

Abandoned But Not Forgotten

Ron Cummings Testimony

By Rob Randall

sermonaudio.com

Preached on: Sunday, December 26, 2010

The Invisible War

P.O. Box 5

McKinney, TX 75070

Website: www.theinvisiblewar.org

Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/theinvisiblewar

This is The Invisible War with evangelist and author Dr. Rob Randall.

There is a bigger battle going on the world right now than we can even see, a battle that has existed since the beginning of time. This is not a war between countries, but an all out assault on the very soul of people everywhere. Lives are being defeated and destroyed. Marriages are falling apart at an unprecedented rate. Children are rebelling against everything they have been taught. Addictions are rampant to everything you can think of and all of this is the result of a spiritual war which is the invisible war.

And yet there is hope. Rob Randall is a third generation evangelist who has devoted his life to seeing people who have come to the end of themselves find a true life of promise and healing. The invisible war is a journey that will lead us on the road to freedom and a path of fulfillment.

There are no quick fixes, only a process. But it begins with the first step. So here is Rob Randall to take us through this journey one step at a time as we find hope in the invisible war.

Welcome to The Invisible War. We are so glad that you have joined us and we thank you if you come back and listen each week to this very special radio program that we have and if you are a first time listener, thank you of joining us.

Now you are going to be glad that you tuned in today because you are going to hear an amazing story of a man who was in prison and he was not getting out. He had years on his sentence. He lost his family. He was embroiled in drugs and hatred and anger. He was tormented by nightmares of unbelievable intensity. And then something happened to him. One of the most amazing stories of salvation that I think you will ever here.

Our special guest here in just a moment is going to tell his story.

I want to remind you who are listening today that each week this radio program is taken from Dr. Randall's book by the same title *The Invisible War: Living in Victory over the Enemy*. And we want to encourage you to get your copy of this Bible study in spiritual

warfare by visiting our website, the invisible war dot org. That is the invisible war dot org and ordering it online.

Dr. Randall, I am going to give you the privilege here of introducing our special guest.

Dr. Rob Randall:

What a joy and great privilege is mine today in welcoming to the invisible war, Ron Cummings. I met Ron through another ministry of deliverance and spiritual healing here in the Dallas area. When I heard his story of God's amazing love and grace I began to look forward to when our Lord would allow us to share his story with our many listeners. And this is the day God has enabled us to come together.

I want everyone to pay close attention to our guest and wonderful brother in Christ, Ron Cummings as he shares his story of God's amazing and faithful love.

Voice:

Ron, thank you so much for joining us. We are glad that you are here.

Ron Cummings:

Thank you.

Voice:

You know, just to synopsise your story, it involves crime and prison and drugs and deliverance from things that were just so attached in your life that you thought there was no hope. But we want to start from the beginning. How did the enemy begin to grip you and keep you into bondage?

Ron Cummings:

You know, actually I believe it began in my childhood. My parents divorced actually when I was 11 years old and I became very angry. I got into rebellion and I just began to run with the wrong crowd and do wrong things and as time progressed the things that we got involved in became more severe and I began to get arrested. And, you know, I can still recall back in those early days that I would get arrested and put in jail and I would get on the phone. They would let you make a phone call and I would call someone and say, "Hello, I am so sorry. Please, please come get me out and I will never do this again."

But the truth is I would actually spend my time laying in that cell trying to figure out ways to do the same types of things except only this time doing them differently. I kept thinking I was going to get smarter, but the truth is I just got dumber and dumber, you know?

Voice:

Yeah, it is kind of like pride was taking over there, wasn't it?

Ron Cummings:

Amen. It was pride. It was pride and turned to rebellion and I was a very, very rebellious child.

Voice:

You eventually ended up in prison.

Ron Cummings:

I did. My crimes got more severe. Eventually in the 1970s I stood before a judge in Dallas, Texas and he had my record, my files before him and it was quite thick and he said, "Boy, you have been given plenty of chances." He said, "This is the end of line for you." And he slammed down his gavel and sentenced me to sentences totally 105 years in the Texas Department of Corrections.

Now at that time I was married and I had four little children and my attitude had always been I am going to do what I want to do and no one is going to tell me. What I do doesn't affect anybody but me. If I get caught, if I do the crime, I will do the time. But that is not going to hurt anybody but me.

But God has shown me over the years that my sin not only killed my life, but it meant that my wife that I just abandoned her, my sin destroyed her life and it destroyed my children's life because they were left to grow up without a father.

Voice:

You went into prison with the total idea that you were going to escape.

Ron Cummings:

Absolutely. From the time that judge slammed down that gavel, my idea was to escape. I couldn't even count that high.

But I was very persistent and, you know, when you can't escape things physically, I mean, you can always try to escape mentally. And I chose to do that through drugs. And there in the 70s and the 80s drugs were plentiful in the Texas prison system.

Voice:

You managed to escape.

Ron Cummings:

I did.

I was very persistent and eventually in 1988 I did escape and I was gone for like 26 days. I knew I was going to be caught. I had been caught at everything I had ever done. And I knew that I would be caught. I had done all the time I was ever going to do and so my big plan was when I escaped I took three pistols from the sheriff's office on the way out and I just thought that we would just hold court right in the middle of the street. I had done all the time I was going to do.

But, you know, God had another plan and 26 days later they ran me to the ground before I could move. I was surrounded and they put me in waist chains and leg irons and transported me back before that judge in the county that I had escaped from. And, boy, he was not a happy camper. He looked at me that day and he said, "Boy," he said, "You are never going to learn this." He said, "You will never see the light of day again." And he slammed down the gavel and sentenced me to an additional 25 year sentence.

Voice:

Already.

Ron Cummings:

Already.

Voice:

Twenty-five years added to the 105.

Ron Cummings:

Added to the 105.

Two days later a transport van picked me up, carried me back to the prison. I went before the classification board and the head of the board told me, "Boy, you are never going to be free again."

The send me to the east ham unit. Now the east ham unit at that time was called America's toughest prison. And I don't know about that. We just called it the house of pain. It was a painful place to live.

And because of my security classifications they put me in the cell blocks and my movements were, as you can imagine, pretty restricted.

Voice:

You began to have some severe nightmares. Boy, that is an understatement from what I heard.

Ron Cummings:

I really did. I had never had nightmares before, but I would close my eyes and try to drift off to sleep and when I did go to sleep I would find myself buried alive underground in a casket. And it was so real and I can recall it now like it was yesterday and it was so dark and so claustrophobic I couldn't breathe. And I would take my elbows and try to push up on the lid of this casket and it wouldn't budge and take my feet and try to kick out the end of it and I couldn't do it and I couldn't break out the sides. And would just claw at the lining of this casket and every time I closed my eyes to sleep the same nightmare would return. It was just horrific.

So I thought, you know, drugs had always been a way of escape for me that I was going to go down to the medical department and get some medication to help me sleep. And I went down there and I told the doctor the story and he took one look at me and sent me to see the psychiatrist.

And as I went in to see the psychiatrist this guy said, "Well, Ronnie, tell me a little bit about yourself. How much time are you doing?"

And I said, "Well, I have 125 years."

And he just looked at me and he said, "A hundred and twenty-five years? You must be depressed."

Well, I certainly was and he sent me back to the cell blocks and I took that medication and they had absolutely no effect on me except that things just got worse.

It all culminated one evening. I drifted off to sleep and I was immediately buried alive underground in this casket and I remember screaming and clawing and thrashing about and trying to get out of the casket and it wouldn't move and I couldn't breathe and it was so dark and I just bolted straight up in my bed. And I was somewhat catatonic, but as I opened my eyes I felt a wetness on my fingers and I reached over and pulled the string on the light in the cell and as the light came on there was blood on my fingers and on the sheet and I looked at the wall and there were claw marks in blood where I had scratched my fingers down to the quick, my fingernails trying to get out of this casket. And it was just horrific.

The guards came. They hauled me back down before the medical department. This time they had a team of three psychiatrists come in that day. They put me in a straightjacket and laced it up the back and transported me to what was then LS3 psychiatric unit. And when I was taken over there I was stripped down to just a pair of white shorts and shoved

off into this cell. There was no furniture in there. There was no sheets, no mattress, nothing but a hole in the middle of the floor to relieve your body functions.

And once every four hours they would come and open the bean hole. Now that is where they put the beans through. And they would open the bean hole and holler in there, "Hey, come here, back up here."

And I would have to go up there and back up and they would handcuff me and once I was safely handcuffed they would come in with the medication.

Now you were going to take that medication. I am just telling you. They would... they had a little rack that they roll in there and strap you to it and force it down you. You were going to take it.

And this just went on for days and days and days. You have no idea whether it is day or night in there or what hour it is. There is no windows, but I had periods of lucidity where I could actually remember what my name was and maybe my children's names and my wife's name, but... and I had periods of absolute insanity.

Voice:

But you are in this cell now and they are giving you medication. You don't know if it is night or day.

Ron Cummings:

Right.

Voice:

What happens?

Ron Cummings:

Right. And most of the time I didn't even know who I was. But during one of my more lucid times, when they cam in with the medication I asked the guard, I said, "Ma'am, I am so bored in here." You know, I had counted all the cracks in the floor. I gave every one of those cockroaches a name and counted the pleats on the pads on the wall and ran out of things to do. And I asked the guard, "Could I just please, please have something to read?"

The guard looked at me and rather sarcastically said, "Boy, you are not going to get anything to read." He said, "They are afraid that whatever we give you, you might use to make a weapon to either harm yourself or harm us." And he slammed that door. And as he was shutting the door I kicked it and I became so angry I thought, man, here I am. I have over 125 years and I am never going to have my family back. I will never be free

again. I have lost everything of value in life and this guy won't even give me anything to read.

And I cursed him and I threatened his life and everything that lived and breathed. And just went into an absolute rage.

And at some point in that I passed out on the floor. And I have no idea how long I was out, but I recall the first thing I sensed was a coldness on my cheeks as I came to. And I was laying by that hole in the middle of the floor and facing the bean hole and laying up on the bean hole was a little brown book and, you know, I have that here with me today. And the minute I laid eyes on that I knew what it was. It was a Bible. And I want to tell you the last thing that I wanted in my life was a Bible. I had persecuted Christians in prison. I thought it was jailhouse religion, weak sisters. I wanted nothing to do with it. It thought it held no hope for me.

But, you know, I could not take my eyes off of this little book and I managed to stand up and I kind of did the [?] shuffle over there and grabbed this Bible. It seemed to stick to my hand. I came back, began to walk around in the middle of that floor. And I raised this Bible up and I opened it from the back.

And, like I say, I don't know what I expected to read, probably a, you are going to spend an eternity in hell. Well, I felt like I was already in hell. But God knows what you need. God knows what will reach you and three words jumped out at me.

It said, "God loves you."

You know, it was such a shock to me. I didn't think anybody could love me. I was unlovable. But it said, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."¹

And, you know, I knew the life that it was talking about wasn't the kind of life that I was living.

And I continued to read where it said that all are sinners.

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."²

And my heartbeat quickened because I knew I qualified for that. I had been sinning all my life. That had been my whole life as a sinner. And as I continued to read it said that God had made a remedy for sin.

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."³

¹ John 3:16.

² Romans 3:23.

³ Romans 6:23.

And then I read, perhaps, the greatest information that I have ever had in my life, that that remedy for my sin, for my life was available to me right there in that strip cell.

The Bible says in Romans 10:13, “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”⁴

And I want you to know I just dropped to my knees and I literally began to scream out. I said, “God, I have hurt so many people. God, I have made such a mess out of my life. God, all my great dreams and schemes and plans have just turned to mud. God, would you make the voices stop? God would you make the nightmares go away? God, if I have to spend one more moment the way I have lived the last 18 years, God, just kill me right now.” And I was just literally screaming. “God, kill me. Jesus, save me.”

And all of the sudden a little light up in the corner of the cell just like a little pin light caught my eye and I glanced up at it and I instantly went snow blind and that light was the whitest light I have ever seen. And it emanated through that whole cell and I had been so cold I had goose bumps on me. I suddenly began to sweat. And as I did stuff began to leave me, stuff that had been in my life it seemed like forever, as far back as I could possibly remember.

And I just remember falling over on my side and I curled up in a fetal position and the Spirit of God began to move on me and God just loved on me and he loved on me and he loved on me and I have no idea even today how long it lasted. It just seemed like an eternity. I will never forget that experience.

But at some point I heard keys rattling outside that cell door and the bean hole dropped open and the guard hollered, “Hey, back up here.”

And I backed up there and they handcuffed me and I was stunned and they opened the door and they came in with the medication and I began to tell them, “Wait a minute, man. Hold up. Something has happened to me. I don’t think I need that.”

And the guard just looked at me and was kind of... he said, “Why? What is going on? What has happened?”

And before I could think about it I help up this little Bible and I said, “Man, I have been talking to God.”

Well, you know, in that psychiatric cell that wasn’t a good thing to tell him.

Voice:

Give him some more medication.

⁴ Romans 10:13.

Ron Cummings:

I tell you.

And the guard said, “Yeah, well, maybe so, but you are going to take this medication anyway.”

And, you know, I did. But within about a week or a week and a half I was able to convince them just to wait, to hold up, that, you know, I wasn’t going anywhere. I wasn’t a threat to anybody in that isolation cell.

And when the medication stopped I got better and better and better and better every day. And about three weeks later they put me on a chain bus and transferred me back to the east ham unit and I will never forget. As we came in the back gate of the ham unit they have a cage there that they put you in and I was sitting there in the hand cuffs waiting on the unit security to come get me and take me back to the cell block. And I asked the back gate guard, I said, “Ma’am, have you all got a preacher here? I need to see a preacher.”

And the guard told me, “We don’t have preachers in prison. We have chaplains.”

And, you know, I had never been to church in prison.

I said, “Well, I need to see that dude. Can I see that dude?”

And he must have saw something in my eyes and before I knew it a guard came out and they took me up to see the chaplain. His name was chaplain Vance Drum. He is still there today, a mighty man of God. And I went before chaplain Drum and I told chaplain Drum what had happened to me over in the cell and how about the light and about how the Spirit of God had moved on me and the nightmares and he said, “Well, Ronnie,” he said, “When you cried out to Jesus,” he said, “Brother, he came into your life.” He said, “Brother, you have been born again.” He said, “You are a new creation in Christ Jesus.”

And, you know, I just looked at him and I said, “Really?”

He says, “Yes.” He said, “What else can I do for you?”

I said, “Well, man. Tell me how to keep it. The nightmares are gone. The pain is gone. The voices are gone. I have a peace that I have never ever known before in my life.”

And I was so afraid that it was going to leave and that the darkness would come back.

Well, chaplain Drum, he just looked at me and turned me in the same little New Testament where Jesus, he showed me, he said, “Look. Jesus said, ‘I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.’⁵” And he said, “Look, Ronnie, here is the real deal.” He said,

⁵ Hebrews 13:5.

“Jesus didn’t only come to be the Lord and Savior of your life, son.” He said, “He wants to be very best friend you ever had.”

Voice:

Outstanding. Now something amazing happens at this point. You have been growing in your walk with Christ, fellowshipping with other Christian inmates, plugged in there to church services...

Ron Cummings:

Yes.

Voice:

...in prison. And one day you got a letter.

Ron Cummings:

I did. I never got letters. I hadn’t had a letter in over five years and I hadn’t had a visit in about seven years. And I mean I didn’t know anybody to write anymore I had been locked down so long. But they called my name at mail call and I went down there and it wasn’t actually a letter. It was a piece of paper that had been folded four times and stapled. And I opened it up and as I did I saw the state seal of Texas and inscribed in it was... it said, “Board of Pardons and Paroles.”

And I looked down there and there was my name and the letter said that I had been granted parole. I was just stunned.

You know, I wasn’t even eligible for parole. I had over 125 years. I had just been back off escape right at three years. You don’t get parole. So I knew it had to be a mistake. I just knew it had to be a mistake.

I took that thing back to my cell and put it under my pillow and began to pray over it and thought, well, it is just the devil trying to steal my mind again, trying to torment me. And eventually I got enough nerve to take it up to someone by that time who was pretty well acquainted with me, the chaplain Drum. And I took it up to see him and I said, “Chaplain Drum, I got this in the mail. Would you just... I think it is a mistake. Would you check it out and let me know?”

And he said, “What is it?”

And I didn’t even have the nerve to tell him. I handed it to him and as he opened it up I will never forget. He said, “Oh, yeah, this is a mistake.”

And I said, “Well, just check it out.”

And he said, “No, you stand right there and I will call.”

And he did. And I saw his eyes get real big and he hung the phone up and he said, “Ronnie, this is for real. They are going to release you.”

I said, “You are kidding me.”

He said, “No.”

Well, it was nine months down the road and I want you to know that during that nine months I did everything I could to try to get grounded, more grounded in the Word. I told God. I said, “God, you see all eternity. If you see where I am ever going to stray from you, please, God, don’t let me out of prison, because it has taken me this long to find you, to have a life, to find a life.”

God gave me the verse in the Philippians 1:6. “He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”⁶

So I understood immediately that God was doing this work in me and not myself.

Well, I continued to believe it was a mistake. I mean, you read about it every day. They let the wrong people out of jail or prison and they make some kind of paper work mistake. And nine months later they called my name and put me on the chain bus and before you are released you go through photo and ID and they run you through all these computers and I kept thinking at any minute they are going to discover they have made a tragic mistake.

And the next thing I know that the doors were opened. I could see the sunlight out there and as we came out through the walls I had paired up with another fellow and my great plan was just to get right on down to the bus station and get my bus ticket and just get out of Dodge before they could discover that they had made a mistake.

And as I came out they were changing shifts and the guards gather across the street there at the walls in Huntsville. And I saw them and I turned left and got down to the end of the street and as I took a step off that curb I heard my name, someone yelling my name at the top of their voice.

“Cummings, Ronnie Cummings, Cummings.”

And it was coming from up around where those guards were and I am going to tell you. I just started walking faster. And I heard the name again.

“Cummings. Cummings, Ronnie Cummings.”

⁶ Philippians 1:6.

Well, all the hair was standing on the back of my neck and then I heard footsteps behind me and I was almost running. Then I felt a hand grab me by the shoulder and spun me around and I just remember closing my eyes and saying, “God, this is your will.”

As I turned around I looked in to the face of a young man that looked vaguely familiar to me and he said, “Ronnie Cummings?”

And I began to nod my head. And he said, “Daddy... dad.” And it was my son Timothy and he was now an adult. And I don’t know how they found out that I was being released, but they had come to pick their father up.

Dr. Rob Randall:

What Ron is sharing with us is that now he is saved, wonderfully. He didn’t even know what salvation was and God saved him.

You know, what reminds me, the Scripture that comes to my heart is, “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”⁷

“Whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered.”⁸

Deliverance is our salvation. It is that process that begins at the new birth that continues to make us more and more like Jesus.

And so Ron is a wonderful example. That is why I wanted our listeners to hear his story today. He is a wonderful example to all of us to remind us of our own vulnerabilities, that no matter how great the struggle, God is able.

Voice:

Now people who haven’t been to prison or maybe haven’t committed crime and so forth, they can still run into problems such as these, can’t they?

Dr. Rob Randall:

Well, you don’t have to be in prison to be in bondage. Some of the freest people that I have ever met spiritually are behind bars. It has nothing to do with whether or not you are in prison or not. Obviously, you do crimes, you get caught, you end up in prison. But prison doesn’t solve the spiritual issues at all.

And you can be the freest person in America and be in horrible bondage spiritually. And so this is not a matter of prison. That just happens to be where Ron had to end up so he wouldn’t hurt others or hurt himself where the Lord could finally get his attention. But

⁷ Romans 10:13.

⁸ Joel 2:32.

many of our own lives are in serious bondage and we need to come to the place, to the end place of ourselves where we cry to the Lord to come and help and to deliver us from those things that are tormenting us.

And what is wonderful is I want everyone to understand I don't care what your bondage is. I don't care how long you have been doing it. I don't care how hopeless you may feel. God is greater. He is bigger. He is greater than all of it. But you must humble yourself. I must humble myself and turn to him. And everything you need today, he will give it and more, but you must humble yourself and ask.

Voice:

Dr. Randall, I think that this would be a good time for you to pray for our listeners. I know that there are people who are listening right now who are struggling. Would you pray for our listeners right now?

Dr. Rob Randall:

What a privilege it is.

Would you gather around the radio right where you are? Just pray with me. Let me have the privilege of praying with you in that quiet place. Would you do that with me right now? Just pray with me.

Lord Jesus, thank you for loving me. Lord, thank you for dying of me. I know that I am a sinner and I know that without you there is no hope. I ask you to come into my life and forgive me of my sin. I receive you as my Savior and my Lord. Make me. Begin the process of making me this day like Jesus. I can't do it. I have tried it and failed. So, Lord, come into my life and do your mighty work and we will praise you forever in Jesus' mighty name. Amen.

If you have prayed that prayer with us today we want to hear from you. Give us a call. Our toll free number is 1 877 808 8886. That is 1 877 808 8886. You can visit us on the web at the invisible war dot org. That is the invisible war dot org. Let us know how we can minister to you and help you today.

I want to thank personally those of you who have and are supporting the invisible war. You have enabled a testimony like Ron Cummings to go out to the many, many thousands of hurting people today. So we thank you.

And for others who could help, may I encourage you to give as generous as gift as the Lord would allow you to give this day. Please help us. Stand with us. If you can give a gift today, let us know. Visit our website, the invisible war dot org. There are many ways that you can give there. Or you can call us. Let us know how we can help you. 1 877 808 8886. That is toll free 1 877 808 8886.

Please pray for us and thank you for your giving. We look forward to next week when we share once again the Word of God from his heart to your heart in the invisible war.

Voice:

This has been the weekly radio program called The Invisible War with Rob Randall. You don't have to live defeated, heartbroken or in bondage to anything. Give everything you are to everything he is and you will begin to see your life transformed into the life he has made you to be for your sake and for everyone around you. Remember to check out the invisible war dot org for resources, podcasts, information and just a place to let us know how to pray for you. We will see you next time on The Invisible War.