

# Three Predictions for 2013

by Jim Cymbala

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*Jim Cymbala shares three predictions for 2013, emphasizing God's presence and support in times of fear and dismay.*

**Duration:** 32:29

**Scripture:** Joshua 1:9, Psalm 23:4, Psalm 46:1, Isaiah 41:10, Isaiah 43:2, Matthew 28:20, Hebrews 13:8

**Topics:** "Discouragement"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a personal story of being attacked by three kids when he was younger. His older brother came to his rescue and gave him the confidence to face his attackers. The speaker then relates this story to the message of Isaiah 41:10, which says not to fear because God is with us. He encourages the audience to remember this verse and apply it to their interactions with others in 2013. The speaker also acknowledges that there may be times in the coming year when they feel like they are sinking, but reassures them that God will be there to help them through.

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## Transcript

Today in the New York Daily News, in the centerfold, they had predictions for 2013, based on your astrological sign. Your Leo, Taurus, Gemini, etc. And they had all this nonsense in a number of paragraphs for each sign, of this is what your 2013 is going to look like.

I was just scanning it and looking and saying just things. Some people, so anxious to know what's going to happen in 2013, because there's a lot of apprehension about what will happen, the financial cliff, that it seems like we're going to go over, and all kinds of things happening. But to base it on astrological signs, and the day that you were born, and all of that, just what absolute silliness.

And yet those same people say, what, you believe in the Bible? You believe in Jesus Christ? But I'm a Leo, I'm a Gemini. I want to give you three predictions, absolutely going to come true for 2013. I'm not a seer, I'm not a prophet, but I want to tell you that all three of these things, they're going to happen to you in 2013.

And when they happen, I want you to remember this meeting, and I want you to remember exactly what was said to you, so that when they happen, they will happen. I don't care what color you are, what age you are, I don't care about any of that. This you can take to the bank.

This is going to happen to you this year. I'm not throwing just creamy pastry at you, and telling you sweet nothings. I'm telling you the honest to goodness truth, what the Word of God says.

I'm basing this on the Word of God, and it's applicable to us, not just for the new year, probably all happen in January. But I want you to remember, and it happened in different ways. The verse I want you to focus on is just one single verse, in Isaiah 41, verse 10.

And the verse says this, So do not fear, for I am with you. Do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you.

I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Now, those are promises from God, and they were made to Israel thousands of years ago. This is the prophet Isaiah prophesying.

But they're the kind of prophecies that can be applicable to God's people at all times, because they're basically found also in the New Testament. Certain promises and prophecies about Israel belong in the Old Testament, and have to do with God's dealing with the people, the 12 tribes of Israel. But this is not one of them.

This has a wide spectrum of application. So do not be afraid, don't fear, for I am with you. Don't be dismayed, for I am your God.

I will strengthen you and I will help you. And I will uphold you by my righteous right hand. This was said, as I said, to Israel.

And what's interesting about it is, in the book of Isaiah, God is pointing out through the prophet the faults and the failures and the sins of God's own people. Israel has no unblemished record in the Old Testament. And as Isaiah is sent to prophesy, it's not like he's saying to the greatest, most spiritual, most godly people that ever lived, this is what I'm gonna do for you, because you all are the best.

You're just incredible people. And you've been so faithful to me, so here are the promises I'm gonna give you. No, what's amazing about this promise, this little verse, this nugget, is that it's said to a people who have been up and down and down and up.

But God says, even though you go down and you go up, I never go down and up. I am the same yesterday, today, and forever. And God says in the context before the verse, I have chosen you.

You didn't choose me, I chose you. And I want all of you to know, in the mystery of God's sovereignty, if you are a believer in Jesus Christ today, you are here because God chose you. I know you put your faith in Christ and the gospel came to you, but that's the mystery.

We choose Him, but then in another sense, He chose us before the foundations of the world. So He has chosen us, and we're not like everyone else in the street. We are the children of God.

We've been born again. We've been washed in the blood. How many are happy that every sin you ever committed has been washed away? Wave your hand at me.

And forgotten, God says, I will never remember whether you did it 24 hours ago, 24 days ago, 24 months ago, 24 years ago. There's no record of any transgression against God's people in heaven because of the blood of Jesus Christ. You have to go on the New Year reckoning on that.

You can't live in condemnation. That's what Satan wants for all of us. So this was made a promise to the people of Israel.

And this what encourages me about this is, you know, if God made a promise just to Moses or to Joshua or just to Isaiah, I would say, well, I'm not in that class. I don't know if this promise applies to me. No, this is said to the rank and file of God's people who have failed.

We've all failed, God, in 2012. But what God is saying is, I don't go by your failure. I go by my love.

I loved you before you even wanted me. I was looking for you. You were not looking for me.

So here are the promises, and here's my predictions. Now, you remember this. May God, the Holy Spirit, write it in our hearts so when it happens to you, tomorrow or later on in January or sometime in the year, you'll remember this.

During the year 2013, I predict that every single one of us are gonna have moments where we're attacked by fear and apprehension. There will be moments when you will be tempted to be timid and draw back. There will be anxiety.

It might attack your sleep patterns, but you will be afraid or tempted to be afraid. Fear is a phenomenally strong thing. Many people are held back and never realize their potential in God because of fear, because fear is the opposite of faith.

You can't live in fear and live in faith. And if you live by faith, you can't live in fear. Fear and faith are incompatible.

They cannot walk together. How can two walk together unless they be agreed? And fear and faith are saying the opposite things. I predict that every choir member is gonna have moments when you're gonna be tempted to fear for your children, fear for your finances, fear about your job, fear about what might happen to you, fear of your own weakness, fear of your own moral failings, whatever.

You're gonna be afraid. You'll be tempted to be afraid. And here's what God says to us.

People of God, people that belong to me, do not be afraid for I am with you. When you are afraid, realize no matter what you feel or don't feel, no matter what you see or don't see, I am with you. I am not only with you invisibly, I am for you.

And remember the verse that said, if God be for us, what's the rest? Who can be against us? This is the antidote to every attack of fear for 2013. This is the way to resist the devil who uses fear. If you study the book of Joshua, you study the prophets, you study the Old Testament, you study the New Testament, you'll see there's a tandem that always goes together.

Fear and discouragement. Fear and discouragement. Do not be afraid, neither be dismayed.

Before Joshua went into the land, God told him three times in one chapter. Listen, hear the word of the Lord, Joshua. Do not be afraid, neither be discouraged, for I am with you.

Whenever you go through, I am walking through with you. Don't be afraid. Nothing can touch you unless it gets through me.

Remember what Jesus said? Lo, I am with you to the end of the age. You're never alone. We are never alone.

And where fear comes is where you feel you're alone and vulnerable and susceptible. And the only way to counter it is to stand on God's word, no matter how you feel. You can't go by emotions.

You have to go by the word of God. No, I will not be afraid, for the Lord is with me. The Lord is walking with me.

He's behind me. He's in front of me. He's on the side of me.

He will never leave me alone. Yeah, but the devil will say, you haven't been what you should be. You're right, but he is what he should be.

And he said he would never leave me nor forsake me. Come on, let's put our hands together and say amen to that. And we have to fight fear because fear paralyzes.

Fear of the future. Fear of the unknown. I've ministered to a lot of people who are battling with fear and I tell them, I try to understand.

I say, tell me what you're afraid of. They can't verbalize it. Fear is an awesome thing.

And God says this, do not fear. You are not pleasing to me when you fear. You do not be afraid in 2013, for I am with you.

The one who was dead, but now is alive forevermore. I am with you. Jesus said, I am with you.

Despite your failures, despite your mess ups, I am with you. So when you're tempted to be afraid, tomorrow, next month, February, wherever through the year, remember, oh, Pastor Simba quoted that verse, Isaiah 41, verse 10. Let me look that up and underline it in my Bible.

Do not fear, for I am with you. Do not be afraid, for I am with you. Say that with me.

Do not be afraid, for I am with you. Second prediction. There will come times in 2013, and it might come very, very soon, because of all the chaos going on in our country and the inability to govern properly by our leaders, where there will be moments where you will be what the Hebrew word here is, you will be dismayed.

You will be dismayed. Now, when you look at that word in Isaiah 41, 10, it has an interesting derivation, because what it means is to be like nonplussed, to not know what to do. Have you ever had moments in your life where circumstances happen and things work out, and you look at it and you go, I don't know what to do.

I don't know what to do. And the more you stare at the problem or the circumstance, you can get into total discouragement and being dismayed, because you say, I don't know what to do. I got to make a decision, but what decision do I make? I don't know what to do.

I'm dismayed. That's what that word means. I'm overwhelmed.

Like, what's the right thing to do? This is an important decision. And now the Lord speaks to all of us and says, now listen, when you're afraid or tempted to be afraid, remember, I am with you. Get rid of that fear

and remember, I am with you.

The Lord is with me. I don't have to be afraid. He's going to take care of business for me.

Number two, when I don't know what to do, listen to what God says. Remember this, I am your God. Don't look at the situation.

Look at me. I am your God. Look over here.

In fact, that word actually means to be walking and stop and so gaze upon something that it transfixes you and then causes you to be dismayed and not know what to do. And God says, take your eyes off of the problem and get your eyes on me. I am your God and I'm going to help you through 2013.

And this is what the Lord says to all of us. There will be moments of temptation to fear. There will be moments of temptation to what do I do? How did this go down? What is going on? And God says, don't you now get dismayed and apprehensive.

You just remember, I am your God. Do you think, well, he's being held now probably by his dad, Pastor Petrie, but you think when that boy is in my arms, do you think any of you could ever hurt him? You'd have to kill me. You'd have to get through me to hurt my baby Levi.

How do you think God is? I'm just a wicked man. Just think how God is. He's holding us.

He's guarding us. He will guide us. You'll hear a voice behind you saying, this is the way, walk in it.

We don't have to be afraid of decisions, the economy, Congress. I don't care what they do in the UN. He is our God.

Can we put our hands together and say, he is our God. I will not be dismayed. I'm not going to read the newspaper and say, oh, what's going to happen? There's going to be doomsayers all over the land in 2013, like the world is coming to an end.

If it comes to an end, because it's because God says it'll come to an end, and then he's going to take us all home. All in favor say, aye. But until that moment, God says, I want neither of these two things in your life.

Listen to me, every one of you, ladies and gentlemen, no fear and no dismay, no perplexity and giving up and saying, what am I going to do? I don't know what to decide. I don't know what to do. God says, I am your God.

I will guide you and lead you. Oh, my goodness. He sent his son into the world, and he died for us.

You think after giving us his son, he's not going to help us navigate through 2013? Well, of course he's going to do that. These promises are not for everyone in the room. These promises are only for those who have been born again and are part of God's family.

It's not for religious people. Religion doesn't count. It's not for Protestants.

It's not for Catholics. It's not for Jewish people or Muslims. These promises are only for those people who belong to the family of God.

God says, I will never leave you. And the Lord says, I am your God. Don't you be afraid of what's going to happen.

I'm going to take care of that. Now, if you're here today, and you are not a born-again believer, oh, my goodness. You're going into 2013 without a protector, without a savior, without someone who will watch over you and keep you.

Oh, my goodness. I would wonder why anyone who's not a born-again Christian whose life has been changed by Christ coming into your heart, I would wonder why you would be here on New Year's Eve. I know most of you are believers.

But just in case there's one or two of you who are across the street in the overflow areas, if you're here and you haven't given your life to Christ, you haven't put your trust in Him, you haven't repented of your sins and said, Jesus, be my Savior. Oh, please, you know, come up. I'll hug you.

I'll pray for you. I'll lead you to Christ. But don't go into 2013 on your own with all this turmoil swirling around us.

You're going to just face it on your own? You're that smart? You're that strong? I'm not. I need a Savior. Someone says, oh, if you're a Christian, you're weak.

You need a crutch. I'll take two. If Jesus is my crutch, how many will take two? I'll take everything I can get from Jesus.

So remember now, when you are tempted to be afraid for your children with your finances, remember what the preacher said from the Word of God. I am with you. God says, I am with you.

When you don't know which decision to make and you're perplexed, remember what God says. Don't do that. That hurts me to see my children all nervous and frustrated and afraid and dismayed.

No, don't do that. Don't do that. You know that I am your God.

Just look to me. Don't look at the problem. Look at me.

Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, join with me. The doors open at 5. We begin at 7. We're going to have three consecutive nights of prayer. The meeting will begin at 7. At 8:15, 8:30, we will have a first dismissal for those who want to go back home, have to go back home, or be with the children at school and all of that.

And then those who want to stay, we pastors will wait on the Lord with you and all of that. Why do we do that? And you could join me in fasting those days. You can fast by just drinking water, as I'm hoping by God's grace to do.

Or you can fast by drinking juice that day. Or you can fast just one meal. Why do we do that? Because you see this, when... Don't be dismayed.

For I am your God. God has promised to guide us and lead us. But to hear his direction, it takes time.

You can have instant potatoes and instant coffee. You can't have instant God. You have to wait upon the Lord.

You have to learn to listen. And God says, I will be your God. I will guide you.

Those of you who have problems here tonight, you don't know which way to turn. You're facing something. Come and join with us these three nights.

And it's going to take concentrated effort and focus because that's how athletes get in shape. They don't go, oh, I want to be a basketball player. I think I'll work out once a month and learn how to play basketball.

No, they're working out every day. I want to be a baseball player. And I want to learn to hit.

I think I'll go in a batting cage like once every couple weeks. No, they're there until they have blisters on their hands. And when you want to draw close to God and hear from him, you got to give God time.

So join with us. And next Sunday at 3 o'clock, we will be praying for every adult laying hands, we pastors, on every adult, every child, every baby. We do that on the first Sunday of the month.

Why? Because God's promise is don't be dismayed. I am your God. Look to me.

Look to me and I'll help you. I will guide you. One last prediction.

During 2013, there will be moments to be tempted to fear. And God says don't. I am with you.

Do not be afraid. I want to get to that place in 2013 like I was with my brother one day. I have a brother six years older than me.

When I was a kid, let's say I was about 10 years old, and I got into it in the playground. We were playing stickball or punchball, and words happened right here in Brooklyn, and some guys pushed. And then next thing I know, three guys grabbed me and started just beating on me.

And it wasn't fair. There were three against my friends. I don't know what happened to them.

They disappeared. But three guys just beat me down. So I went home all cut up and a little bloodied, and my brother looked at me.

He was studying. And he said, Who did that to you? And I said, Oh, some kids there. And he says, Come here with me.

Show me those kids. Now, I was afraid of those kids. They were all bigger than me.

But with my brother walking that way with me, I walked into that playground like John Wayne. I mean, I walked in like, No, we're going to deal with you now. Why? They had just beat me up, but I was with my brother now.

I want to go through 2013. I want you to go through it. Jesus is with me.

I can't see him, but Jesus is with me. I'm not going to be afraid. I'm not going to be dismayed.

Lastly, in 2013, you're going to feel like you're sinking. Don't you be embarrassed of that. I have felt many times in my life that I was sinking in one way or another.

Sinking emotionally. Sinking mentally. Sinking spiritually.

You feel like your strength is ebbing away, and you just get like a feeling of you're going down. I'm not going to ask how many have ever felt that or dealt with that, but I think almost all of us have. Certainly all the people I've counseled all these years, they've admitted to me that sometimes you're just on top of things, but at other times it feels like, oh, the bottom is falling out.

I'm going down. Here's what God says. I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

I will bend over, and I will catch you. God knows we need to be caught. The picture in the Hebrew language is I will bend over, and I will grab you, and I will hold you up.

You will not hold yourself up. I will hold you. Don't be afraid, for I am with you.

Don't be dismayed, for I am your God. I will direct you. I'll handle things for you.

But when you feel you're sinking, and the enemy comes in like a flood, in spiritual warfare, there is a mysterious moment called the day of evil. Paul doesn't tell us what it means, but when he tells in Ephesians 6 to put on the full armor of God, he says, and in the day of evil, having done everything, make sure you stand. Now, if you study the lives of great Christians, men and women, you'll find out that almost all of them had days, times, seasons, when it's just like the enemy came in like a flood.

And just when you're attacked, and you're feeling like, oh, no, what's going to happen now? God says, I got my eye on you, and I'm going to reach down, and I'm going to catch you. And we can stand on that promise for 2013. Satan, whatever you do, I have a righteous right hand that's going to uphold me and keep me together.

Come on, let's put our hands together and say amen to that. Fear, discouragement, or confusion, and then that sinking feeling when you're attacked by the enemy. And we will be attacked by the enemy, and that's why God put these promises in the Word for us.

Do you realize who was attacked more than any of us ever? It was Jesus Christ. If Satan had the guts to come against the Son of the living God and tempt Him, not just 40 days in the wilderness, after 40 days in the wilderness, but it says he waited for a more convenient season to come back. And whatever age you are, you and I are going to fight the devil in 2013.

I don't care where you try to hide, the devil will get at you, and it's just part of what it is. It comes with the turf. Paul says at the end of his life, I have fought a good fight.

How many are planning, by the grace of God, you're going to fight this year, right? We're not going to fight by being belligerent. We're not going to fight by being nasty with other people. No, that kind of fighting we don't want to have in our lives.

We're going to fight by saying, no, I'm not giving in to fear because the Lord is with me. Where do you see Him? I don't see Him, but He's with me. I don't see Him.

You don't have to see Him. He is with me. He said in His Word, He will never leave me nor forsake me.

My mother and father might leave me or forsake me. Your own family might turn on you, but the Lord will never turn on you. He will be with you.

And when I'm confused and don't know which way to go, I'm going to remember to look at God because He said, I am your God. I am your God. I have all power.

I'm going to take care of this situation for you, so don't be dismayed. And when the enemy comes in like a flood and you're just thrashing about, I will uphold you by my righteous right hand. How many have had times in life when you thought you were going under and He'd come up under you and He held you? Just lift your hand if you ever had a moment like that.

I thank God that you're that honest because we've all had those battles. The longer I've walked with God and the men and women that I've met who I've admired, who love the Lord, I used to think when I was growing up that people that God used never had battles, never had attacks from Satan. I actually thought that, choir.

I thought that if God put His hand on your life and used you, you never were attacked, you never fought battles. Oh, my goodness. You know what the truth is? The more God blesses you and chooses you and wants to use you, the more battles you have with the enemy because if you're lukewarm and sleeping, the devil is smart.

He won't even wake you up. He'll just let you sleep through life. But when you make up your mind, when you come to the prayer meetings this week and you say, no, God's going to use me, I'm going to talk to more people this year than I've ever talked before.

And let me just leave you with this little pastoral encouragement. I've been thinking about this all day today and it kind of goes with these three little promises I gave you. This year, you can't avoid talking to people unless you're a hermit, unless you're just, you don't interact with people.

All of us are going to interact, so here's three rules for interaction this year. Let's remember them. If you're talking to unbelievers, I don't care if it's in the post office, in the bodega, in the store, in the street, in the school, on the job.

If you're talking to a believer, let's ask God to help us this year to always be ready to say a word for Jesus, to tell him about the Lord. You can't jam it. You're going to need wisdom.

You got to love them first and keep loving them, but we always should be looking with everyone we talk to. God, how can I say a word for you in 2013? Number two, we're going to be with believers. The choir is going to have a practice and they're going to meet together and the brothers are going to stand together and practice.

When they interact, let's ask God this year, Lord, make me an encouragement to another believer. Let me not pull them down or talk baba and nonsense and pull them down. Let me, or gossip and slander about someone else.

Let me season my conversation with salt and grace so that I can say something uplifting to someone. I don't know about you. Don't you need words of encouragement? How many love when someone encourages, you know? I just love when someone wants to say something to encourage me and I try to be an encouragement.

I want to be a greater encouragement. And lastly, the best conversation you can have this year is with God all alone, listening to his word, talking to him from your heart. We're going to have the best year ever

because he always saves the best for last.

God never says, I gave you a good 2010, then I took you down a little bit in 2011 and then I had good plans for 2012. Now, 2013 is a down year for you. No, no.

It's from glory to glory and from faith to faith. God's going to keep us. Let's just close our eyes for a second.

Is there anybody here? Oh, God, just give me one. Lord, just give me one. Is there anybody here in this building who would say, Pastor, I'm going into 2013 and I don't know, I'm not sure if I'm really born again.

I go to church, I believe in God, but a personal experience where I became a new creation, where old things passed away and everything became new, the kind of Christianity you're talking about, I don't know if that's ever happened. I just kind of was raised in church, was baptized as a child or sprinkled or confirmed, but a real personal relationship with Jesus, it's not the way it should be for me tonight. And with just 15 or 18 minutes left before the new year, you have a chance to enter into 2013 knowing your sins are gone and you have the promise of eternal life that Jesus will one day bring you home to be with Him forever and ever and ever and all you have to do is say, Jesus, I need you.

I believe in you. Forgive me. Have mercy and help me.

Is there anyone in the balcony or downstairs? Just lift your hand and say, Pastor, pray for me before this new year comes in because I want to know that I'm in right standing with God through faith in Christ. Just lift your hand. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you up in the balcony. If you raised your hand and you want me to pray with you and to receive Christ and start the new year right, started with Jesus, started with I will not be afraid for He is with me.

I will not be dismayed. He is my God. Come out of your seat and stand right up here.

Just come up out of your seat and stand right here. Come on. If you lifted your hand, you come up.

Those of you standing here in the front, listen, I'm going to pray with you and I want you to know I will be joined at the hip with you. By the grace of God, I will try to be your friend, your pastor, if you want that to be. We're going to baptize lots and lots of people in February.

I would love to see you on this stage being baptized, letting the whole world know, now I am born again. Now I belong to Jesus. I don't have to be afraid.

He is with me. I don't have to be dismayed. He is my God.

And if the enemy will come in like a flood, His righteous right hand is going to hold me up. I'm not going under. I'm going over.

All of you here in the front, repeat after me this prayer. Dear God, thank you for loving me, for bringing me to church tonight, to hear you the good news of Jesus Christ. Forgive me of my sins.

I want to be that new person that you want me to be. I have no strength, but you have all power. Thank you for the blood that washes away my sins.

Thank you for the cross where Christ died, and they buried Him. But He rose again, King of kings and Lord of lords. I receive Him tonight as my Lord and Savior.

I believe in my heart, and I confess with my mouth that Jesus is raised from the dead and is the Savior of the world. I receive Him tonight into my life. And I will walk with Him every day as He gives me strength.

In Jesus' name, amen. Amen. Amen and amen.

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