

## Marriage Lies

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Rick Blackwood: Hey everybody. Wow, thank you so much. Thank you for your kindness. You always encourage my heart and I am so grateful for that. God bless you.

I'm thankful that God continues to give me the energy and the strength to do what he's called me to do. Thank you so much.

By the way, our students are with us today, so let's give it up for the students as well. Yeah.

Well, you can go ahead and catch a seat. If you're a guest with us for the first time today, I want to welcome you to Christ Fellowship. My name's Rick and I serve as the lead pastor here.

Also want to welcome all of our campuses streaming live with us. Give it up Palmetto Bay.

If you're a guest with us for the first time today, just want to tell you where we are. We have been in a mini-series for a few weeks that we've entitled Family Matters.

And Mark has talked about the role of wives in the marriage. Ed talked about the role of husbands. This is kind of my first time; I've been out for a while, and my first time to speak into this. And I want to do that right from the word of God.

And so if you have your Bibles, I want to encourage you to open them to Ephesians chapter 5, that's our primary text, and Ephesians chapter 6. Ephesians 5, Ephesians 6.

If you don't have a Bible with you, don't worry about it. It'll all come up on the screen and you can track along with us that way.

I know I asked you to take a seat, but would you stand in honor of the reading of God's word?

And I just want to begin by reading a couple of pieces of Ephesians chapter 5, to get us started.

Verse 22, what's the first word there? "Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands."

Verse 25, what's the first word there? Yeah, husbands. Stop right there, because in Ephesians chapter 5, God is talking to us about the love relationship between a husband and a wife. But folks, check this out.

It is not arbitrary; it's not coincidental, that the very next subject that God talks to

us about after talking to us about the relationship between a husband and a wife, the very next subject that God brings up after the family is the devil.

Oh, yeah. Listen to chapter 6, verse 11. After talking about husbands and wives, he says, "Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes."

Now, stop right there and take a seat. Because I want to set this up today with a story from my childhood. But let me go ahead and warn you, this is a story that may trouble you. Especially if you're an animal lover.

So I want you to slip into the scene. To begin with, when I was about 14 years old, I worked an after school job at my uncle's car body shop. I did a lot of odd jobs there, like sweep the floor and wash cars.

But one of those odd jobs was, I had to feed the two guard dogs. Now mind you, this body shop was in a high-crime area of our town, so consequently these two guard dogs would be released from their pen at night to attack any would-be intruders.

At any rate, it was my job to put their dog food, their Alpo, into a hubcap like this, open the pen and slide it into the pen to them.

Now, I want you to stay in the story. Because these two guard dogs were German shepherds, male and female. I'll never forget the male dog's name was Judge. Yeah he was named after the Pontiac GTO Judge. How many of you remember the Judge? Yeah.

The female's name was Bonnie, and she was named after the Pontiac Bonneville. I guess they were all into Pontiacs.

But folks, let me tell you, Judge and Bonnie were vicious dogs. And they were not only vicious to would-be intruders; Judge and Bonnie were vicious to each other. I mean, they often attacked each other. They often turned against each other, and here's why.

The foreman of the body shop, I can't remember his name for the life of me, I just remember he had a broke neck and when he talked to people he had to turn his whole body like this.

But this guy, this foreman, did things that made Judge and Bonnie angry with each other. For example, once a week when I would go to feed Judge and Bonnie, this guy would take gunpowder and pepper their food with it. Oh, yeah. Which means he was feeding them a lie.

And the lie that he was feeding them was, this food is good for you. This food is tasty, it's safe. When the truth was, it had been laced with gunpowder.

Just so you know, feeding dogs gunpowder makes them angry. And it not only made Judge and Bonnie angry at would-be intruders, it made Judge and Bonnie angry with each other.

And folks, check this out. As if that weren't bad enough, this devil of a guy not only fed Judge and Bonnie a lie, but he would throw them a lie.

And by that I mean, often when Judge and Bonnie were eating their food in close proximity to each other, he would pick up a rock out of the gravel and beam one of them with it. Throw it and hit that dog.

And whichever dog got hit, I guess he thought the other one, or she thought the other one, did something. And folks, they would turn after that and fight with each other like dogs.

In fact, it looked like this. Take a look.

Folks, I always wished I could say to Judge and Bonnie: Judge and Bonnie, you don't see it. But this devil of a man is feeding you lies that are designed to make you angry with each other, and to turn you against each other.

Christ Fellowship, let me ask you. How many of you does that story bother you? Let me see your hands. How many of you, that story troubles you? Listen: good.

Good! Because what an image of what Satan often tries to do with husbands and wives. And so here's my proposition today, this is what I want you to walk out the door with: Satan is methodical at feeding husbands and wives lies.

And they are lies that are designed to turn you against each other, and to turn you on each other.

And you might be saying, "Well, Rick, what are those lies? How can we fight against them?"

We're gonna find out today as we go back to the book of Ephesians. I want to give you two primary thoughts.

How many of you have your listening guides? Wave them in the air. Listen, to all of you who are students, you're thinking, "Oh, this is about husbands and wives, it's not really about me."

Listen, you're gonna get married one day. And you want to learn this stuff not when you get married. You do not want to learn it after you get married. The best thing you can do is learn it now, so I hope you're gonna take extensive notes, because we got them. And I hope you're gonna take this, file it away someday. Cause you're gonna want to pull it out, you're gonna need it. We all need this.

No matter where you are, married, divorced, remarried, this is helpful. Even if you could use it to help someone else.

So two primary thoughts, here they are if you're filling in the blanks. Number one: Satan attacks Christian husbands and wives.

Satan attacks Christian husbands and wives. Now with that in mind, look at verse 22: "Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands." Verse 25, "Husbands, love your wives."

And everybody stop there and look up. Because there you have the two components of a Christian marriage. Namely, a husband and a wife.

But folks, with husbands and wives in mind, I want you to watch the newsflash in chapter 6, verse 11 to them.

The Bible says this, "For our," what's the next word? Say it like you mean it. "For our struggle."

Folks, thinking caps on. Because the antecedent of "our" struggle, in general is a reference to all of God's people. But specifically in the context of Ephesians chapter 5, listen, this is a reference to husbands and wives.

You say, meaning what?

God is saying that you are in a struggle, husband and wives, to save your marriage.

By the way, the word struggle there, "for our struggle," husbands and wives, your struggle. The word struggle there has been translated from the Greek word pele. I always tell you, your New Testament part of your Bible was originally written in Koine Greek, and then translated over to English, Spanish, French, whatever.

That word struggle, the original Greek word is pele. And pele means to fight against a killer. To fight against a killer.

Husbands and wives, have no illusions. Your marriage is constantly under attack by a killer. And it's a killer who wants to kill your love for each other, kill your romance for each other, and eventually kill the marriage relationship altogether.

You say, "Rick, if somebody's trying to kill our marriage, attacking our marriage, who is it?"

Look at verse 12, here's the answer.

"For our struggle," husbands and wives, your struggle. I always say to Rhonda, "Honey, our struggle."

"Our struggle is not against flesh and blood," it's not in the third dimension, it's not something you can see, it's not her, it's not him.

"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers. Against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil."

You say, who is all of that? Who are the powers, rulers, authorities and spiritual forces of darkness?

Here it is. Those are all ranks of demons. Those are all rank and file of fallen angels who are with Satan. And I'll say more about that in a moment. For now, you need to know this. Write this down, is A and B.

Satan always attacks God, God's people and God's plan. You need to know that. Let me say it again.

Satan always attacks God, God's people, and God's plan. You say, meaning what?

Meaning if you are a Christian, you are one of God's people. If you are a Christian couple, your marriage is one of God's plans. And folks, check this out. Satan wants to attack your marriage.

Not because he's so much about he hates you, not so much that he hates your marriage, it's that he hates God. And your marriage relationship represents all that is blessed of God. All that is good from God.

And not only that, your marriage is God's plan. God planned this from the beginning of the world. And God's plan that he carefully thought out is that two people, a man and a woman, would come together in marriage. And that together, they would do life together. They would experience love, they would experience fun, they would experience romance, they would be able to experience all of that together for a lifetime.

That is God's plan. Satan's plan is to kill God's plan. And this is so important, write this down as B. Satan has a methodical strategy to kill your marriage.

In fact, listen to verse 11 again. God says, "Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the Devil's," here's a key word, the Devil's what? Everybody say it like you mean it.

The Devil's, yeah, his schemes.

Now I want you to lean into this, because the word schemes there, has been translated from the Greek word methodia. Teach you a little Greek today. Everybody say it. Methodia.

Everybody say methodia. Yeah, listen. Methodia is the word from which we get methodical from. Or methodological.

You say meaning what? Meaning Satan's attack against your marriage is not random. It's not arbitrary, it's not knee-jerk. No, there is a method to his attack on your marriage.

And folks, here is the key that you need to know so write this down as C. Satan's method to kill your marriage is to feed you lies.

In other words, just like that foreman fed Judge and Bonnie lies, that were designed to make them angry at each other, to attack each other. Just like that, Satan wants to feed you a bunch of lies that will turn you on each other.

In fact, listen what Jesus said about Satan in John 8. Jesus said this: "He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth."

Why? "for there is no truth in him. When he lies," not if he lies, but when he lies, "He speaks his native language."

He lies fluently, is the idea. "For he is a liar and the father of lies."

Make no mistake about it, Satan is the father of lies. And his angle of attack against your relationship, husband and wife, is to feed you a bunch of lies that are designed to turn you on each other, and against each other, so you fight like dogs.

You say, "Well Rick, what are the lies? How do we fight these lies off?"

Well I want you to write this down, this is number 2. This is so important. Fight lies with what? Truth.

In fact, listen to Ephesians 6:14. Ephesians 6:11 says "Put on the whole armor of God so that you can stand against these methods of Satan."

The next verse says this, it says, "Stand firm, then, with the belt of truth firmly buckled around your waist."

Now folks, this is graphic language. Because the image here is of a fighter buckling some sort of a belt around him to fight off somebody that's trying to kill him.

And God says that the belt we fasten around us is the belt of truth. Here's the point. We fight Satan's lies with God's truth.

Let me say that again. Husbands and wives, all believers, we fight Satan's lies with God's truth.

Let's say that together. We fight Satan's lies with God's truth. Let's say it again: we fight Satan's lies with God's truth. Say it like you mean it. We fight Satan's lies with God's truth.

So folks, here's what I want to do with the balance of our time today. Got 23 minutes. I want to expose some of the big lies of Satan that kill marriages. And then I want to reveal God's counter-truth. Sort of look like this.

Lie number one, truth number one. Lie number two, truth number two. Does that make sense? Okay, so here we go. Write them down. I'm gonna get as many as I can.

Lie number one: we can minimize God and still have a maximum marriage. Let me say that again: we can minimize God and still have a maximum marriage. And folks, here's what you need to know.

This was the first lie, the very first one, the father lie, if you will, that Satan fed to the first couple: Adam and Eve. And this was the lie, the lie was this: you can have a great marriage without God.

So picture the scene: God puts Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, in a perfect environment. The Bible says God would come down in the cool of the day, remember this? And have fellowship with them.

So Adam and Eve were actually very close to God. And as Adam and Eve drew closer to God, guess what? They drew closer to each other. That's the design. It's a trilogy. God is here, husband, wife, as you draw closer to God, as she draws closer to God, you automatically draw closer together. The further away you go from God, actually the further away you go from the marriage relationship that God designed.

But Adam and Eve were close to God, and close to each other, and they had a maximum relationship. But then Satan slithered up in the form of a snake, and he fed them a lie. And the lie was, if you get close to God, you're gonna miss out on the fun. That's one of Satan's favorite lies. If you go with the God stuff, you're gonna miss out on the good stuff. Because God is all about having no fun. God's a killjoy. God is just a fuddy-duddy.

And so if you want to have a maximum marriage, don't get too close to him, because he'll ruin it. If you want to have a maximum marriage, yeah you can kinda play the God thing here and there, go to church every now and again, but don't get too close to God, 'cause you'll miss out on the fun.

Satan fed them that lie, and they swallowed it hook, line and sinker, and sinned. And if you read the narrative, they turned on each other. They started fighting with each other, blaming each other. And folks, Satan has been serving that lie to people ever since, that God will kill your fun if you get too close to him.

And who knows, maybe that's you. Maybe you're here today, and you have stiff-armed God for a lifetime, because you believe the lie that if you go with God, you'll miss out on the good stuff. Lie!

Here's truth number 1, write this down as number 1, so important: a maximum marriage relationship demands a maximum God relationship. That's why, write this down as A, this is so important. God's marriage plan begins not with our relationship with each other, but with our relationship with God.

Listen to Ephesians 5:22, what's the first word? Wives, good. Verse 25, what's the first word? Husbands.

Now stop there again, because God is talking to husbands and wives about their relationship to each other. And he's saying, husbands love your wives. Wives and husbands, submit to one another.

So he's talking in Ephesians 5:25, 22, to husbands and wives about their relationship with each other.

But folks, before God talks to husbands and wives about their relationship with each other, God first talks to husbands and wives about their individual relationship with him, back in verse 18.

Does that make sense? Which is why in verse 18 he says this. Before he talks about your relationship to each other, he says, "Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead be filled with" who? The Holy Spirit.

Here's why that's so important. Write this down as B. Before you can have a right relationship with your spouse, you must first have a right relationship with your God.

Here's why that's so true. Write this down as C. I want you to remember all of this. Your most profound need can only be filled by God. Not your husband. Not your wife.

And listen, everybody heads up. Many couples miss this from the start, they miss this from the altar. In fact, picture a marriage altar. Because so often they're standing there, and she's standing on her side, whatever side that is. And she's not saying this out loud but she's standing there thinking, she's thinking "Hey pal, I'm expecting you to fill me with a love that will fill me with peace, that will fill me with security. A love that will fill me with meaning, that will fill me with significance, that will fill me with purpose, that will make me feel beautiful, that will make me feel like a woman."

He's standing there on his side, and he's thinking the same thing. "Pal, really pal? Well hey gal, I'm expecting you to fill me with a love that will make me be filled with peace, and fill me with security, and fill me with meaning, and fill me with

purpose, and fill me with feeling like a man."

Folks, the problem with that is, that neither one of them are going to be able to fill those kinds of needs. And when they figure it out, that their expectations aren't being met, they often turn on each other.

Because here's the truth. Your most profound needs can only be filled by God.

And folks, here's why that's true. Write this down as 1 and 2. That is true because you have a body, a soul and a spirit.

I hope you will always remember that I taught you, you are a trinity. You are made, the Bible says, in the likeness of God. You're like God. You're not God, but you're like him, and one of the ways you're like him is you're a trinity. God is father, son, holy spirit, but one person.

You are body, soul and spirit, the Bible says, but one person. Your body is your physical dimension; it's that physiological part of you that dwells in the third dimension.

And listen, there's a sense in which your wife or husband can meet physical needs. Scratch you on the head, I love that. Rub your back. Can meet your sexual needs.

So they can fill that need, but here's the point. You're not just a body. You also have a soul. Every time you see the word soul in the Bible, that's been translated from the Greek word *sukay*, which is the word from which we get psychology. Your soul is your psychological person. It is that part of you that can feel, that can think, that can dream.

It's also that part of you that can feel romance. So there's a sense in which your spouse can be your soul mate and meet those romantic soul mate needs. But here's the difference, folks.

Your most profound part of you is not your body and soul, but your spirit. This is what makes you different from the dogs, the animals. Animals have a body, they even have a soul, they have emotions.

Here's what makes you different. They don't have a spirit, you do. And your spirit is your most profound part of who you are, because your spirit is that part of you that can last forever.

Your spirit is that part of you that can be filled with meaning, that can be filled with purpose. It's that part of you that can feel peace and joy in a sustainable way. And here's what I love, write this down as number two.

Your spirit is that part of you that connects you to God. Think about it. Your body makes you world-conscious, your soul makes you people-conscious, but it's your

spirit that makes you God-conscious.

It's your spirit that tells you that you have needs. Your spirit has profound needs. And they're needs that only God alone can fill. Which is why this entire section on husbands and wives begins back in verse 18, when God says, "Be filled." Not by your wife, not by your husband, but be filled in your spirit by His spirit.

And folks, that happens, that becomes possible when you become a believer. Because when you become a believer, it is now possible for your spirit to connect up with God's spirit and for God's spirit to fill you with those needs.

It's just like a gasoline pump can fill a gasoline tank in a car. And it can fill that car up, and fill it with the fuel that enables that car to go with strength and vigor. Just like that, imagine this is God's spirit and this is your spirit. God's spirit can now connect to your spirit, child of God, and he can fill you with his love. Every day, you can fill up on, "nobody else may love me, but who cares? I'm loved by God."

Every day you can fill your spirit with that. You can fill your spirit with his love, with his mercy, with his kindness, with his compassion, with his commands. Don't ignore God's commands, they'll help you. You can be filled with his plan for your life.

In fact, I want you to watch what this verse says God's spirit can fill you with. Listen to this. In verse 18, watch this. Verse 18 says be filled with God's spirit.

How many of you remember when we called these places filling stations? Remember that? Well that's what God's spirit is, it's a filling station.

And verse 18 says, "Be filled with his spirit." Fill your spirit. Watch what he fills us with. Verse 19, 20 and 21 tells you what he fills you with.

Verse 19: when you're filled with his spirit, you'll be filled, and you'll sing, and make music from your heart, from your spirit, to the Lord. Don't you love that? That means God is a song in your heart. And it's a song of joy, not a phony plastic smile, but a joy that nobody can take away from you.

Look in verse 20. When you're filled with his spirit, you will always give thanks to God, the father, for everything. You'll give thanks for your wife. You'll give thanks for your husband. Instead of saying "I can't stand the way that guy snores all the time, I hate it." You'll say, "God, thank you for what I have. God, he may snore, and he may do some things I don't like."

But you see, when you're filled with the spirit, rather than looking at what he's not, you'll look at what he is. And you'll be thankful. And you'll be thankful for her. You'll say, "God, she may not be that. She may not be this. But thank you, God for her, for what you've given to me and her."

And not only that, look at verse 21. When you're filled with the spirit, you know

what you'll do? You'll submit to each other. In other words, that means you don't always have to have your way. Even if you think you're right. You'll have the power to say, "You know what? I'm gonna give her this one."

You won't always have to feel, and always be trying to prove that you're smarter than her or him. Let me tell you, we know in our family, Rhonda's the brains of the family. We got that figured out a long, long time ago.

But listen, we don't have to prove who's smarter. Don't couples do that to each other? "I'm gonna show you I'm smarter than you are, and I'm gonna fight to show you."

You know what, sometimes you'll say, "You know what? I want her to win. I want her to look smarter. I want him to look smarter."

See, that's what happens when you're filled, because you're not trying to prove something. God's always satisfying you.

By the way, when that text says be filled with the spirit, that is in the Greek text what we call the present tense, which is like saying this: "Always be being kept continuously filled with God's spirit."

It's not like the old Rite Guard commercial, one shot and you're good for the whole day. This is like saying, be filled every second, every minute, every hour of every day.

And folks, here's why that's the case. Life has a way of depleting our spirits. Imagine this is your spirit. Life has a way of depleting your spirit of joy, and so you're always needing to replenish it because it's always being emptied.

Unfortunately, many people going through life ignoring their spirits, and they spend a life running on empty. And when you're running on empty in your spirit, it not only depletes you of joy, it depletes the marriage of joy.

Because you see folks, here's the point. Imagine this is your spirit. It's like a gas tank in a car, it's 20 gallons. Your mate at best has a shot glass to fill you. Your spirit is always running out of joy, it's always being depleted.

It's like your mate going ...

You see, folks, I realized a long time ago. I can't fill Rhonda's needs of peace and joy, and significance and purpose. Rhonda can't fill my needs of peace, and joy, and significance and purpose. She can't do that, she doesn't have the power.

But God has an everlasting supply that can fill you with joy and peace, second by second, minute by minute, hour by hour.

you say, "Well Rick, if I need to be filled with the spirit, how does that work?"

Tell you what, hold that thought, and I'm gonna come back to it, okay? So I'm gonna leave the nozzle there just to keep it in your mind. I gotta get to some more lies.

Write this down as lie number 2. Your children take priority over your spouse. Lie.

You see, this lie says that once you get married and have children, your children become your most important mission, and your spouse is relegated to secondary, so you're always focused on the child more than your spouse.

But you see, folks, that kind of thinking will not only destabilize your marriage, it will destabilize your children. And here's why. Write this down as truth number 2.

The truth is, the stability of your children depends on the stability of your marriage. That's why in Ephesians chapter 6, verse 1, God does talk about the parent-child relationship. Verse 1 says, "children, obey your parents." Verse 4 says, "Fathers, do not exasperate your children."

So God does talk about the parent-child relationship. But here's what you need to understand. Before he talks to you about the child-parent relationship, he first talks to you all the way back in chapter 5 about the husband-wife relationship. And before that, he talks to you about your relationship with him.

You see the order? You see folks, here's the point. The fact is, your child determines the security of the entire universe by the stability of your relationship with each other.

If your child sees mom and dad loving each other, caring for each other, in love with each other, and even fighting with each other, but not fighting against each other, they need to see that yeah, we fight! But we fight for each other when we're fighting, not against each other. And when they see that, it's huge, folks. In terms of their emotional stability, their social stability, even their intellectual stability.

The stability of your marriage relationship trickles down to the stability of that child.

Turn it around. If they see you fighting against each other, hating each other, trying to destroy each other, trying to divorce each other, I'm telling you. It destabilizes that child. Which is why God begins with the two of you. The priority is you first. You gotta make that relationship right.

So date each other. Spend time with each other. Fight for each other. You know, we did a series a few years back called We Can Work It Out. Get the series, it's online, free. Listen to it together. Prioritize that relationship.

Number three. Lie number three, I gotta hurry. Love is never having to say you're sorry. How many of you remember that line from love story back in the day? Remember, it's a story, he or she's dying, it's all syrupy. Is it her? And I think she says, "Love is never having to say you're sorry."

Do you know that's the 13th most quoted line from Hollywood movies? "Love is never having to say you're sorry." Lie!

By the way, students, you hear your parents laughing? They're laughing 'cause they know that's a lie. In fact, write this down as truth number three: love is always ready to say "I'm sorry." Always ready.

Listen, I know this truth. And boy, I got it down to a science. I mean, sometimes I come home and I know I'm gonna do something stupid. So I open the door, "Hey honey, I'm home. Sorry for whatever I'm gonna do today that's stupid."

Not really. But I do know the power of those three words. "I am sorry." And boy, nothing cinches "I am sorry" like when the other says, "I'm sorry too." "Me too." "Let's work it out."

And by the way, when your spouse says they're sorry, they're walking out on a limb. Don't saw it off behind them. Don't say, "Well, you ought to be sorry." Or, "You're right, you are sorry."

See, if you do that, you're reinforcing to them, "I don't want to do that again. Cause that didn't work."

Lie number four: financial debt will not affect our relationship. God bless you, sir. Lie.

The Bible says you become a slave when you go into debt financially. You're a slave to whoever lent you that money. Here's the truth. Financial debt, number four, is the number one killer of marriage. Because when all you can talk about money and you're worried about money, it destroys romance.

This is why we want you to take Financial Peace. Because we love you, we don't want you in that bondage, it'll destroy you.

Number five. I gotta hurry, and I'm gonna finish with this one. Lie number five: you don't have to fight for real love. You don't have to fight for real love.

Folks, this is a lie that Satan often feeds young couples. And the lie is, is that real love will not have arguments and disagreements. And if you do argue and have disagreements, the power of romance will overcome all disagreements.

Students, you hear your parents laughing at that one? Cause you'll think that. And what this does, it sets couples up to think that love is easy. And that's the lie they're

being fed. Oh, this'll be a piece of cake romance. And all of a sudden when they find out that love is not easy, and that you gotta fight for it, what happens is they turn on each other. Cause this is not what they expected.

Here's the truth. Number five: you do have to fight for real love. That's why this text tells us, "For our pele, our struggle against this killer."

Listen, we do have to fight. But real quickly, here's what you need to know. Write this down as A and B and I'm gonna close.

You have to know who to fight against. You have to know who you gotta fight against. And here it is: for our fight is not against flesh and blood, it's not against something you can even see. It's not three-dimensional.

Who's it against? Honey, our fight is not against each other, it's something we can't see. It is against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil.

Who is that? That is fallen angels. That is a rank and order, and there is that, in that demonic world.

And folks, here's what you need to know. They exist in a dimension that you can't even see, but they're real. It's like radioactivity. Radioactivity exists in a dimension that you can't see. But if you walk into a room that's filled with radioactive waves, you may not see it, but you stay in there long enough and you'll start to feel it. Because it will start to destroy your body and kill you if you stay in there.

That's the same way with this enemy. We can't see them, but they are hell-bent on making your marriage sick, and destroying your love and romance and your life together.

And listen, here's how we fight against it. We don't fight against them by becoming preoccupied with demons, and thinking, "Oh my god, is there a demon around that corner?"

That's not how you fight. You want me to tell you how you fight demons? You ignore them. You ignore their lies, and you follow the truth. And here's the truth. Write this down as B.

You have to know who to fight for. And I love the way Nehemiah put this. Remember when we did the series a few years back on fight? Here's the way Nehemiah put it. Listen to what he said.

Nehemiah chapter 4, listen to this. Nehemiah said, "After I looked things over, I stood up and I said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people: do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome and" what? Say it like you mean it. Say it like you really mean it, and?

And who do we fight for? Fight for your families. Fight for your sons. Fight for your daughters. Fight for your wives. And fight for your homes.

You see folks, those relationships are not only worth fighting for, they must be fought for. Let me say that again. Those relationships are not only worth fighting for, they must be fought for. And the way we fight number one, is by realizing we gotta fight.

And folks, the way you begin to fight is to fuel your spirit with the fuel of God's spirit. Fill up every day on his love. And how do you fuel up? You put on the belt of truth.

You say what is truth? Jesus said, "Thy word is the truth."

Every day you need to start the day by filling up on God's word. Start with the gospel of John. Even if you don't understand it, just read it. Because what'll happen is, you'll fill up on God's love, that he loves you. His mercy, his kindness, his forgiveness, his directions, his commands, his plan for your life.

Fill up on that.

And the second way you fill up is on prayer. God's word is God talking to you, prayer is you talking back to God. And as you talk to God, I'm just telling you, it fills your spirit with thankfulness, for her, for him. For submission, to each other. Giving in when you need to.

You see folks, I find when my spirit is running on empty, I become easily irritated with little things about Rhonda. I easily get agitated. And I find when she's running on a little of empty, she gets irritated with my stuff. My little things.

But folks, when I am filled up on the spirit, it keeps me alert that I need God. And I need him every moment of every day. When I'm filled up on the spirit, I become alert that yes, there's an enemy here trying to destroy us.

When I'm filled up on his spirit, I become alert that I need to be thankful for her. I become alert that I need to fight for her. I become alert that we need to be leery of debt.

You see folks, this is the way we fight against the enemy and fight for each other.

Now. What I always love to do is take it from here, put it in here. So I want us to read a resolution to God. This is a series called Resolutions. And you know the routine. I'll read the resolution first, you'll be seated and we'll read the resolution together, then I'm gonna call our campus pastors forward at all of our campuses across Dade County.

And then together we'll stand and read this resolution, and we're gonna sing that song "I Will Fight."

So here's a resolution. You listen first as I read it. You want to take your camera out and take a picture of that, go right ahead. Here it is.

"Oh God. I realize that an enemy is trying to kill my family through lies. God, keep me alert to his lies. And keep me alert that you alone can fill the needs of my spirit. And as you fill my spirit day by day with the power of your love, may I through that power fight. May I fight for my spouse, fight for my children, fight for love. And may I fight to follow you."

And all God's people said, amen.

All right, let's read this as, unto God, all of our campuses across Dade County, let's read it as unto him. Here we go.

"Oh God, I realize that an enemy is trying to kill my family through lies. God, keep me alert to his lies. And keep me alert that you alone can fill the needs of my spirit. And as you fill my spirit day by day with the power of your love, may I through that power fight. May I fight for my spouse. Fight for my children. Fight for love. And may I fight to follow you."

And all God's people said, amen.