



DAILY INSPIRATION TO  
STAND STRONG IN FAITH



**FIGHTING**



*The*

**GOOD  
FIGHT**

— DEVOTIONAL FOR MEN —



**TONY EVANS**



BESTSELLING AUTHOR

# **FIGHTING *the* GOOD FIGHT**

## **DEVOTIONAL FOR MEN**

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# THE BATTLE BEHIND THE SCENES

Did you know that a world you can't see may be having a huge impact on the one you can? Let me explain. Right now, you and I are in the middle of a cosmic conflict occurring in the invisible angelic realm. This battle is being fleshed out and worked out in the very visible physical realm in which we live.

Perhaps you are an emotional casualty of this warfare, and this is evidenced by discouragement, depression, or despair. Or perhaps you have been affected in your marriage or relationships by this conflict. It is even possible that your financial situation is directly related to losing the ongoing battles in this warfare, and you thought it simply was related to credit card use or otherwise piling up debt. There is no end to the scope of this battle because Satan's goal is to sideline you from living as an active participant in God's kingdom army. The problem is that most of us forget to look at the true source behind the issues we face. As a result, we end up fighting the wrong enemy. The enemy is the devil and his minions. Once you recognize that our battle is not against flesh and blood but is in the spiritual realm, you are better equipped to wage spiritual warfare well and successfully.

**EPHESIANS 6:12** *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

## PEOPLE AREN'T YOUR PROBLEM

If you feel like somebody's out to get you, you are right. But it's probably not who you think it is.

The apostle Paul says you are making a huge mistake if you think people are the root of your problem. He tells us in Ephesians 6:12 that we wrestle not against “flesh and blood,” which refers to people. So, as bad as people are, they are merely the conduits of another battle. But Satan has been successful in getting us to fight people rather than the enemy causing the people to be the way that they are.

All of us have been in situations where we've tried to change people who are not behaving well or are not treating us as we'd prefer. Yet, until you and I understand that what happens to us through the actions of others has at its core something much bigger than those people, we will remain in a state of deception. This is exactly where Satan wants us to remain. So if you are ready to treat the disease instead of just the symptoms, level up your skills in spiritual warfare. Learn how to get to the root of people problems—as well as even more serious concerns, such as substance abuse and sexual, emotional, or relational issues—by studying and applying principles for waging spiritual warfare with excellence.

**ROMANS 12:18** *If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.*



## TWO WORLDVIEWS

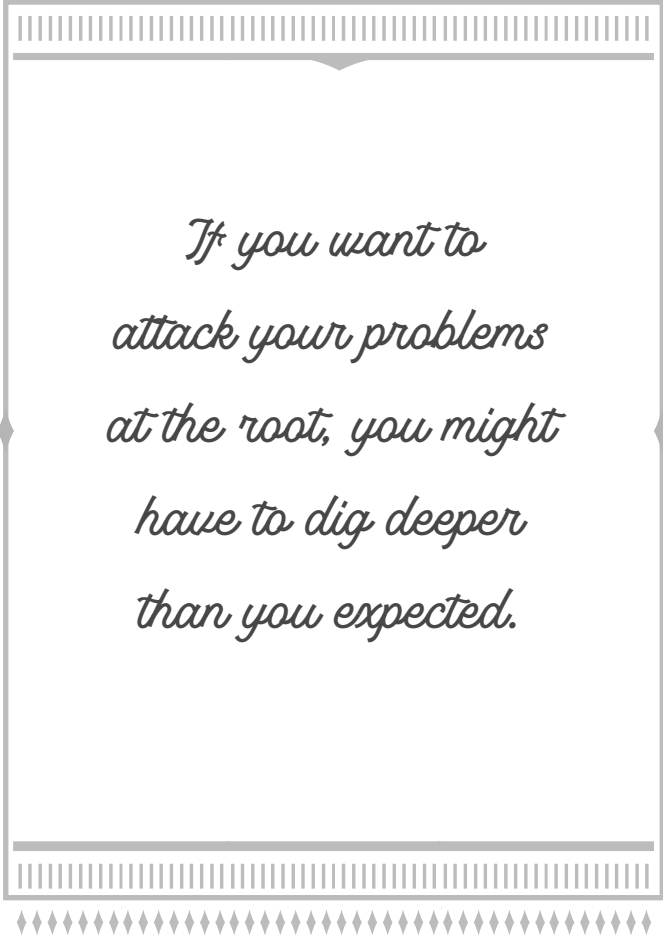
Do you ever catch yourself thinking that things “just happen” in your life? The Bible has an important perspective on this, and I have come to believe that nothing happens without a reason. God either allowed it to happen or intended it to happen. This is because everything in the physical realm in which we live is influenced, or provoked, by the spiritual realm. There is nothing your five senses partake of that is not influenced by what your five senses do not perceive.

Daniel 4:26 summarizes how heaven rules over what takes place on earth: “Your kingdom will be assured to you after you recognize that it is heaven that rules.” Essentially, everything that takes place on earth is precipitated by something that took place in heaven.

Until you and I can address the spiritual causes of the issues we face in our lives, we will never fix them. This reality should help frame our worldview. Now, there really are only two worldviews: There is the naturalistic worldview that says mankind, by his own reason, can figure out how the world works. On the other side is the spiritual worldview, which reflects an understanding and acknowledgment that heaven rules over all. To embrace this worldview, you must understand its essence, which is that the battle you and I are engaged in is ultimately a spiritual one.

**MATTHEW 6:10** *Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.*





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attack your problems  
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## ROOT PROBLEMS

If you want to attack your problems at the root, you might have to dig deeper than you expected. The battle in which you and I are engaged is essentially spiritual. However, even though it is spiritual in its cause, it is physical in its effect.

Many of you reading this devotional find your personal life is a disaster. And that doesn't mean you're out there doing something terrible. It could be that you have uncontrolled anger or an inability to restrain your emotions. In fact, many of us are suffering today because of unresolved anger from our past. Unfortunately, we have been lulled into thinking that someone just did us wrong, but really it was Satan who sought to contrive a situation so he could get hold of our emotions. When Satan gets a grip on your emotions, he destroys your ability to function properly.

Too many men struggle with emotional disconnection in their marriages because their feelings have been sidelined due to past sin—whether they committed the sin themselves or whether something was done to them. The key to reclaiming emotional freedom and control lies in learning how to tell when your problems are merely symptoms of the invisible spiritual battle going on around you, then discovering the tactics and approaches to winning those specific battles once and for all.

**EPHESIANS 6:8** *Knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free.*

## WHERE THE BLESSINGS ARE

Victory comes in discovering how to fight what you cannot see. Ephesians 1:3 provides insight: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.”

The first important thing to notice in this verse is that it tells us where God the Father resides: in heavenly places. While most of us already know that to be true, the next part of the verse is more revealing. In it we learn that our blessings also reside in heavenly places. The meaning of this is profound. If you are in the midst of a spiritual war and need spiritual blessings in order to win it but you don’t know how to access those blessings in heavenly places, you will continue to lose in the spiritual warfare on earth.

Ephesians 2:6 shows us how to access these blessings by revealing where we ourselves are actually residing. It says, “and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” When you accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior, you were transported to another realm. Even though your physical body is here, your spiritual self, which controls your body, operates from heavenly places. Reorient your thinking to understand (A) where you are spiritually, (B) what you can gain from being there, and (C) what benefits flow from Who you know.

**EPHESIANS 2:6** *And raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*



## IT TAKES AN ANGEL

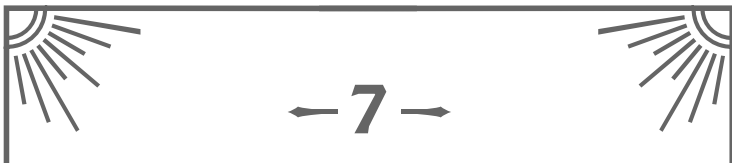
Satan is a powerful enemy, one you don't have the power to beat on your own. But that's why the Lord levels the playing field—and then some. We gain insight into this by reading Ephesians 3:10, which says, “so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places.” What's important to note is that the terms *rulers* and *authorities* in this passage refer to the angels. It is critical to understand this because it takes an angel to defeat an angel.

If you are facing angelic problems in your life (remember, Satan is a fallen angel), then you need an angelic solution.

Most of us have very little consciousness of angels because they are not part of our physical experience. But the battle taking place all around us—and even within us—involves a whole group of angels. The Bible calls God the “Lord of Hosts,” and what that title means is that God, in a military sense, is in charge of an angelic corps whose job involves strategizing against and defeating the demons who seek to defeat you.

You do not have enough power or strength to defeat demons. But God does. Asking God to send angels to neutralize the demons attacking you is a wise use of spiritual weaponry.

**EPHESIANS 3:10** *So that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places.*



## IT'S ABOUT THE GLORY

You can't win a spiritual battle with just physical common sense or strategy. You must wage a spiritual battle with spiritual sense and truth. In Revelation 12 we read about a day when war will break out in a visible form like we've never seen before. Spiritual war will come to earth. Revelation 12:7–9 says,

And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

There exist two squads: Michael and the good angels on one side, Satan and the bad angels on the other. We are in an angelic conflict started through rebellion, and Satan is attempting to deceive the world into glorifying him. This war boils down to who gets the glory. When you know the goal of a battle, you know how to approach it. That's why Paul reminds us that whatever we do, we are to do it all to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31). One way to keep yourself from ending up as a casualty of this conflict is to always seek God's glory first.

**1 CORINTHIANS 10:31** *Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*