

(Ephesians) Putting on the Armor

by Brian Brodersen

Brian Brodersen emphasizes the necessity of putting on the armor of God to effectively engage in spiritual warfare and overcome opposition in the Christian life.

Duration: 55:33

Scripture: Ephesians 6:10

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "Christian Armor"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by expressing gratitude for being captivated by the beauty of the Lord and the joy of serving Him. The speaker then shares updates on recent trips to England and Hungary, including a pastor's conference. The sermon then transitions to a discussion of Ephesians 6, emphasizing the need for Christians to be prepared for spiritual battle. The speaker highlights the importance of being immersed in the truth and living out the practical instructions given in the epistle.

Transcript

Yes, Lord, that is, that's really true. Lord, your beauty has captured us and, Lord, how glad we are to have been taken captive by you. What a joy it is to know you and, Lord, to be your servants.

And, Lord, as we study your word once again tonight, we pray that you would instruct us to the end, that we would know you better, love you more, and serve you in a greater way. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

All right, let's turn to Ephesians 6. And as you're turning there, let me just give you a couple of, well, a couple of, I guess, updates on things that have been going on and so forth. We had a great trip over to England and over to Hungary as well. We were in England for about 10 days and in Hungary for about seven days.

And we just had a dynamite time, had a pastor's conference in the north of England. And this is our seventh annual pastor's conference in the UK. And this was the best one we've ever had.

So it was just really exciting to see how God's touching lives. And some of the churches, actually, a year ago, some of the churches were really just getting started and, you know, just maybe having a half a dozen or so people. And those churches have grown to about 50 people attending now.

So we've seen some really great stuff over the past year. And over the past few years, we've seen the number of Calvary chapels increase in Britain from about five churches when we first went to England to

about 25 now. And there's more and more popping up all the time.

So we're really excited about that. We got to do some ministry with our youth team that went over and our band that came with us, Smithfield, they're playing tonight. That's Charlo's band.

And they got into the schools and were able to go in and do their music and share the gospel, then invite the kids out at the end of the week. And so we had a number of young kids come out and hear the music and hear the word and come to Christ. It was just a really exciting time.

And then we went over to a city called Debrecen in northeastern Hungary. And we have a church that we planted there several years ago. And we originally planted it with a friend of ours here, an American guy who went over.

And then after some time, he left. And now a Hungarian guy named Bodie pastors that Bodie's been here before. He shared with us on a Sunday night.

Bodie was a medical student in London and attended our church when he was living in England. And so he's pastoring that church now. We had a three day conference with him there and we went out on the streets of Debrecen every day and we set up the music.

We did outreach and we saw many, many people come to Christ. It was just a fantastic time. And the thing that, you know, I came back with this, that the harvest is great, but the labors are few.

The people are open and attentive and they're willing to listen and to discuss. And so, boy, we need to just keep praying for those places and praying specifically that God would send forth labors into the harvest. Now, it's great to be back.

And I can't believe it's been a whole month since I've been here on a Saturday night, but looks like the teaching has been pretty good. Not many of you have left. So that's encouraging.

But next week I will be gone again. But don't don't despair. I really want you to pray with me about this.

And I'm going to hold you guys to this and trust you to pray for me this Tuesday. I'm leaving with Brian Nixon and with a friend named Simon Woodstock. And we're going to the west of England to the area of North Devon.

And when I lived in England, I used to go there on a regular basis and do a Bible study for a group of surfers. And since then, a friend of mine has gone over there and he's planted a church. And this next Friday, we're doing a festival in this in a village right on the sea called Willacombe.

And we're setting up a large stage and we're going to be doing music for about five hours. And I'm going to be preaching during that time. But throughout the whole day, we've actually called this festival a creation fest.

I don't know if you remember a while back when I taught on revival, I gave several quotes from the British newspapers expressing the animosity toward creationism. And Ken Ham had gone over there and the whole nation was in an uproar over this creationist coming over and saying that God actually created the world. Well, my friend Phil, as he's praying about this whole festival thing, he really feels like we need to capitalize on, you know, this controversy that's going on in the country.

So he calls this thing the creation fest. And so what we're going to do is we're setting up a large tent that can house about 400 people and all day long from eight in the morning till we begin the concert in the evening. We're going to have seminars going on and we've got a number of different scientists who are coming and they're going to be giving lectures for a half an hour and then opening up for questions.

And now the whole thing is this. The place where we're going is one of the key vacation spots for people in the UK. And this is one of the great vacation weekends.

And so people are going to be there, you know, really just on their vacation. So it's not a Christian event in the sense that we've got a bunch of Christians coming together to do it. It's really an outreach to the British people.

And so please, please, please be praying for us all this week, if you would. And I trust that I'm going to come back next week with a great report of what God did. We're really believing the Lord's going to just do some great things because people are going to hear the gospel and they're going to go back to all of the different parts of Britain.

And we're going to trust that the Lord is going to use this to just touch many people's lives. So please covenant with me to pray on that. And I'll look forward to giving you a great report when we get back.

Now, one other quick thing. We have the concert tonight and this is more for the radio people that are listening than you guys, because I guess, you know, there's a concert tonight. But after the service, we've got the In-N-Out truck that's going to be serving burgers and chips and cokes and for a small fee, of course.

And we've got my son's band, Smithfield, and we've got to cry and we're looking forward to a fantastic time on the field tonight. So if you're at home listening, then get in your car and get down here and join us for this great time we're going to be having at seven thirty this evening. All right.

Having said all of that now, here we are in Ephesians chapter six. And what we're going to do tonight, you know, I sort of kick myself for not doing this already. Let's just finish Ephesians tonight.

And then what I want to do is when I settle down, which will hopefully be in the not too distant future and have a consecutive number of weeks that I'm here, what I want to do is pick up and really go through our spiritual warfare series again. But I feel like, you know, we're just getting little bits and pieces of it because I keep running off here. So I promise I'm going to come back and be more consistent.

But let's just finish Ephesians tonight. And that way we can be done with the book and then we'll come back and we'll pick up in the spiritual warfare series. And before we go on into anything else, that's what we'll do.

We'll actually do the series on spiritual warfare. We'll complete what we've already started. OK, do I have your permission to do that? Is that all right? All right, good.

All right. So then let's pick up tonight in verse 10 of chapter six. And of course, we've been studying this epistle for quite some time now.

I can't really remember how long it's been, but I think it's been at least a year. And we've seen, of course, in the initial chapters, basically Paul just laying out all of the glorious things that God has done for us in

Christ, the spiritual blessings that he's blessed us with. And then after laying that out in a variety of different ways, he brings us, of course, to the practical aspect of the epistle, where he starts telling us how to really walk with the Lord, the things that we're to be doing in our lives personally, how we're to be living pure lives.

And he brings it right down to the real nitty gritty, brings it right down to life within the home and life on the job as a Christian. And so having given us all that practical instruction, we come now to the end of the epistle. And here is he's closing.

He wants to speak to us about the fact that there is opposition to the Christian life that he's been calling us to live. And we all know that, don't we? There is a radical. Battle that is raging, and it seems that it is getting more and more intense with each passing day.

And of course, this has been the way it has been historically. So we're called to live the Christian life, but we have to realize that there is major opposition, but no need to fear. God has promised us the victory, but there are certain things that we need to do.

And so Paul now gives us the instruction on what we need to do, and that's basically to equip ourselves with the armor that God has already supplied for us. And so he says, finally, my brethren. Now, some translations read from hence forward, my brethren, and suggesting that what Paul is really implying here is the fact that there's going to be an ongoing battle from start to finish.

From the first coming of Christ to the second coming of Christ, that interim period that we're living in, the period of the history of the church is going to be predominantly one long battle. And that is indeed what it is proving to be. And also in our lives.

We find ourselves in a battle, and it seems that the battle is intense more often than not. We have those brief times of reprieve. We have those times when it seems like everything is peaceful and tranquil and everything is nice.

But boy, those are sort of just, you know, few and far between those kinds of experiences, aren't they? It seems that there's just this constant assault. And there is because we are God's people living in a world that is under the the authority of the prince of the power of the air that Paul referred to back in the second chapter. The world is not under the direct authority of God presently, although it is ultimately under the the final authority of God, the world is under the direct authority of Satan.

And because we're God's people living in a world that is under the direct authority of Satan, we face tremendous opposition. And that's going to be the case all the way along. Let me quote to you from one commentator that I was reading today.

He said the abrupt transition from the peaceful homes and helpful days of the previous paragraphs to the hideous malice of devilish plots in the section causes us a painful shock. We all wish we could spend our lives in undisturbed tranquility among our loved ones at home and in the fellowship of God's people. But the way of the escapist has been effectively blocked.

Christians have to face the prospect of conflict with God's enemy and theirs. We need to accept the implications of this concluding passage of Paul's letter. It is a stirring call to battle.

We are being roused. We are being stimulated. We are being set upon our feet.

We are being told to be men. The whole tone is Marshall. It is manly.

It is strong. Moreover, there will be no cessation of hostilities, not even a temporary truce or ceasefire until the end of life or of history when the peace of heaven is attained. So we're in a battle.

But this is what we're to do. We are to be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Thank God we are not left to ourselves to fight this battle.

But the Lord has given us strength to do it. You know, the Old Testament is full of illustrations of God's people facing insurmountable odds and great opposition, but through their dependency on him having victory. And those pictures back in the Old Testament are there to encourage us in our spiritual warfare today.

I think, you know, the first thing that comes to mind is David and Goliath. David, from a human standpoint, was absolutely no match for Goliath. It just seemed ludicrous when when David even came and suggested that he might go in and battle Goliath, Saul and Abner.

They just thought this was ridiculous. Saul said to him, he said, You're but a youth. And this man has been a warrior from his youth.

You can't do this. But David's confidence was in the Lord, wasn't it? And he said, the Lord who delivered me from the paw of the bear and the lion, he will deliver me from this uncircumcised Philistine as well. And so David, against insurmountable odds, he went out and he conquered this great foe Goliath.

And then we think perhaps of. Some of the various kings of Judah and how they were outnumbered tremendously, Asa, how he was outnumbered in battle, but he called upon the Lord and was given a great victory. Jehoshaphat outnumbered in battle, but called upon the Lord.

And over and over again, we have these illustrations of how when you depend on God, he will supply you with the strength to have the victory over those who, apart from his helpingness, would easily just completely consume us. So we're to be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Now, we are going to go into a detailed study of the whole armor of God.

But tonight, of course, we want to finish up. So we're just going to touch lightly on this. But I think what Paul is getting at here.

Is that we are to be just sold out, committed totally, completely dedicated to the Lord that we're not to be slack in any area at all, but we're just to just so immerse ourselves in the things of God and the things of the spirit that we really can't help but be equipped because of that connection that we have with the Lord. So putting on the whole armor of God, not leaving any piece aside, but taking all that God has given us, and we can only really do that if we have completely dedicated ourselves to him. And I think today a lot of people are suffering loss in the battle because they haven't put on the whole armor of God.

They haven't made that complete dedication of their life, their areas that they're still sort of, you know, failing to cover because they haven't submitted that to the Lord. But we're called to put on the whole armor of God that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil or the schemes of the devil, for we do not wrestle against flesh and blood. And this is just another way of saying that our fight isn't really against people.

It seems like it is sometimes, doesn't it? Because people are quite often the agency through which the enemy is attacking us. But what Paul wants us to realize is that we're not to get caught up in fighting people. But as we're waging this warfare, we have to get to the source behind the person.

You know, even on the level of life in our society, our culture, our nation, you know, there are so many things that are going on. There's so many wrong things. There's so many evil things.

And, you know, they are being perpetrated upon us by people. It seems and indeed the people are an instrument, but we've got to look beyond the people and see what's going on behind the scenes. And we've got to be careful not to get caught up in a fight with people.

But rather to fight the forces that are manipulating and using those people, we've got to fight it with spiritual weapons. Not with the merely human weapons of, you know, outsmarting them or, you know, I can argue better than they can argue or, you know, I can get a longer picket line together than they could, you know, form or those kinds of things. We've got to get behind.

The person who is more or less a puppet, and we've got to realize that our battle is not against flesh and blood, but it's against principalities and powers against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual host of wickedness in the heavenly places, therefore take up the whole armor of God. You know, sometimes when I look at the things that are going on in our world and the things that are going on in our nation. And, you know, I had this interesting experience just being back in England again and over in Europe in particular, the culture is considerably different than it is here in America.

And one of the differences, especially in England, is that, believe it or not, even though the weather is not really, you know, the kind of weather you would think that people would always be out in, people are out and about a lot more and people use public transportation. People are out on the streets walking. And what happens when you're in that environment is you have a lot more contact with people.

And you know what happens when you start having more contact with people? You start seeing more and more how sinful people are and how miserable life really is. And being over there just recently, I just had, you know, sort of a fresh dose of what sin is all about. And just seeing the kinds of things that are going on there in that society, we happen to twice on this trip, believe it or not, once in Budapest and once in London, I got caught right in the middle of the gay parades.

You know, just there I am just going about my business. And the next thing you know, we're right in the middle of a gay parade. And what in the world is this? And, you know, the funny thing was in Budapest, especially, you know, we drove in right.

We were going to my friend's office and he has an office right in the center of Budapest. And as we pulled up to back in, there's these floats and people are dancing and doing stuff, you know, oh, look, it's a parade. And then when I looked a little closer, I noticed that it was only men in this parade and they were doing funny dances and things like that.

And, you know, suddenly I just found myself caught up in this thing. What in the world is going on? And then I think it was the following week in London we ran right into the same thing. And, you know, when you see this and suddenly this is just in your face and you're overwhelmed with it.

And then, you know, the week that I was there, they decided basically to legalize marijuana in the UK. And, you know, I looked at that and I thought, oh, how and, you know, these kinds of things you see it and

not to mention the stuff that's going on in our very own country and all of the conflict constantly. And, you know, you look at this and you just think, Lord.

Help, Lord, what can we do? And I'm convinced that from a human standpoint, there isn't really much that we can do. But from a spiritual standpoint, we can do plenty because we've got to realize that behind all of these things are the principalities and the powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world. They're the ones that are stirring this up and manipulating this and inspiring people.

And the only way we're going to change it is if we go directly at the source. And that's why we can't get caught up in fighting people. We've got to fight the devil.

And we can do that through the spiritual weapons that God has given us, the weapon of prayer, the weapon of praise, the weapon of proclaiming the word of God and speaking God's word to people in these situations. And that's what Paul is really calling us to do here. Take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand.

I want you to notice something here, the evil day. You know, there are those. Periods, really, and I think here's a case where the day refers to more than a 24 hour period of time, but there are those periods where the battle just really seems to intensify.

And we just come under great attack. Maybe the Christian community in general goes through something like that. But quite often in our own lives, personally, we have those periods of time where it just seems like the enemy is relentless and he's doing everything he can, one thing after another, a series of events.

It's like a domino sort of a thing, you know, boom, he hits this and all these things start happening. And all of this is meant to bring us down. It's all meant to discourage us.

It's all meant to trip us up or to get us to throw in the towel. We've got to be aware of the fact that there are those evil days. That's why we've got to have the whole armor on so that we can stand when those periods of assault come upon us.

And now he is going to go ahead and he's going to list for us the various aspects of this armor of God. And so he says, stand, therefore, having girded your waist with the truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace, above all, taking the shield of faith. With which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked and take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.

So Paul is taking the various pieces of armor that would have been worn by the Roman soldier of his day, and he's using that as an illustration of something that will correspond in the spiritual armor that God has supplied for us. And so he speaks, first of all, about having girded your waist with the truth. The first and most important piece of of a Roman soldier's armor was his girdle, his belt, because every every other piece of the armor, apart from the sword, every other piece was actually hung upon that belt that was put upon.

Well, actually, even the sheath to the sword was as well. So what he's talking about here really is the foundational aspect of the soldier's defense was the belt that he was to put on and the foundational aspect of our defense as Christians in this battle that we are in is that we must be immersed in the truth. We have got to be saturated with the truth, where do we get the truth? Well, there's only one place to get it.

Jesus said, concerning the word of God, thy word is truth, God's word is truth. And so when we talk about being girded in the truth, what we're really talking about is just so immersing and saturating ourselves in the truth of God that. That God's word and his perspective on life, his outlook becomes the way we see everything, there's a lot of talk today about worldviews and there's a lot of talk in the Christian community about worldviews, and that's a big emphasis now among a lot of evangelical Christians, they want to help you to define your worldview and they will take you through classical theology and philosophy and things and help you get a worldview that they think is going to be consistent with the Bible and help you to know how to live your life, not just what to do at church, but how to actually function in life and your everyday experiences at work or at your with the family or in the community or whatever.

And that's good, but so often I find they're emphasizing things that although can maybe be helpful at times, I think the main thing we need to do is immerse ourselves in the word of God itself. The scriptures themselves, so we get to a place where we just think biblically, you know what I mean? Where where our whole thinking process is just when something comes up, when we encounter a situation or we've got a problem that we need to deal with or we've got a something arises that we need to evaluate, come up with a perspective on it that immediately our minds begin to think biblically. We just start tying biblical events together and biblical principles together and scriptures together, and all of a sudden we're coming out with a perspective on it that is really God's perspective because our minds have been so immersed in the word.

But today we have so many things. That work against us becoming saturated in the word, don't we? So many things, so many different things vying for our attention all the time, the television, the videos, the DVD, the new movies, the video games, the music, all of these things. And I was talking to my friend Rob this morning and we were just sharing together and, you know, we were both talking about a similar experience that we have that for me, it's so easy to pick up a newspaper or a magazine or even a book and start reading it.

But to really just sit down with my Bible and immerse myself in it, that is the biggest battle in the world. But that is the very thing that I need to do more than anything else, because if I'm going to be girded with truth, I have got to get a foundation for my life that's based upon the word of God. And I like to look at this here as just sort of having a general understanding of the scriptures, a general understanding is sort of the foundation.

And then we add to that as we go on with a specific understanding that we'll get to when we get to the final piece of the armor here, which is a sort of the spirit being the word of God. But this is where it starts. This is how I'm going to have victory.

I'm going to have victory if I, first of all, am girded with truth. Now, some commentators are sort of divided when it comes to the interpretation of these things, and there are those who see truth here as not only objective truth, as would come from the word of God, but subjective truth more in the sense that your life is marked by truthfulness, that you're a person of integrity. And of course, there's probably something to that as well.

Because if you know the truth, but don't practice it, then you are a person that lacks integrity and you're not going to really be real effective in warding off the enemy or delivering people from his captivity if there's an inconsistency in your own life. So the truth here could have that subjective sense also of honesty and integrity in our own lives and that being a foundation. But of course, it would seem to me that if you're totally immersed in the truth, then that would be really just a natural byproduct of it.

That's it seems to me that that would be the case. But he moves from this now onto the breastplate of righteousness, the breastplate of righteousness, the breastplate would cover the vital organs. The heart, namely the kidneys, the liver, the lungs.

Any one of those vital organs, if any one of them were to be pierced, then that would mean almost certain death for the soldier. And so the breastplate was to guard those vital organs. And so Paul talks about here the blessing the breastplate of righteousness.

You know, the devil is always on the prowl, he's always on the attack. And one of the things that he's always trying to get us to do. Is to look at our own failure.

And despair. That's why we have got to be so firmly grounded in the righteousness of Christ. Having that protecting my heart, the fact that I am righteous because of my faith in Jesus Christ, that I am justified before God.

And that even though Satan comes with a myriad of accusations and some of them actually have merit to them, that I don't fall into despair, that I don't fall under condemnation and become neutralized or immobilized in my. Progress, but that I stand firm on the fact that I am justified by faith and I'm resting in the finished work of Jesus Christ and devil, it doesn't matter what you say about me, it's probably all true, but I'm not resting in that. I'm not basing anything or any hope in that my hope is in Christ, my trust is in Christ.

And one of the tactics of Satan is to come against us and to hurl at us accusations and to try to get us to buckle under that condemnation and, you know, just get to a point of despair, a point of just giving up because of weakness and failure. But if we remember that our righteousness is not based upon our performance, but it's based upon our continual belief in Jesus, our trusting in him, that we have been given a righteous standing before God, well, that frees me up to not fall into that condemnation. It frees me up to continue to advance, to continue to take ground in this spiritual battle.

And so we put on the breastplate of righteousness once again. Some commentators talk about the necessity of righteous living. And I would agree that there's probably something to do with that here as well.

When we're living a righteous life, well, that, you know, it kind of really wards off many of the attacks of the devil. He doesn't have a way to get in. So, of course, because we've been justified and made righteous, we want to now live according to what we are.

We want to live righteously and we can do so by the grace of God. And now he says, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Having shod your feet, the picture here is that of a Roman soldier who is equipped with.

These boots that were studded and would give him the ability to stand firm in battle, you know, if you're in a fight, you need to be able to stand your ground. If you lose your footing, you'll lose your ground, you'll be driven back. And so Paul uses this and now in the spiritual realm, he says, having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace, we as God's people.

As we're walking along through life. We are to be walking really. As heralds of the gospel of peace.

You think of the words of Isaiah. Quoted by Paul in Romans about the beautiful feet of those who proclaim the gospel of peace. And as we're going throughout our business, as we're going throughout our lives, we're just walking in the gospel of peace, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, we're walking in it, we're experiencing peace with God, we're experiencing the peace of God, and we're seeking to bring people into reconciliation, we're seeking to bring people.

From enmity with God to peace with God as we share with them the gospel. But as we go through life, we're just going about our business. But yet, with this motive driving us, with this passion moving us along, it's the passion to get the gospel of peace to people wherever we're going.

We're taking ground as we walk through this life, we're bringing the gospel as we go. And then he says, above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. Now, this was not the small round shield that the soldier would have maybe in a. In a real hand to hand combat situation, but it's more that oblong kind of a shield that was probably about five feet high and about 18 inches wide that you could actually crouch down behind and be protected from those flaming arrows that would often be sent by the enemy.

And what a picture the apostle gives to us here of how Satan works, he sends flaming arrows against us quite often, doesn't he? You ever had those times where all of a sudden something just like a flaming arrow seems to just hit right smack in your brain and there you are, you might even be in church, you might even be here lifting your hands, you're worshiping the Lord and all of a sudden, you know, this thought, this perverse thought, you're like, oh, what in the world was that? Or some kind of blasphemous thing comes into your mind and you just think, oh, Lord, how could I think that? And oh, God, am I even saved? And I'd better just leave if anybody knew what was going through my that's a flaming arrow. How do we deal with that? The shield of faith, we just hold up the shield of faith, and when those things come, we just reject that by faith, I reject that I don't embrace that, I don't receive that, I don't believe that I'm not going to respond to that by faith. I just stand firm against those things.

And like I said, we're going to go into great detail on each of these. So I'm being very brief intentionally tonight. But the shield of faith quenches all the fiery darts of the wicked, and then he says, take the helmet of salvation, just having that knowledge of our salvation firmly fixed in our minds.

And that's how we operate on that basis that I'm saved. I'm saved from my past. I'm being saved from the present.

I'm going to be saved in the future, and my whole life is about being saved, having been saved, going to be saved and just living. In that salvation to the fullest, and then he says, and the sort of the spirit, which is the word of God, the sort of the spirit. The word of God, you know, Jesus himself, he illustrated, I think, most wonderfully for us what Paul is talking about here, remember when Satan tempted Jesus, you remember when he was there and he had been in the wilderness, he had been fasting for 40 days and 40 nights, and when he was hungry, the tempter came to him and he said.

If you are the son of God. Take these stones and turn them into bread. And now how did Jesus respond? He said it is written.

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God, you see, Jesus did exactly what Paul is teaching us to do here. Satan came back again. With another temptation.

It says that he took him upon the pinnacle of the temple and he said, if you're the son of God, cast yourself down from here because it is written. That is, angels will take charge of you and they'll bear you up and you won't dash your foot against the stone, so Satan attacks Jesus, Jesus counters with the sort of the spirit, the word of God, Satan comes back a second time and attacks. And what does he do? He says, and oh, by the way, it is written.

You get in a dueling match with the devil sometimes with the sort of the spirit. So he says it is written, tries to trip Jesus up and Jesus is, oh, yes, but it is written again, you shall not tempt the Lord, your God. You see, the devil knows the word as well.

That's why it is so vitally important that we know it thoroughly, because when he comes with something and we respond with it is written, he might respond back with, oh, yeah, well, it's written over here. And what do we do then? Well, if we're girded with the truth, if we've got on the breastplate of righteousness, if we've got on the full armor of God, like Jesus, we say, oh, yes, but it is written over here, you shall not tempt the Lord, your God. And then you remember the third time he took him up to a high mountain, showed him all the kingdoms of the world and all their glory, and he said, bow down and worship me.

I'll give you these things. And Jesus said it is written. You shall worship the Lord, your God, and him only shall you serve.

And Satan fled from him at that point. And so Jesus showed us himself what Paul is. Calling us to do here, taking the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, and this word here, interestingly, is the word logos is the word that we know most, I think we're most familiar with, but there are other Greek words that are translated word, and this is a different word, and it actually refers to a specific word from God.

And for the various situations that come, we need sometimes that specific word of God for that particular situation. So remember, I talked about being girded with the truth, and this is sort of the foundation of your life and it's sort of a general understanding of the scriptures, and we all need to have that as the underpinning. It's the foundation.

But we also need to have an intimate acquaintance with the word where we're able to draw specifically from the scripture for specific kinds of attack. So, in other words, it's not good enough just to read the Bible through and get sort of a general overview of what it's saying, that's important and we should be doing that. But we have to meditate on it as well.

Now, we have to contemplate sometimes. Each chapter, sometimes each paragraph, sometimes each sentence, sometimes each word. And as we do that, then we become able swordsman.

We become able to take the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, and through it, we're able to send the enemy fleeing. We're also able to deliver captives that he has held. And so taking the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, and then in verse 18, he says, and praying always.

With all prayer and supplication in the spirit, being watchful to this end, with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints, the two great offensive weapons that we have are laid out for us right here, the word of God and prayer. The other aspects of the armor are defensive, they are to protect us. And we need those because we can't really advance if we're.

Being crippled ourselves, but in order to really take the kingdom further, we've got to have. These offensive weapons, we've got to have the word of God at our immediate access and we need to be

strengthened with prayer. And it's notice a couple of things, it's the sword of the spirit, it's that it's God's word, it's the sword of the spirit, all scripture is given by inspiration of God, but it's the man who's filled with the spirit who most effectively wields the sword of the spirit and the man who's filled with the spirit is a man who's been in prayer and he's strengthened in his inner life through prayer.

So he's able to really go out and wield the sword of the spirit. Oh, how we need to pray. Oh, how we need to pray so much more than we do.

I'll tell you, I came back from England with a great burden to pray. And like I said earlier, just looking at the situation, one thing, again, I wanted to tell you guys about because I really, again, want to encourage prayer. I believe I'm under the conviction that God is doing something fresh and exciting all over the place.

I believe that God is going to do something extraordinary in Europe and in England again. But I'll tell you, looking at it from the surface, it looks almost like it's, you know, been completely taken over by the devil. Islam has made its greatest advances into Europe, in the UK.

And the Muslims have a plan. To declare Britain the first Islamic Republic of Europe, they're working feverishly to do that, and there's a city in the north of England, the city of Bradford. And Neil, our drummer, is from Bradford, but there is what is known as the Bradford factor.

And the Bradford factor is this, the Muslims plan to make Bradford the first Islamic city in Britain, which will be a prototype to ultimately bring the whole nation under the rule of Islam. When I was living in London, I would oftentimes go to a place called Trafalgar Square and Trafalgar Square is just a monument to Nelson, who was one of the heroes. In British history, but it's also a large square where they'll have various rallies, and I have come upon several times rallies in Trafalgar Square where the banners are flying that, you know, basically Islam for the UK and thousands and thousands of Muslims, you know, praying and shouting and doing, you know, their whole thing about how, you know, it's time for Britain to submit to Islamic rule.

And so there is a radical effort on the part of Islam to take Britain and the Bradford factor is the key. And they have pretty much taken over Bradford, not totally, but they're well on their way to doing it. But having heard this initially, I was just I was so overwhelmed and I just thought, Lord, how does how do I reconcile the things that I think you're showing me with all of this sort of thing? How could this even be dealt with? And immediately the Lord spoke to me and said, you can pray.

And through prayer, this can be reversed. This can be altered, this can be changed. And so I really was filled with hope and came back with this just sense that we need to pray, not just for England, but we need to pray like we've never prayed before, that God would just do a fresh work and pour out his spirit.

I believe that he's going to do it. I believe that he wants to do it, but I believe that he wants us. Each one of us to be a part of what he's going to do, and I believe he's calling us to prayer.

And Paul here tells us that this is the way to overcome the principalities and the powers. It's through praying always with all prayer, all sorts of prayer and supplication in the spirit, being led by the spirit in our prayers and being watchful to this end. So watching, looking, you know, being on the alert like a watchman in a tower seeing things and oh, look.

And so we see things going on, we say, let's pray about that. I'll tell you, I have had in the last six months, I cannot believe. The answers to prayer that I have seen.

The Lord has just been in this mode of absolutely blowing my mind, it's almost like, Lord, would you do this? Yes, I'll do it right now. And it's done. I just can't believe it.

I, you know, just without going into detail, there was something recently that it was a situation. I just felt like there needed to be something here. But I knew humanly speaking, there was nothing that could be done.

And I said, Lord, I just pray that somehow you would change this within three weeks. It was changed. And I just could not believe it.

And I've just been seeing one thing after another, just as we've been asking, God has been answering. And he wants to answer. But we've got to ask, you do not have because you do not ask.

Remember, James said that. And so we're to be watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints. And now Paul says, and for me, the utterance may be given to me that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that in me or that in it, I may speak boldly as I ought to speak.

Pray for us. We pray for you. Every pastor.

On staff here, I'll speak for them, we need your prayers, we covet your prayers, and God gives us a variety of opportunities. Pray for us that utterance may be given to us, that God would give us boldness, that he would lead us to those opportunities. And we'll pray for you that as well.

We pray for each other, those things. And now in closing, Paul says that that you also may know my affairs and how I am doing that because the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord will make all things known to you, whom I have sent to you for this very purpose, that you may know our affairs and that he may comfort your hearts. Peace to the brethren and love with faith from God, the father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen. Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

God wants to pour his grace on us. And all he really is looking for is just. Sincere hearts.

People who are genuine, people who are real, people who are just saying, Lord, I'm not perfect, I've got, you know, my problems, as you well know, but Lord, I love you and I want to love you more and Lord, just pour your grace on me and he will do it. That's his promise. Let's pray.

Father, we thank you for this study in Ephesians and the things that you've taught us as we've gone through it. And Lord, we thank you that you have provided for us the armor of God so that we can stand. And not just stand, but we can take ground and Lord, gird us in the truth, clothe us in your righteousness.

Lord, maybe we'd be walking. In the gospel of peace. Lord, holding up the shield of faith.

With that helmet of salvation firmly fixed on our heads and Lord wielding effectively. The sword of the spirit. Oh, Lord, lead us in prayer.

And Lord, as we think about the whole armor of God. In these days, these desperate days. Lord, may we be fully clothed.

Not leaving any peace aside, Lord, may we be. Thoroughly set apart. For your glory in these days, we thank you, Lord, for what you're doing in our lives, we thank you for what you're going to do in the future, we bless you and we praise you, Lord.

Amen. Amen. Let's stand together.

All right, we're going to just go ahead and adjourn immediately after we close in the song tonight and all meet out on the field. So God bless and have a great evening. Pray for us this week.

We appreciate it.

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