**Spiritual Warfare**

Never Give In, Never Make Peace

By Jon Bloom

On October 29, 1941, Winston Churchill delivered [one of his most famous speeches](https://www.nationalchurchillmuseum.org/never-give-in-never-never-never.html) to the boys of Harrow School, his alma mater. And the most memorable lines from this speech are these:

**Never give in, never give in, *never, never, never, never* — in nothing, great or small, large or petty — never give in except to convictions of honour and good sense. Never yield to force; never yield to the apparently overwhelming might of the enemy.**

We must remember the context of this speech. War had been raging for two years. France had fallen to the Nazis, along with numerous other smaller nations. Soviet Russia was reeling under a massive German invasion. The United States was trying to avoid sending its boys to death (Pearl Harbor would occur in five weeks). Britain was standing largely alone as the bulwark against the violent tidal wave of Hitler’s ambition. The days were still dark (or “stern” as Churchill preferred) and ominous. There were some rays of hope, but victory was by no means certain. Germany still had the momentum.

As Churchill addressed an auditorium of frightened young school boys who might soon be facing bullets as soldiers, and a frightened British public who were traumatized by the devastating bombs of the German Luftwaffe and demoralized by discouraging reports in the press, he did not speak words of consolation, but of exhortation: *never give in*.

This was far more than a call for endurance; this was a call for relentless courage and take-it-to-the-enemy moxie.

**We Are at War**

We are at war. When Jesus called us as disciples, he not only delivered us from the domain of darkness ([Colossians 1:13](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Col%201.13)), he drafted us into his war against the darkness ([Ephesians 6:11–12](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Eph%206.11%E2%80%9312); [2 Timothy 2:3](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim%202.3)). War is not a metaphor for the spiritual reality we experience; it’s what it is. If anything, the earthly war is a metaphor for the spiritual reality, though more accurately, earthly war is one horrible way the spiritual war manifests in the physical realm.

**If we don’t believe we are in a war, we will be ill-prepared for what’s coming or disillusioned about what has happened.**

In war, conflict, hardship, risk, and suffering are the norm. The Bible tells all faithful followers of Jesus to expect them ([John 16:33](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%2016.33); [2 Timothy 3:12](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim%203.12)), because we live like sheep in the midst of wolves ([Matthew 10:16](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt%2010.16)); we live in enemy territory ([1 John 5:19](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20John%205.19)). If we don’t believe we are in a war, we will keep trying to make peace with the devil, thinking we’re doing the right thing.

Despite Churchill’s continual warnings of the growing German threat throughout the 1930’s, most of Britain’s leaders lived in denial and excoriated Churchill’s “warmongering.” As a result, they led the British public to believe in a false security. In 1938, Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain signed an agreement with Hitler and came home proclaiming “peace for our time.” Less than a year later, woefully unprepared, Britain was forced to declare war on Germany.

We are at war, not peace. We must recognize the signs of the times ([Matthew 16:3](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt%2016.3)). We must watch with biblical discernment the movements of the enemy and not be ignorant of his schemes ([2 Corinthians 2:11](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Cor%202.11)). I of course am not speaking of people, but principalities and powers, “spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places” ([Ephesians 6:12](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Eph%206.12)).

**This is not a time to secure peace. This is a time to engage in war.**

**Expect to Fig**h**t**

Those of us who live in affluent regions of the world will need to fight just to view life as war. Affluence conditions us for comfort. It conditions us to expect abundance and convenience and leisure and entertainment. It encourages us to aim for material security.

But a soldier doesn’t live a balanced or secure life. A soldier lives a focused life of strategic sacrifice. **A soldier lives for one overriding aim: victory for the Cause.**

In peacetime, we expect to live in peace. An enemy attack is an unexpected shock to those who expect peace. In wartime, soldiers expect to fight. An enemy might spring a surprise attack, but soldiers are not shocked that an enemy attacks.

Such is the nature of war: enemies attack; soldiers fight. Fighting is the vocation of a soldier, wherever he’s deployed, whatever his individual assignment.

In peacetime, we give ourselves to civilian pursuits, whatever most advances our individual or family interests and prosperity. In wartime, we must not entangle ourselves in civilian pursuits because we are devoted to one overriding aim: victory ([2 Timothy 2:4](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim%202.4)).

Jesus came to make peace possible between a holy God and sinful man, and between redeemed people of every ethnicity and background ([Ephesians 2:14–16](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Eph%202.14%E2%80%9316)). But he did not come to bring earthly peace to the devil or those given over to him, but rather a sword ([Matthew 10:34](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt%2010.34)).

And those of us who follow Jesus must not only pick up our crosses ([Luke 9:23](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke%209.23)), but also our swords (of the Spirit) and armor ([Ephesians 6:10–17](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Eph%206.10%E2%80%9317)).

**Because we will fight.**

**What Encouragement Sounds Like**

A year before his speech at Harrow, in even darker (sterner) days, immediately following the heroic deliverance of 335,000 British and French troops from German capture in the Battle of Dunkirk, Churchill encouraged the British Parliament and people, as well as the world, with these words of resolve:

**Even though large tracts of Europe and many old and famous States have fallen or may fall into the grip of the Gestapo and all the odious apparatus of Nazi rule, we shall not flag or fail. We shall go on to the end, we shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our Island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; *we shall never surrender.***

This is what encouragement sounds like. Encouragement is not just tender consolation for the suffering, *it is strong exhortation to the fainthearted.* This is how we should speak to each other in wartime, especially when the shadow of evil is cast over us. This is not a time to give in to fear. It is not a time for despair.

**This is a time for resolve. It is a time, not for posturing and swagger, but for a humble, Jesus-trusting, Word-grounded, Spirit-filled determination. It is a time for holy Christian moxie.**

**Man Your Post**

For we are at war. War with the forces and effects of the powers of hell is hellish. It’s ugly, cruel, disorienting, and violent on numerous levels. This present darkness is out to destroy us, those we love, and as many people around the world as possible, body and soul.

But we have far more reason for hope than Britain ever had in the early 1940’s. Victory is certain. The enemy is attacking on many fronts, yes, but **he is also in retreat.** The kingdom of Heaven has been advancing for two millennia, and will relentlessly continue until the full number of saints have been rescued from satanic capture ([1 Timothy 2:4](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%202.4); [Romans 11:25](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom%2011.25); [Revelation 6:11](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rev%206.11)).

**And you have a post to man, assigned by our Lord. It does not matter how prominent your post is. It does not matter how difficult your post is, how intense the fighting at your place in the line. It does not matter if you survive the battle, for you *will* ultimately survive (**[**Luke 21:18**](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke%2021.18)**).**

**What matters is the Cause.** That’s what our lives now are about.

**So man your post with all your might, whatever it is. Stay alert, and do not neglect your responsibilities. Do not defame the Commander, hinder his Cause, or harm your comrades by devoting yourself to civilian or sinful pursuits (**[**2 Timothy 2:4**](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim%202.4)**).**

Stay at your post till you receive orders for redeployment. When that happens, serve your replacement as best you can, then pick up your weapons and move to the next deployment, regardless of how obscure the post. Or patiently and prayerfully wait for your orders, regardless of how long. Remain in active service until you receive your divine discharge ([2 Timothy 4:6–8](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim%204.6%E2%80%938)).

*And fight the good fight.*

**Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.** ([1 Timothy 6:12](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%206.12)).

Fight! As far as it depends on us, let us be at peace with all men ([Romans 12:18](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom%2012.18)), but fight the spiritual forces of wickedness to the death — for we will never die ([John 11:26](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%2011.26)). If the enemy takes the beach, let us fight him in the fields. If he takes the field, let us fight him in the streets, refusing to surrender.

And let us trust our Supreme Allied Commander with overall strategy and force deployment. He knows what he’s doing and will bring the enemy down. For our parts, let us be faithful at our posts and resolve to **never, never, never give in.**