

Mother's Day 2015: The Battle Is the Lord's
with Pastor Joseph J Graber

"I learned more about Christianity from my mother than from all the theologians in England." - John Wesley

1 Samuel 17

43 So the Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.

44 And the Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!"

45 Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.

46 "This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.

47 "Then all this assembly shall know that the LORD does not save with sword and spear; for **the battle is the LORD'S**, and He will give you into our hands."
(NKJV)

Psalms 18

29 For by You I can run against a troop, By my God I can leap over a wall.

30 As for God, His way is perfect; The word of the LORD is proven; He is a shield to all who trust in Him.

31 For who is God, except the LORD? And who is a rock, except our God?

32 It is God who arms me with strength, And makes my way perfect.

33 He makes my feet like the feet of deer, And sets me on my high places.

34 He teaches my hands to make war, So that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.

35 You have also given me the shield of Your salvation; Your right hand has held me up, Your gentleness has made me great.

36 You enlarged my path under me, So my feet did not slip.

37 I have pursued my enemies and overtaken them; Neither did I turn back again till they were destroyed.

38 I have wounded them, So that they could not rise; They have fallen under my feet.

39 **For You have armed me with strength for the battle;** You have subdued under me those who rose up against me.

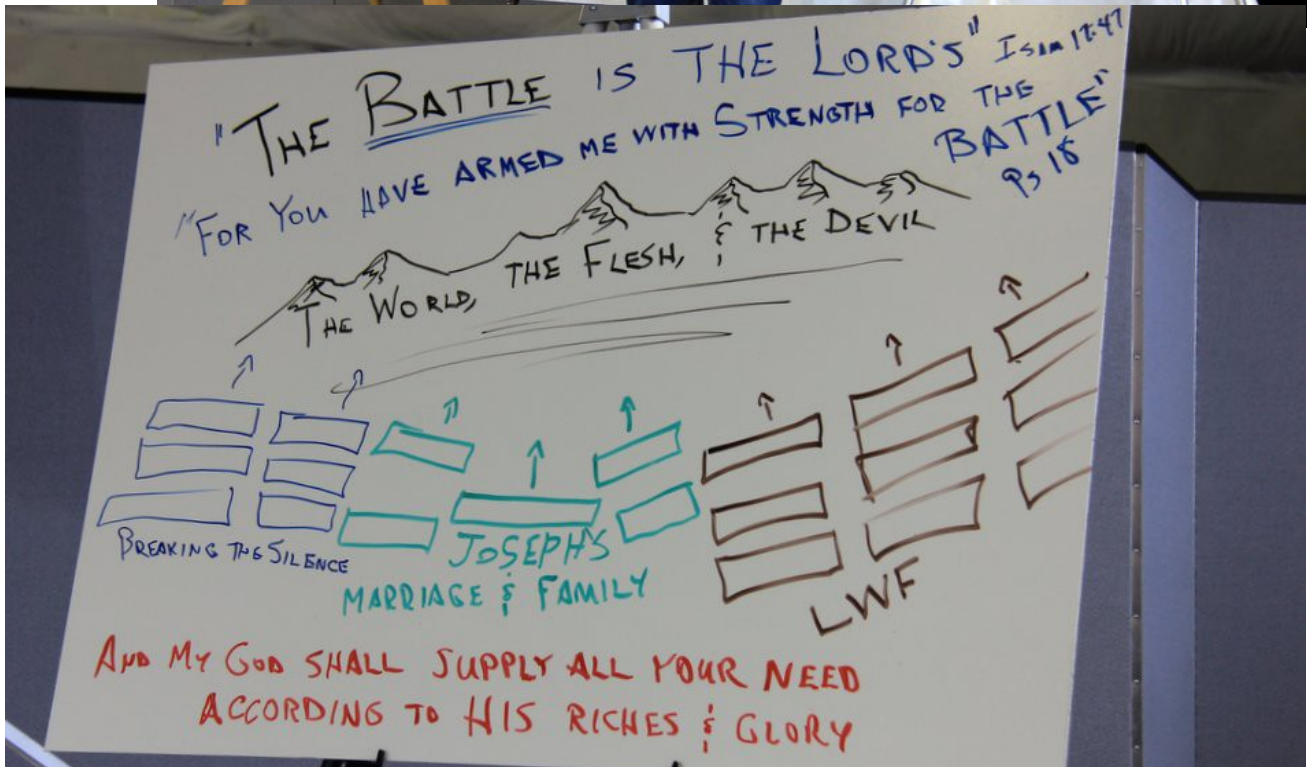
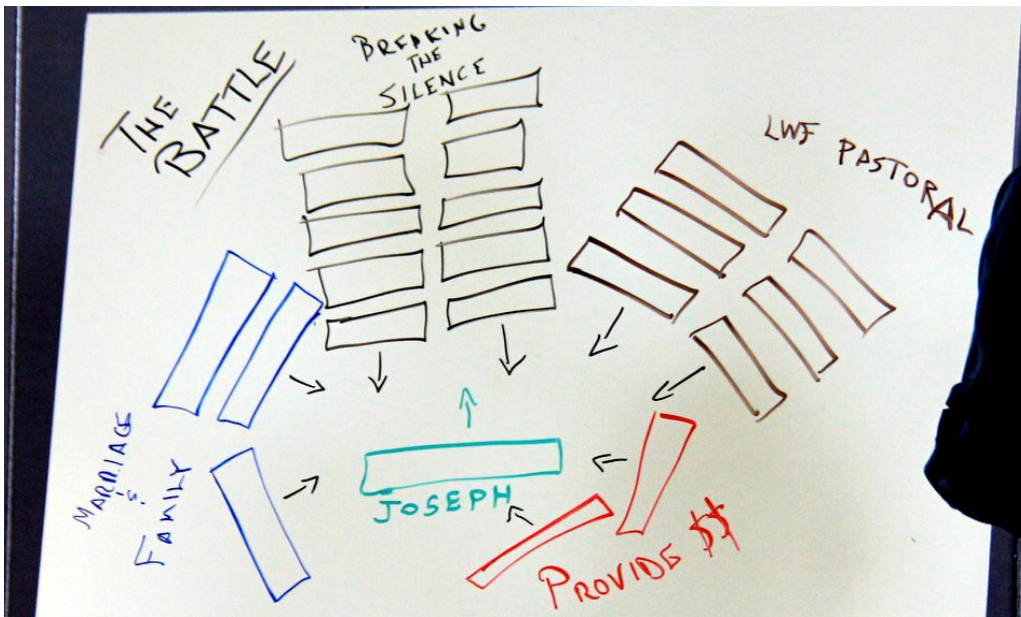
(NKJV)

Philippians 4

6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

19 And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.
(NKJV)



Keepers of the Springs – excerpt from a sermon by Peter Marshall

Once upon a time, a certain town grew up at the foot of a mountain range. It was sheltered in the lee of the protecting heights, so that the wind that shuddered at the doors and flung handfuls of sleet against the window panes was a wind whose fury was spent.

High up in the hills, a strange and quiet forest dweller took it upon himself to be the Keeper of the Springs.

He patrolled the hills and wherever he found a spring, he cleaned its brown pool of silt and fallen leaves, of mud and mould

and took away from the spring all foreign matter, so that the water which bubbled up through the sand ran down clean and cold and pure.

It leaped sparkling over rocks and dropped joyously in crystal cascades until, swollen by other streams, it became a river of life to the busy town.

Millwheels were whirled by its rush.

Gardens were refreshed by its waters.

Fountains threw it like diamonds into the air.

Swans sailed on its limpid surface

and children laughed as they played on its banks in the sunshine.

But the City Council was a group of hard-headed, hard-boiled business men. They scanned the civic budget and found in it the salary of a Keeper of the Springs. Said the Keeper of the Purse: "Why should we pay this romance ranger? We never see him; he is not necessary to our town's work life. If we build a reservoir just above the town, we can dispense with his services and save his salary."

Therefore the City Council voted to dispense with the unnecessary cost of a Keeper of the Springs, and to build a cement reservoir.

So the Keeper of the Springs no longer visited the brown pools but watched from the heights while they built the reservoir.

When it was finished, it soon filled up with water, to be sure, but the water did not seem to be the same.

It did not seem to be as clean, and a green scum soon befouled its stagnant surface.

There were constant troubles with the delicate machinery of the mills, for it was often clogged with slime, and the swans found another home above the town.

At last, an epidemic raged, and the clammy, yellow fingers of sickness reached into every home in every street and lane.

The City Council met again. Sorrowfully, it faced the city's plight, and frankly it acknowledged the mistake of the dismissal of the Keeper of the Springs.

They sought him out in his hermit hut high in the hills, and begged him to return to his former joyous labor.

Gladly he agreed, and began once more to make his rounds.

It was not long until pure water came liltng down under tunnels of ferns and mosses and to sparkle in the cleansed reservoir.

Millwheels turned again as of old.

Stenches disappeared.

Sickness waned

and convalescent children playing int the sun laughed again because the swans had come back.

Do not think me fanciful

too imaginative

or too extravagant in my language

when I say that I think of women, and particularly of our mothers, as Keepers of the Springs.

The phrase, while poetic, is true and descriptive.

We feel its warmth . . .

its softening influence . . .

and however forgetful we have been . . .

however much we have taken for granted life's precious gifts we are conscious of wistful memories that surge out of the past –

the sweet

tender

poignant fragrances of love.

Nothing that has been said

nothing that could be said

or that ever will be said,

would be eloquent enough, expressive enough, or adequate to make articulate that peculiar emotion we feel to our mothers.

So I shall make my tribute a plea for Keepers of the Springs, who will be faithful to their tasks.

There never has been a time when there was a greater need for Keepers of the Springs,
or when there were more polluted springs to be cleansed.

If the home fails, the country is doomed. The breakdown of home life and influence will mark the breakdown of the nation.

If the Keepers of the Springs desert their posts or are unfaithful to their responsibilities the future outlook of this country is black indeed.

This generation needs Keepers of the Springs who will be courageous enough to cleanse the springs that have been polluted.

It is not an easy task – nor is it a popular one, but it must be done for the sake of the children, and the young women of today must do it.