

Chapter 8: The Battle of Our Lives and Appendix (Spiritual Warfare and Orphan Care)

Discussion: Last week, you were challenged to identify one non-essential activity and trade that time for one of the physical “big rocks” mentioned in the 7-STRONG list. What did you change? How did that small shift impact you and/or your family?

The conclusion of the book shifts the perspective away from specific aspects of fighting for the family back to the overarching war for the family. Difficulty in marriage or parenting isn't always a sign of failure—it is often a sign of active spiritual warfare. True victory isn't found in a "perfect" Instagram-worthy home, but in the gritty, mundane commitment to stay in the fight and to reflect the Gospel.

Awareness: What's true? What's happening?

1. If you were to rank the fronts of a current battle in your home—marriage, parenting, physical health, or external service (like ministry, relationships, orphan care, etc.)—which one feels most under attack right now? In what ways did you experience victory by staying in the fight this week? Were there places you felt defeated?
2. Read Ephesians 6:12 and 1 Peter 5:8. Your family is usually not the enemy. Can you identify times when you have fought against your family instead of the real enemy? How should acknowledging that Satan is a roaming lion seeking to devour change your daily attitude toward your spouse or children?
3. Almost anything worth doing is hard work. Why is the lie that marriage is supposed to be easy so dangerous to a couple's long-term commitment?
4. Despite your feelings or the voices of culture, you, as a parent, are *not* your kids' last great hope. How does that relieve the pressure of parenting? How does it increase the responsibility to strengthen your own relationship with Christ and to lead your children toward Jesus?
5. Reflect on the chapters in this book. How has the content of this book helped you identify areas of weakness, struggle, or spiritual attack in your personal life, marriage, and/or parenting? Discuss areas where you have implemented change. How have those changes impacted your home?
6. Failure is not an option. What is at stake if you surrender?

Ownership: What part is mine?

7. Commitment creates intimacy and security. How could commitment through thick and thin—like holding a spouse's hair during a virus—strengthen intimacy? How does this shift our view of intimacy from performance to partnership?
8. Read 1 Corinthians 7. Making intimacy a regular part of your relationship will help safeguard your marriage. What pseudo-emergencies and distractions in your work life, home life, or thought life has the devil created to prevent you from making time for intimacy with your spouse? How can you fight the

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temptation to neglect each other and intentionally invest time in intimacy for the health and success of your marriage?

9. Your marriage is a training ground and one of your greatest opportunities to honor Christ with your life. Have you experienced a season where your own personal spiritual growth contributed (positively or negatively) to the overall health of your home? What structured Bible study and prayer habits have you developed in your personal and family life? Are there any habits you need to implement?

Action: What needs to change?

10. Marriage is a battle that you must win. Identify commitments you need to keep, habits or hobbies you need to give up, or decisions you need to make to win the spiritual victory for your marriage and your family. What is one step you can commit to taking today to fight for your marriage and family?

Key Verses for Study

- **Ephesians 6:12** – For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.
- **1 Peter 5:8** – Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.
- **1 Corinthians 7:3-5** – 3 The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. 4 For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise, the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. 5 Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.
- **James 1:27** – Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.
- **Psalms 127:3-5** – Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. 5 Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.

Application for the Week: "Securing the Perimeter"

This week, conduct a *Battlefield Assessment* of your home in two specific areas:

1. **Identify the Distraction:** Pinpoint one pseudo-emergency (work emails, social media, a messy house) that the devil uses to steal your intimate time with your spouse or focused time with your kids. Intentionally schedule a no-phone hour or a date night to reclaim that ground.
2. **The Ministry of Presence:** Identify a family in your church or circle who is in the lonely stage of a battle (new parents, foster parents, or a couple in crisis). Consider ways your family can support them and offer a tangible act of service—such as providing a meal, offering to watch their kids for a couple of hours, or sending a specific prayer of encouragement.