

Warfare Prayer for Believers

A Clash of Kingdoms

By Kathy Branzell



Family can evoke strong emotions. I am very protective of my younger brother Keifer. We never fought while growing up. And if anyone messed with him, I was there to protect him in a heartbeat. Even as adults we still have each other's backs.

Most of our families have some disagreements or squabbles among ourselves, but when an outsider comes after one of us, all the family members take their battle stations, coming to that person's defense. Taking aim at one member of our family is a declaration of *war* on us all!

The apostle Paul reminds us of the nature of war, especially in the spiritual sense, in 2 Corinthians 10:3–5:

Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (nasb).

Who are the people in your family? I pray you see yourself

belonging to *God's* family. We are brothers and sisters in Christ, a bond even stronger than siblings by blood or marriage.

God's family members pray all types of prayers for each other: protection and provision, direction and desires, jobs and joy, fruitfulness and finances. We even pray over weddings and the weather. We intercede for those who do not know Jesus as their Lord and Savior. We pray over our own needs and the needs of others around us.

But as family members in the eternal sense, each of us is also at war with otherworldly spiritual forces, and we need to take our battle stations to fight for each other.

Developing a Warfare Mindset

Do you consider yourself a "go-to-war" type of family member? It's a good question for all of us. When Satan starts pursuing or pressuring our brothers or sisters in Christ, do we rush into God's throne room in fervent prayer on their behalf? In deep suffering and adversity, do we press in and pray scriptural promises with tears, tenacity, and faith?

When a mother fights for the life of her unborn baby that she is in danger of losing, are we likely to casually lift up a request? Or do we fall before God and plead with Him to glorify Himself in this life and situation?

How do we pray regarding a neighbor's cancer diagnosis? How about that pregnant teen at church whose life is about to change drastically? Can you and I be counted on to do battle in prayer when someone in our small group is "let go" at work? Do we have the courage to prayerfully approach a brother or sister who is being tempted or tormented?

When a fellow believer is wrestling against powers of

darkness, God calls us to watch each other's backs. Think about your response when you hear of turmoil and distress. Are your prayers yielded to the Holy Spirit and filled with faith so that they produce divinely powerful responses from the Almighty Hands that formed the universe and keeps it in motion?

John Piper says, "We cannot know what prayer is for until we know that life is war."¹ In every breath, decision, and activity, Satan and his fallen army are fighting to fill their kingdom of eternal torment. After all, misery loves company. They do not care about people; there is no affection in them, no desire to see people fulfilled or happy. Their intent is to tempt, trick, and torture any soul into an eternal separation from God. Their goal is to hurt God by stealing His children away from Him. It is *war*!

Fighting the Right Way

We do not fight this war with gossip or judgment—or by leaving people alone to make their own bad choices. When we fail to press in and persevere in prayer, we're abandoning our posts. We're surrendering territory and family to the plundering of our enemy.

We must armor up, so to speak, and stand firm on the front lines (Eph. 6:10–17). We fight first on our knees in travailing prayer. We give ourselves to agonizing intercession that expresses our grief and God's sorrow as He sees His child becoming a target of Satan's battleplan to kill, steal, and destroy.

- *Family battlegrounds.* If you are a parent, you may know the pain of one of your children being drawn away from the spiritual and physical safety of your household rules. You've determined family guardrails for

protection and success, but your children rebel, thinking you're withholding happiness from them.

Parents, overcome Satan's tricks with truth! Wield the sword of God's Word over them in prayer (Eph. 6:17).

- *Community battlegrounds.* Millions of Christ-followers enter the marketplace every day. They take their places in schools, the military, law enforcement, business, and retail. They assume roles as government officials, judges, first-responders, and teachers. As influencers in our society, these believers may experience some of the most intense warfare.

Become an intercessor for one or more of them.

- *Cultural battlegrounds.* It's easy to complain about the eroding of biblical values in our culture, to post our frustrations on social media, or to rally in protest. Posting and protesting may make us feel better, but do not change things.

Fight in a more effective way. Try pressing in and praying for God's servants to be bold and courageous in making the right decisions and acting in righteousness.

James 5:16 tells us that the fervent prayers of the righteous are powerful and effective. Prayers tear down the devil's defenses and destroy his schemes. When we, as prayer warriors, fall to our knees, anything set up against or above God will tumble. The haughty are silenced in the humble prayers of God's servants. Even children can overcome fear and join in warfare prayer for others when they pray in the strength and authority of Jesus.

Finding a Higher Perspective

Growing up, all I dreamed of doing was joining the Air Force

and becoming a SR-71 pilot. Known as a spy plane, the SR-71 was the fastest manned plane used for strategic reconnaissance. I wanted to serve my country, protect it from harm, and defeat its enemies.

I planned and worked for this my whole life. But, because of one eye exam, my dreams came crashing down—or so I thought. I was night blind.

A few years ago I told this story to my small group. A friend who knew me well leaned forward, looked intently at me, and said, “Wow, so God put those desires in your heart. But His plans were to use you in His Kingdom, not a country—to fight every person’s enemy, not just America’s. God is allowing you to fly above the earth’s atmosphere and into the spiritual realm in warring prayers. God’s thoughts and ways are higher than ours, but thankfully you have volunteered in the ‘Kingdom Air Force.’”

Years of questions and pain faded as I realized God had deployed me to thousands of prayer battles. He gave me incredible squadrons of fellow prayer warriors who had my back, prayed me through, and taught me truths about prayer.

In warfare never fly alone. We all need prayer partners to defeat a deceiving enemy. Lock your shield with the shields of other warriors who pray with you and for you. Paul reminds us in a passage about spiritual warfare: “Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people” (Eph. 6:18).

The war between God’s Kingdom and the kingdom of darkness is raging. Our family (the family of God) is under attack. It’s time to mobilize heaven’s army on our family’s behalf with passionate and persevering prayer.

¹John Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad* (Grand Rapids: Baker

Academic, 2010) 65.

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