

He won't be fooled by that. He will not be fooled by that. Paul said that, who walked with God, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

But that lays the onus on us that we're to walk with God, to be strong in the Lord. Now, there's one thing I just want to say in passing about Satan that we didn't touch on last week and these evil spirits and the spiritual warfare that we're all involved in. Every choir member here, no matter how they look to you now, they are no different than the apostle Paul.

They are involved in a spiritual warfare which all Christians know about. Once you become a believer, you become aware that there's a battle going on. All who recognize that just lift up one little hand so I know we're all on the same planet Earth, right? Satan is not afraid to attack anyone.

He attacked Jesus. He tempted Jesus, not just once, many times. And he looked for a more convenient season, the Bible says.

And notice here that Paul begins by saying, now you be strong in the Lord, you be strong in his mighty power. And then he changes it to first person plural for our wrestling. We wrestle not against flesh and blood.

He doesn't say you don't wrestle against flesh and blood. He said, I know what it is too. We wrestle.

I'm involved in this too. So there's nobody exempt, no minister, no pastor, no spiritual giant. No one, don't ever believe that, that somebody can get a position in God and be so close to God, they're not gonna be involved in this rugged combat of spiritual warfare.

The warfare only ends when you die or when Christ comes. In heaven, there is no warfare. Can we say amen to that? But while we're here on Earth, while we're here on Earth, don't be shocked, don't be surprised, don't believe anyone who tells you different.

Paul says our struggle, we wrestle not against flesh and blood, against principalities and powers. One other thing in passing. When the Lord was tempted, the Bible says that Satan waited for a more convenient season, which means that Satan, he's not omniscient, he doesn't know everything, but he studies all of us.

And he knows our structural weaknesses. He knows the sins that we've indulged in before we knew Christ. He knows that, as we said last week, that the person who won't steal could blow up and have a temper problem.

And the person who will never get upset has a problem in another area. He knows all those things. He makes a study of those things.

And so do his legions of emissaries. But he also has been a student for thousands of years of when best to attack us. Now we're all attacked and we're all tempted and we always have to be on guard.

Remember what Jesus said, watch and pray so that you don't enter into temptation. He said that to the disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane. But the Bible does say in the day of evil, having done everything,

stand up against Satan and don't let him knock you down.

Don't let him throw you to the ground. So having done everything that you stand in the day of evil, well, what is the day of evil? Well, the day of evil seems to be times of special temptation. We know the Lord taught us to pray on a daily basis, hourly basis.

Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. And later on, lead us not into, but deliver us from the evil one or from evil. So this is something every day, every moment that we have to be on guard against.

But Satan knows, and maybe one day we'll talk more at length about this. We can make a study together on when does Satan pick to make his major assaults because he studies us. Let me just give you two times that you have to be very careful.

When your heart has been broken and you've been let down and the bottom falls out of your plans and you're very vulnerable and you tend towards sadness or depression or those low moments, the loss of a loved one, those moments are special moments when Satan knows we could take our eyes off of the Lord and look inward and have self-pity, and he attacks. You'll find that as you study the Bible. Elijah, at one of those low moments, ended up wanting to take his life.

And here he was, this mighty man of God, a mighty prophet. But when he got that low emotional moment, which we all suffer from, we all suffer from low moments. How many have ever had a low moment in your life? Just stick up one little finger like this, all right? All right, we all have, haven't we? Those are special moments, right? Temptations that he wouldn't give to us right now in this service while I'm speaking.

He knows you're on guard. He knows we're listening to the Word of God. We're worshiping and singing, holy, holy is the Lord.

He's not gonna come with certain temptations. He's gonna wait for alone moments, lonely moments, down moments. Another time that he comes is when you're highly elated and you hit the jackpot.

I was gonna say hit the number, but we don't play the numbers, amen? But when you are in some kind of joyous ecstasy, when there's even been a spiritual triumph, when a minister speaks a sermon in front of 10,000 people and God uses him and there's this joy and highly you're elated and maybe people even complimenting you or you get some just wonderful thing that happens and you get so elated and in those moments of elation and even rejoicing, it's so easy to get wrapped up in your emotion and take your eye off of the Lord. You'll see that in the Bible. One example of the first one was Peter when Jesus was arrested and he was despondent and lonely.

Why have he let them arrest him? We've seen him walk on water. How can he let this happen? And then in that low moment, following him from afar, he denied the Lord three times and then as I mentioned, Elijah down and kind of discouraged. Discouragement opens up.

This is why the Bible says don't give place to the devil. Don't give place to the devil. What does it mean? Be careful and as you're walking that you give place to the devil but one of those other moments is high elation, great success because it's so easy to take your eyes off of God when everything is going good.

Isn't the devil a devil? I'm telling you. Am I right? He watches us when we're down to attack us then and then he knows that when we get up, we can just stop looking at the Lord and saying, look at me. Look

what happened to me.

Wow. And then boom, he comes. My question though is this.

Why? As I study problems that come across my desk, as I counsel people as I plan a meeting or conference or something or someone comes to me with a proposal in the church for a ministry, I start asking what my assistants know as I write on a piece of paper. I need more W's and H's and the W's are questions I force myself and I've learned over the years to ask. Why? What? Where? When? Who? How? How much? How long? And I apply those questions to every problem that comes in my life.

What am I talking about? Where is it? When is it? Is it something time sensitive? Why? Why is this happening? Why does this woman feel this way? Where is it happening? Some don't always apply. How? How does this work? All right. How are we going to do this? How long does it take? How much is involved? How much money is going to be involved if we do this ministry? So I want to ask a W when I read the Bible and I hear a truth and or I read a story, I start applying W's and H's.

What am I reading about? Where did it happen? When did it happen? Why did it happen? Who did it happen to? What's it got to do with me? How long? How much? What applies here? Someone just wrote me a letter and said, would you come and do speak at a conference at my church? Please get back to me. I put the note to my assistant, call and find out all the W's and H's. They didn't tell me what the conference is about.

How long would I speak? Is there another speaker in the same night? Because I try to avoid those meetings that have two speakers, like a preacher, preach-a-thon. How long is the conference? How long is the meeting? Where is it happening? Who will be there? How many will be there? Is it to ministers? Is it to lay people? How will I know to pray? How can I do anything unless I understand more? So I want to ask this. Given what we know about what we just have read about spiritual warfare, I want to ask this.

Why? If God has all power, why is he permitting all this? Why are we in spiritual warfare? God has all power, doesn't he? Greater than the devil. Why is he permitting all these battles to go on? And they're hard. They're hard.

If you're here today and you're a Christian, you don't tell me that it's hard sometimes fighting the devil. I don't know what world you live in. And no one's exempt from it.

In fact, if the truth were told, the more the Lord lays his hand on you and the more he wants to use you, the more battles you fight. But why? Why does God permit this? Now, we know this verse. We're all familiar with this verse from Romans 8. Don't we all know this verse? And we know that in all things, God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

And we know that in all things, or all things work together for good to them who love God and who have been called according to his purpose. So let's put the two together. Why in the world does God permit Elisha to have these battles? If he loves her, why is he letting her do this? So you might say to me, yes, but Pastor Symbol, here's another truth.

Even in the attacks of Satan, God is going to work it for good. And I want to ask you this then, if that's what you say. How does God do that? If God permits this to go on and we know no temptation has come to us that is not permitted by God, Satan can't overpower.

Remember, the main, we talked about Satan as the accuser. Satan, the main thing he does is he's a seducer. He's a tempter.

He presents something that looks good to the eye, but it has a sting in it. That's how he got Eve to begin with and Adam. They saw something that looked good, but they didn't know what the repercussions were.

So my question is, why does God permit it? Okay, God, you're selling me and I agree with you. Even spiritual warfare is going to work for our good and somehow bring glory to God. But I want to ask how? Because the battle is hard sometimes.

I've heard too many stories, dried too many tears from my own face and other people's faces, you know, to just glibly say, God is on the throne and He's good all the time. I want to know how this works. Why does God permit it? And if it is for our good and His glory, then how does He do that? Because this will help us, brothers and sisters, it won't take long, but this will help us when we're going through it.

When you are attacked and you are in the middle of a warfare that you can't even tell anyone about. So let's do real talk today. When you're in a fight that you can't even tell anyone about and you wonder, where is God and why is it so hard? And the discouragements are coming on the left and on the right.

And it seems like, I remember hearing a minister whose books I have in my library, he's gone to be with the Lord now, but I remember hearing him a lot of years ago on the radio as a young minister. And he said that here he had ministered for the Lord, preached sermons, been greatly used by God. And then like as an older man retired, living with his wife, now giving himself just to writing, somehow a sewer opened up.

And he was attacked by Satan in ways that he had never known his whole life. And I remember his voice breaking and him saying, and I went through this battle, like everything was coming at me. I was tempted in areas I never had been tempted before in my life.

And here I had been serving God, pastored, written books. His books are phenomenal. He has a great commentary on 2 Corinthians that I've read a couple of times.

And there he says out of nowhere, I was tempted to curse and I never cursed in my life. I was tempted to use foul language. I never used foul language in my life.

And I had to run to God and I had to say, what in the world is this about? You all are not saying amen, but I know that this is sinking into your hearts, isn't it? Because you're saying, wow, I'm not the only one. And he said it was absolutely like a sewer and just demons attacking him, all kinds of suggestions to his mind. Why does God permit it? And if it does work for good, how? Because this will help us as we fight.

Well, let's just do a couple and then we'll close. Number one, spiritual warfare is permitted by God and spiritual warfare works for our good because nothing in this world builds faith like a good fight with the devil. You can be lax.

You cannot pray. You could be growing lukewarm or cold. You could never hardly open your Bible.

You just let the enemy attack and you will realize this is a fight of faith and I got to get close to God like in a hurry. Now, without faith, it's impossible to please God. But faith has to be purified because all of us have faith, but some of our, all of our faith is mixed with other stuff.

And the way God purifies our faith, our trials and difficulties, and yes, even spiritual warfare to get rid of the junk that's in our faith, to get rid of that which is unreal in our faith and stuff we think we know, we really don't know. But when the enemy comes in like a flood, then we have to run to God and we got to cling to him. See, God is working for our good and God is working for our good because when you are on a sunny day, you can, and if this is the Lord and holding onto his promises is right here, you can just think you're just fine and you walk away from the Lord, but he loves us and he wants fellowship with us.

So he permits the enemy to attack and he uses spiritual warfare to drive us to him. And Lord, I don't know what I was thinking. I thought I could live without holding onto you.

I can't even leave you for a second. God, do I need you? God, you got to help me through this day. And just 48 hours earlier or two weeks earlier, you were just like happy as a lark and just, yeah, you had the world on a string.

How many here can look at me and say, Pastor, I've been attacked by the enemy and gone through spiritual struggles and it's made me run to God. It's made me hold onto God. Lift your hand if you know what I'm talking about, see? So God is using this for our good because it teaches us to pray.

Since Satan is invisible, the greatest weapon against him is invisible, prayer. Satan is invisible. This watch has no power against him.

This Kleenex has no power against him. This physical book has no power against him. The word has to go into my heart and produce a drawing close to God.

Remember what Jesus said, those demons that you didn't, no, they only come out by what? By prayer and fasting. So God uses spiritual warfare and permits it and works it for our good because it purifies our faith and makes us just flat out cling to God. And if you're here today and you're going through a battle, the Lord will never turn any of us away.

When we disengage with God, it's always me disengaging with God. God has never disengaged with me once. So you can't throw up your hands and have a pity party no matter how hard it hurts or no matter how difficult it is and no matter how Satan is coming at you and no matter who in their family is just tormenting you, it's gonna make you hang onto God.

And the Lord loves that. No dad is prouder, no dad is happier when their son or their daughter says, Daddy, I don't know what to do. Help me, defend me.

Dad says, you got it. Who's bothering you? I'll handle that. I'll handle that for you.

I'm gonna see this week, God willing, my granddaughter, Sue, Susie Joy. And I've mentioned this in regard to faith and what faith is. That's a good example.

I'll say this just for someone who didn't never heard it. I was walking with her when she was four or five years old on Northern Boulevard in Queens. And she's just walking next to me, this little stick of a girl.

We were helping raise her because of the situation that she was born into. As we were walking on Northern Boulevard, some little wannabe tough guys turned the corner, 16, 18, 19 years old, pushing, shoving, pants falling off their back ends, all trying to be like hard, trying to make everybody tight around them. But it wasn't happening.

But they're shoving and she couldn't discern. She just knew they're bigger than me. And they were shoving each other, but playfully fighting, taking a few swings.

And she drew close to me. I remember it like it was yesterday. She started walking closer to me.

She had been a little bit apart, but now I could feel her little bony hip bouncing into me. And we were walking and now they're coming closer. And there's seven or eight of them.

And I knew I could feel the fear in her. And suddenly she stuck out her little bony hand and searching for my hand. And the minute I held her hand, her whole body relaxed because she was saying, Papa's Bruce Lee, he can handle everybody.

She totally relaxed. Why? The guys were still there. They were still cursing and shoving each other.

No, no, Papa's got my hand. Nothing she'll ever give me in her whole life will mean more to me than that. Because I knew I'm going to take care of her.

And I could tell she knew he loves me. He'll take care of me. That's how God feels today.

When you're in the battle, he loves it when we run to him. Come on, let's put our hands together and say amen to it. Just two more quickly.

You know what also spiritual warfare does? Some great spiritual writer said God's main objective every day when we wake up is to humble us because we're all so stinking proud on our own. No insult meant, but I speak, I think, for all humanity. We tend toward pride, not so much in the sense of braggadocious and that kind of thing, but just the independence that we have, like we don't need God, like we can make it through without him.

We just have that naturally. This is why prayer is such a difficult discipline because when we walk in pride, we feel no need to pray. So what God uses spiritual warfare to do is to humble us because don't you realize how weak you are when Satan attacks? Am I right or wrong? You know, you just think you're just some spiritual giant and you think you have it all together and then the enemy attacks and it humbles us.

Andrew Murray, the great spiritual writer, said humility is the root through which all the graces of God flow. It's the channel. Without humility, that sense of I need you, Lord, and I don't have what I need in myself.

Without that, all the blessings of God, they can't flow. There's no channel to flow in. Humility is the root.

All that good sap, life-giving sap from God. So God uses spiritual warfare to remind us, we might think we're big and our family might be bragging on us, but you just tackle the devil and let him come in and you'll be saying, help me, Jesus, real quick. Am I right? But notice that that also does.

All things work together for good. If you understand spiritual warfare and it humbles you, you and I will become less judgmental because we all tend towards self-righteousness, but you just let the devil have a good five rounds with you and you see what you're capable of doing as you feel temptation and the devil attacking. You're not going to be so quick to be putting people down, are you? Am I right or wrong here, ladies and gentlemen? So God uses spiritual warfare to not just humble us, but to take away judgmentalism from our life and give us compassion, compassion.

Altos, who in the world can you look down on? There but for the grace of God goes you. Who can I look down on? No, people like to do that. I grew up around that and around churches that like to just judge everyone.

They called it discernment. It wasn't discernment. It was just judgmental, just looking down on people because their sins were not in the category that your sins are in.

People's weakness was not where your weakness was. So you love to go, look what's happening. Oh, how could she be like that? You just have a couple rounds with the enemy in spiritual warfare and it makes you so humble.

It makes us so merciful with other people. And you know what else it does? God uses spiritual warfare to prepare us to be a blessing to others. How can you and I be a blessing to others unless we've been in the fight ourselves? Unless you and I know how much we need God and how in the flesh dwells no good thing, how in the world am I going to help someone else? But now I'll not only be humbled, I'll not only have compassion, I want to say, hey friend, I'll pray with you because I was there.

And he brought me through. He's going to bring you through. Come on, let's put our hands together.

Say amen to that. The enemy is attacking, but just like he put Christ on the cross only to be defeated by the cross. He put it in Judas's heart and entered into him to betray Jesus only to have it backfire because Christ rose from the dead.

Just like the devil, what he meant for evil, God worked it for good then. Even spiritual warfare, God works for our good. All the battles that you go through, they're not just meant for you.

They're meant for someone else. Those watching this through some streaming or whatever, always remember what you're going through is not just for you. It's for the person that God's going to send you to because you've been humbled, made soft.

You now have compassion and you can lift someone up to put people down and judge them. Anybody can do that. I am astounded by how many people go to church for years, think that to judge people is some sign of spirituality.

Oh, I can see through him. That's not a sign. I don't see Jesus doing that.

Do you see Jesus? And he was the son of God. You see Jesus going around and going, oh, I can't shake your hand. I see what's in you.

No, no. When he works in our lives, we're able to pick other people up and say, I've been there. You know, when I talk to pastors, I've been doing over the last two, three years, literally dozens, hundreds, I guess, pastors conferences, pastors meetings.

I did one here recently. I'm doing a thing called 24-7 as God opens doors. I go to a city or I did one here in Brooklyn.

Most of the pastors came from the Bronx and Staten Island. 24-7 it's called. 24 pastors and I spend seven hours with them.

24 pastors or thereabouts with their wives. And I spend seven hours and just talk about how to prepare a sermon or the devotional life of a pastor or how to get a church to maybe pray more or the battles with pride. Try to just have faith to be yourself and don't try to act like a preacher.

All battles and things that I've gone through and you don't know, you don't know how I see this happen all the time. Enemy attacking me, challenges. I've had mountains.

I didn't think I could get over valleys. I never thought I could get through. Now on the other side of it, I'm able to speak into pastors and look at their eyes and I see the tears in their eyes and they say, how could he know what I'm going through? Because I was there and I'm still there.

But God uses what you go through and the victory he's gonna give you so that you can help somebody else. So what Satan meant for evil, praise God. God can work it for good.

Yeah, let's all put our hands together for that. God can work it for good. Remember that when the attack comes, you gotta remember now he's building my faith, drawing me closer to him because I gotta be strong in the Lord.

He's also humbling me so I won't be so judgmental. Judgmental people are very, very hard to be around. And you wonder what world they live in.

Because after God has been so merciful, who has the time to be talking about other people's faults? Why is it so quiet? How many want from this moment on not to be judging but to be helping? Say amen. That's what we should do. You know, that's in the Naval Academy which I was in as a plebe a lot of years ago.

All the plebes who get hassled and hazed in ways you don't wanna even know about. I got involved in that. I was brought there to play basketball and they got me in to play basketball but I had to go through what everyone else went through.

There are no exceptions. So they give you a first classman, a senior, what we would call senior in college but in the Naval Academy, he's a first classman. Second, third classmen are sophomores and then they're plebes are freshmen.

And they give you just one guy. Everyone else you call sir, everyone you brace up to, everyone else you're standing at attention, everyone else you just know them as Mr. This and they yell at you and they'll try to break you down. But you got one first classman who you can go into his room and find solace and protection and rest for a second.

And he understands what you're going through because he was once a plebe. And he can speak into your life and tell you, don't worry, you're gonna make this. Don't worry, this is what's gonna happen.

And oh, it was so comforting because you knew, he knew he was there. And that's the way God works for good in our lives. What we go through, we can help somebody else get through.

Lastly, when you love someone, the only thing that satisfies you is if they love you back. Nothing else satisfies. If you really love someone, what you want them to do is to love you back.

You don't want their money. You don't want an eight by 10 glossy. You want them to love you back.

Now, God is love. And there's faith, without faith, it's impossible to please God. But God, he wants our love.

To one church in the book of Revelation, he said, you know, you work hard, your doctrine's good. You don't permit fly-by-night preachers to come in there with false teaching. You're good, you're good to go.

Except one thing, you lost your first love. Now, first love there could be love for other people. Because as Christians, we can get mechanical, and we can lose our love for people, and actually get so wrapped up in studying the Bible and arguing about the mark of the beast and the millennial reign of Christ and all of that, that we forget that it's about loving people.

Jesus loved people. But we also can lose our love for God. So, and for the Lord, we get distracted by other things.

So one of the ways the Lord keeps our love strong for him is permitting us to go through spiritual warfare. Because then when he fights for us, and he gives us the victory, when we slip and fall, and he shows mercy, you love him so much more. Honest, real talk.

How many love him more today than you did when you first got saved? Why do we love him more? I mean, he forgave us for our sins. He told us we're gonna go to heaven when we got saved. Why do we love him more now? Because when you go through the battles of life, and you see how he sticks with you.

Come on, has he stuck with us? How many here have ever fallen, and you felt like kicking yourself, and other people kicked you when you were down, but he picked you up? How many have ever here been afraid to go to him, to even say, God, forgive me, because you've been there so many times, but you found that his mercy is new every day? And he said, yeah, let's do this. Is the Lord not amazing? And that's how he draws out our love for him. He permits us to go into hard places so that he can rescue us.

So he rekindles that love that's getting a little cold. If you're here today, the Lord wants you to love him. Yeah, come to church.

Yeah, read your Bible. But love can never be satisfied unless it's loved back. And I love him today.

You love him today? How many just love him today? And along with that love, think of the praise that we give him. We're gonna sing that song, evermore I will love you, evermore I will praise you, I will lift your name forevermore, whatever the words are. Every battle we go through that he gives us a victory, we can look back and give him praise.

Without the battles, you can't have the victory. Without the victory, you can't have the praise of the victory. That's why in the Old Testament, they keep going back the prophets.

And I found you when you were in Egypt, and I brought you out with a strong, mighty hand. And then I brought you to the Red Sea, and you didn't know what to do, and you panicked, and you were ready to go back to Egypt. But I delivered you, and you praised me.

And we're here today, and we have a lot to praise God for. Because some of us could be dead. All of us would be lost without the Lord.

But he lifted me. I was too young and never met the man. But as a kid, when I fell in that lake in Prospect Park, didn't know how to swim, just a young boy and a man with a suit, and it had a shade case.

My friends told me, put it down, took off his jacket, and dove in to the water of the lake in Prospect Park, and pulled me out as I'm just panicking, gonna drown, die. And I got out of there, and I was so shaking and so panicked, I couldn't even hug him, didn't even know to thank him. He just went on his way.

How many times have we fallen in a lake, and the Lord picked us up out of that lake? Come on, everybody in the building, let's put our hands together. Let's pray together. Lord, I thank you that although spiritual warfare is not easy, all things work together for good to them that love God.

And you permit it so that we might have a testimony, that we would be humble, that we would have compassion on others, that we would cling to you tighter. Because we realize how weak we are in ourselves. We are so happy that you live inside of us today, and that you're ready to fight our battles for us.

Some of us, Lord, we're all aware that you have held us up from falling, but some of us have even fallen, and you carried us. We couldn't even make it through certain periods of our life, you actually carried us. Like a shepherd carrying a lost sheep.

Do we just want you to know, God, that we love you today. Te amo mucho, Señor. We love you so much.

We just wanna sing our praise to you, and we're refreshed today, and we're gonna stand strong in the name of the Lord against the devil. Satan, we are not ignorant of your devices, but we overcome you by the blood of the Lamb, the blood of Jesus Christ. And your very attack is gonna draw us closer to the Lord, and your very attack is gonna humble us and make us a greater blessing to others, and your very attack is gonna make us love the Lord, our God, even more, and cling to our Jesus.

If you're in the midst of some high artillery, real strong up-close wrestling going on with the enemy, and this message was a blessing to you, and you want God to know, God, you encouraged me today. The man spoke the words I needed to hear from your word today. And God, I thank you for that.

I am not gonna go under. I'm not gonna be despondent. I'm gonna fight the good fight of faith.

Can we put our hands together and just thank God? Come on, for his word. Let's thank him for his word. Ephesians 6, verses 10 through 12.

Now, Lord, let your peace be upon us, and let what's gonna happen in the next 60 seconds be meaningful, Lord. For when I close this prayer, we're gonna greet one another, and we're gonna say something good, or give a hug, or say a prayer, or put a hand of encouragement on someone's shoulder, because we're all in the same fight, and we wanna be a blessing to someone. We don't wanna tear them down.

We wanna build them up. Let this sermon build up your people. Let me use whatever authority you've given me to build people up, Lord, in their faith.

We pray this all in Jesus' name, and everyone said. Amen. All right, turn around and greet four or five people.

Would you please, come on, greet four or five people. Not one, not two, four or five.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jim-cymbala/spiritual-warfare-series-why-must-we-fight/>

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