

# The Christian as a Soldier

by Fred Tomlinson

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*This sermon emphasizes the spiritual warfare Christians face, highlighting the need to be strong in the Lord, put on the whole armor of God, and resist the tactics of the devil. The speaker delves into the strategies of the enemy, the importance of being disciplined and focused, and finding immunity and safety in Christ amidst attacks and temptations. The message encourages listeners to seek refuge in Jesus, the ultimate victor over the enemy, and to abide in Him for protection and victory.*

**Scripture:** Ephesians 6:10, 2 Timothy 2:1, 2 Corinthians 10:13, 1 John 5:18

**Topics:** "Spiritual Warfare", "Armor of God"

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## Description

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## Transcript

Well, thank you very much. Sharing the message of the Gospel is one of the great joys of my life, and a great privilege. And this has been going on for quite a few decades now, and it never gets dull.

In fact, it gets better and better. It gets brighter and brighter until that perfect day. And so this is a joy for me.

And I pray that the Lord will be able to say something to you who are listening today. Isn't this amazing? I can't see any of you that will be listening to this. I don't know who any of you are, and yet I'm here in my study, and I'm able to, having looked to the Lord about this, which I certainly have done, to be able to talk to whoever is listening.

And I believe that the Holy Spirit's in control of the whole process. And so I know roughly, anyway, what I'm going to share right now, but I have no idea what the Lord wants to say to you individually and particularly. And so we're trusting him to do that part of it all.

So I want to ask you to turn to the Scriptures with me, if you will. I'm looking at a couple of verses in the book of Ephesians, chapter 6. And there's a whole context to this, which I can't look at in particular. But then looking down through the chapter, I arrive at verse 10.

And the Apostle Paul says, Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, 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. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Now I'm going to break away from the text there. Not because what follows doesn't matter. It matters very, very much indeed.

But in the limited time I have, I'm not going to go down there in particular, although I will make a reference to it in a few minutes' time. But you will know that from reading the writings of the Apostle Paul, that he uses what we could refer to perhaps as the warfare metaphor many times. I believe I'd be right to say that at least 15 times in his writings, he makes some reference to warfare in one way or another.

And while he wasn't involved in warfare as we may normally think about it, he certainly knew about Roman soldiers, that's for sure. And he was arrested three times that we know about. We may have been arrested more than that.

But there are three occasions when we know he was arrested. And just trying to put the pieces together as well as we can, we come up with the impression that he spent at least five and a half years in prison. And so he had lots of time to be aware of Roman soldiers and the whole concept of what they were all about and how they presented themselves.

There must have been endless conversations. And he was a man with an open, big mind and, of course, overarching that, a great love for his Saviour. And for the Gospel that was committed to his trust.

But we can be sure that as he looked at these soldiers, he thought about the whole challenge of being a Christian and the kinds of seductive activities of the enemy toward the Christian men and Christian women. And so he wrote. He didn't write all of his writings from prison, but he wrote a number of them from the prison cell.

But with that in mind, I've just turned over a few pages in my Bible to 2 Timothy where the apostle is writing what, so far as we are aware, was the final letter that he ever wrote. And I'm convinced that as I read here and consider his situation and listen to his own words as he finishes this letter, that he was well aware that at any moment someone would come to the opening of that cell where he was and he would be taken out and executed. He knew how he would be executed.

It was inevitable. He had reached that stage now. And so when he writes to Timothy, and I mustn't digress too far here because 2 Timothy is one of my favourite books in the New Testament, but he talks to Timothy as though he's his son.

They didn't have the Scriptures as we have them today, of course. They were actually being written at the time. And Paul knew what had been committed to his trust in terms of the Gospel and its breadth.

This whole body of what we call Christian doctrine that we read him talking about was committed to his trust. And now he anticipates that his life in this world was going to come to an end very, very shortly and very abruptly. And who was going to carry on? Who had really caught a sense of and an understanding of the truth that was committed to his trust? And Timothy was high on that list.

And he writes to him as though he's writing to his own son, he says, because he had a lot to do with the very beginnings of Timothy's experience, the deeper experience of God. And so that's what 2 Timothy is all about. It's Paul pouring his heart out to this younger man and seeking to encourage him and direct him and focus his heart.

And so with all that in mind and connecting with my opening remarks, I look at chapter 2 of 2 Timothy where Paul says, Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that woeleth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who has chosen him to be a soldier.

And I break away from the text at that point. Beloved, whoever you are, whatever your situation is today, insofar as your heart is open to the Lord Jesus Christ and to his gospel and to his truth, I believe that I can say to you with absolute assurance in my own heart that he wants you to be a good soldier of Jesus Christ. I'm taking Paul's words to Timothy and I'm applying them, as it were, to you, whoever you are.

I'd love to see your faces right now and see who you are and how you're responding to that. But this, I believe, is what God has put on my heart to say to you today, that God wants you to become a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Now, having said that, that, to my mind, raises a question.

And that is this. What, in fact, was the Apostle Paul's view and understanding of Christian warfare? How did he understand it? And in seeking to respond to my own question, I can say without any doubt at all, again, that Paul knew very, very, very well that there was an enemy. That's fundamental to becoming a soldier and being a good soldier.

We must be well aware and clearly aware that there is an enemy. And also the Apostle had a very clear understanding and a full grasp that clearly God had quickened in his understanding of the early events that took place way, way, way, way back in the Garden of Eden. And this would be very, very important for Paul.

It comes through in his teaching on various occasions. And in answering this question I've posed, it's so important for each of us to recognize that we have an enemy. But then as we begin to unpack that, our minds must surely go back to those beginning scriptures in the book of Genesis.

And as we turn back there, of course, we see the enemy in that context, in the paradise that God had created with now Adam and Eve, there in the midst of it all and the center of it all. And as we look back there and we get into the third chapter of Genesis, and this is what Paul had clearly in his mind, that the enemy who existed was a powerful strategist. And, you know, it's so easy and we so readily discredit the enemy in one way or another, but the fact is we mustn't underestimate him.

He's a master strategist. He knows exactly what he's doing. He's not God and he doesn't possess the knowledge that God has.

But we don't want to underestimate him. He knows what he's doing. He knows what he is about.

And his strategies are incredibly seductive. And that is in fact what was going on back there in the Garden of Eden. And Satan, without me trying to explain all the details that you are aware of or that you will find there in that third chapter of Genesis, he succeeded in seducing Eve.

He succeeded in seducing Eve to reject God's authority. What an incredible thing. I've thought about that a good deal.

And just in our own human minds, which of course are so incredibly limited, we can't figure all these things out, but we try. We try to imagine how could Eve, who in that context of perfection and innocence and at the same time this awareness of this creative God, this God who we're led to believe came down and talked with her and Adam in the cool of the day, how could she be seduced? And of course there's a sense in which I can't answer that question. But the facts remain and the Scriptures confirm that she was seduced away from God and from obedience to God.

And we know how this followed through to Adam. And we know that in the apostle's mind who understood the ways of God, forevermore it would be Adam who is held responsible for what took place. That has to do with a rather complicated subject that we refer to as headship and authority.

But we won't go down that road just now at all. The fact is that the enemy was successful in seducing both Eve and Adam away from God. And they succeeded in seducing them away from the dominion that God had delegated to them within the context of Eden.

And as the result of their disobedience and their rejection of God and their response and their obedience, we could say, to Satan himself, that they entered through a doorway. They didn't shuffle through it, they went through it instantaneously. And it was a doorway from the paradise of God that he had established them in.

And they went through into another kingdom altogether. They entered into the kingdom of darkness. Paul knew this, he teaches about it in other epistles.

In the book of Colossians I'm thinking in particular. And having transitioned as a direct consequence of their rejection of God, they then, because they were excluded from paradise, and we're familiar with the details explained there in that chapter, but God had set in motion a principle, we would have heard it earlier in Genesis, where God was creating living things and he was giving the statement out that they would be able to reproduce after their kind. And you know, that's exactly what happened with Adam and Eve.

They were now in the kingdom of darkness. They reproduce, and they reproduce men and women after their own kind, who likewise exist in the kingdom of darkness. And the consequences of that, the outworking of that, is everywhere around your life and mind today.

It explains everything that is evil and chaotic and etc. In this world we could stop and think about just so many things today. But it's all tied in to this very early event that took place, recorded in Genesis, understood and embraced in the mind of the Apostle Paul, even as he writes to Timothy, and even as the Holy Spirit conveys that word to your heart and mine.

The Apostle Paul also knew, and I should add this, he knew and how he believed that on a hill called Calvary, another man came, another man, the man from heaven came. And on that hill called Calvary, and hanging on that central cross, he secured an all-inclusive victory. And he legally and effectively opened another door.

Isn't that wonderful? I think it's wonderful. And through that door that he opened on the cross, he would lead a liberated people. They would become known as a generation.

As you start off reading in the New Testament, the very first words of Matthew are so telling and tie right in, or I'm tying in to them really, when he starts off by saying, the book of the generation of Jesus Christ. And it were these people, these people so privileged to be called of God, who've responded and believed the Christian gospel and still yet are doing it today, they are conducted instantly by a miracle of the grace of God into a new dimension. They exit the kingdom of darkness and they enter into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

Paul tells us that. These are his words, not mine. And glory to God.

And these people, and I trust that that includes you as I'm speaking to you today, I trust you're one who has put your faith in the Christian gospel and your faith is in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour, your Redeemer, your Liberator. And all such people, according to the Scripture, enjoy even in this world, it's like a down payment or an initial taste of, if you like, first of all, the Edenic blessings. But one hymn writer ties into this, and he refers to all those who are in this second category, in this category that we may be in today, and we trust we are, where we gain more blessings than our father lost.

And the reference to father is to that first Adam. This last Adam, this second man, the Lord Jesus Christ, as I've said already, he established a legal basis for God to accept sinful people and he provided, and is still yet providing, the effective power to enable us to translate and be transformed and transition from one kingdom into another kingdom, into his kingdom, and to begin to experience and enjoy in our own hearts and in our own lives more blessings than our father lost. That could be explained a lot more, and I can't do that just now.

What we know is that that enemy that was in the form of a serpent in the writing of the book of Genesis, this enemy of God, this arch enemy of Jesus Christ, and we should spend another whole session talking about how that perhaps came about without the bits of information God has provided for us. I keep saying about the Bible, you know, God hasn't set out to sort of dot every I's and cross every T's and tell us absolutely everything that ever happened. He's not doing that.

He's presented his word on a need-to-know basis. He's given to you and to me all we need to know in order to experience God and his great redemptive work, and he gives us a few clues about how it's all going to end up as well. It's all wonderful, but we always have questions.

I've always got questions, and I've said many times I wish the Bible was thicker than it is. In other words, it had more information, but it's a need-to-know basis. God's given me everything I need to know, and he's given you everything you need to know.

But also from reading the Scripture, I discover that this enemy, this arch enemy of Jesus Christ, this Satan, is referred to on three occasions in John's Gospel as the prince of this world. He usurped, as he stole the authority from Adam and Eve, he continues in this usurped authority, and even right in the Scripture he's referred to on another occasion as the God of this world. He's not the ultimate God, but then that's another story.

Let me tell you a story right now. I'm not digressing from where I am, but I'm trying to illustrate something. I, myself, in my life, I entered through that second door, as I've referred to it, and I did that, you know, I did it 55 years ago.

Many of you who listen to me more regularly, you'll have heard me refer to this before, and just how that experience was so completely life-transforming to me. It was a spiritual event that just transformed everything. But immediately following that particular day and that experience, I was standing on a busy city street in Liverpool.

I was a police officer. I was standing close to another police officer. We were both in uniform.

But standing right in front of me was the chief of police. We call him the chief constable in England, but the chief of police for the city of Liverpool was standing right in front of me. And he'd just got out of his big black Jaguar limousine, and his sergeants had just driven away.

And there's a story behind all of that and why it happened like this. But this was a big moment, a very big moment for me as a police officer. The chief of police is standing right here, and he's just said, How's it going, boys? And what I didn't see was someone had come somewhere from my right behind us, and he had punched my other officer friend so hard he collapsed onto the ground.

And that was the first clue I had that something was happening. All this happened in milliseconds. The very next thing that I was aware of was I was ten feet, it was measured by the plainclothes department, ten feet away from where I'd been standing.

I was in the roadway, lying on the roadway. I need to tell you what happened. I'd been hit by a man, a very large man, with a knife.

And he'd knifed me in the back with such force, it threw me to the point where I landed ten feet away. And I mustn't tell you all the details because that would take too long. But, you know, I went to hospital and all kinds of things happened.

But the fact is that man was charged with attempt murder. And the day came for him to be tried. And I arrived early at the law court.

And before everything had started, I walked down to the front of the court, and there was a table. And on the table were articles of my uniform that were damaged, and some other things. The knife was there.

I looked at it. There was also what, to all intents and purposes, would be like a photo album, which the plainclothes department had put together as they'd investigated this crime. An injured police officer doesn't investigate his own crime, so I had nothing to do with it.

I'm learning as I stand here. And I start to turn the pages over, which have got information and photographs. And this one page, don't forget how I started this story, what had happened to me just a couple of days beforehand.

I'd given my life entirely to God. I turned this page over, and there's a picture that had been taken, a photograph that had been taken of a close-up section of the wall of the apartment where that man lived. I'd never met the man in my life before.

But on the wall, he'd actually cut out a photograph of a police officer from the newspaper, and he'd pasted it on his wall, and then it was all slashed with a knife all over it. And so much so, I couldn't see the face of the officer at all. But underneath, there were some words that almost sent a chill down my spine.

The name of that officer was PC Christian. And I may not be able to convince everyone else about this, but I know as I stood there in that moment, it was as though something was frozen inside of me. These different pieces of my life had just come together, and I realised without any doubt in my mind that what took place on that night, he didn't try and murder the other officer.

He wanted to come to me and was heard to shout out, I'll kill you. And that was all in the evidence that was given on that day, and on that basis, he was charged with attempt murder. But the fact is, I realised on that occasion that insofar as I'd given my entire life to Jesus, I was now a marked man in Satan's dark kingdom.

Well, I could tell you more about that, but that wouldn't be very profitable. The fact is, I need to tell you something. I don't wish to frighten anyone, but I need to tell you the truth.

If you've given your whole life to Jesus Christ, you also are a marked man or a marked woman. I can tell you, I believe, that Satan hates you. I believe he hates me.

I could tell you of another event in my life. It was not similar, but it was another attempt on my life. The fact is that this enemy, who is so seductive, that was the feature we picked up from reading in Genesis chapter 3, but he has a strategy, and his strategy is spelled out in John's Gospel.

And his intent is this, to steal and to kill and to destroy. He failed completely with the Lord Jesus Christ, but I believe he's made war on his seed, of which I am one. And I believe you are, insofar as you've given your life to him.

His intent, so far as you are concerned, and as I say that, it's applying to me also, his intent is to steal from you your faith in Jesus. His intent is to cripple your spiritual progress by stealing your peace and your joy, and in its place to create fear in one form or another. His intent is to kill.

You know what he wants to kill? He wants to kill your testimony. He wants to kill my testimony. He wants to just rip it apart and destroy it.

And he's succeeding as I look around in different places without going into other stories. And it's as though, in my mind, it's as though I can hear the enemy laughing his hollow laughter. To steal, to kill, and if he can, to destroy your life.

And I believe that is what was going on, on that fateful evening that I've referred to just a few minutes ago. You know, at this point in my talk with you, I could pivot off and I could talk about the satanic strategy to so pervert the gospel message as to render it powerless. You know, his intent is to convince a crowd of people who, you know, they've prayed the right prayer and so on, but their lives are just so incredibly carnal and there's no distinction between them and holiness is something foreign to them.

But I believe in his seductive strategy seeking to sort of twist the scriptures to allow for people to believe that it's okay, it's okay with God for us to be carnal Christians, quote unquote. I don't believe that for a moment. And the sort of intent is, well, it's okay, God's okay with it, and he gratefully, you know, inhabits our praises as we all gather to worship.

You know, we couldn't be more wrong. I think this kind of teaching can result in some dreadful words that I hear Jesus talking about. You'll remember them.

When under certain conditions, said Jesus, he will say, depart from me, for I never knew you. God is calling out a people for himself who will be a holy people, his treasure, his precious ones, the apple of his eye, his bride in that great day. Amen.

But we won't take that any further. We're thinking about ourselves. We're thinking about ourselves as being targets of a seductive, strategic enemy.

You know, many of you will be aware of this. There's so much teaching available about spiritual warfare, and I'll probably lose some of you from listening to me, but, you know, I believe that there's just so much teaching that is so warped and distorted and so contrary to the biblical record. You know, if we want to be real Christians, we need to follow the words of Scripture very, very carefully and very diligently, and we have to be careful when things are being said and things are being taught that are not clearly presented in the Bible.

And, you know, it's not even good enough. Hear the last part of this statement. It's not merely good enough that we can find something in the Bible.

We want to know where it is in the Bible. Who was God speaking to when he said these things, and so on. Otherwise, we end up just pulling things out.

We say, well, it's in the Bible, so it's okay, but there has to be some small print. Not so small, actually. In fact, I think my job is to make it into a much bigger font and to highlight it as much as possible because we want to have everything right.

And the Bible is not just a textbook, but it's a test book. We need to test what we have been taught to accept and believe with the words of Scripture. And at that point, we need to be very courageous, and this doesn't come easily to us.

We need to be courageous enough to say, no, that's not in the Scripture. This is not what the Scripture says. You know, it's one thing for you to tell me these stories over all this drama and whatnot, but what does the Bible say? We're in the early church.

Is this happening in this particular way? How did the apostles understand this? That's the way we must surely approach the Scripture. And, you know, I know this isn't really the main thread of my message, and I'll probably kick myself for wandering off the course when I'm all finished. But, you know, in passing, let me at least say this, that we're never told in the Bible.

I'll say me. I am never told in the Bible that I am to fight the devil. I'm trying to understand what Paul understood by warfare for the Christian.

Well, the Bible never tells me that I'm going to fight with the devil. I am told to resist him. That's as far as it goes.

I'm never taught in the Bible that I am to curse demons. I never read that in the Bible. And I never see anyone doing that in the Scriptures.

You know, I've personally got many stories I could share with you about demonic activity and my own personal engagement in these areas. That's not my job today. But, you know, insofar as we're thinking about some kind of tussle or wrestle with these evil spirits, the only text that you're going to find along that

line is in Acts chapter 19.

And we read there about the seven sons of Sceva. And there's definitely a tussle that takes place back there. But these men, they were attempting to cast these evil spirits out of someone.

And the evil spirits actually ended up pursuing them. And you can read about it in Acts 19. But we have to keep in mind that this name of Jesus, it's not as a word.

It's not some magical word. It has no inherent power. There are lots of people with the same name, we're told, at the time of Jesus.

But it has power. It has power when the Holy Spirit of God is behind it. And as it's being used, it needs to be used by those to whom this power is delegated.

And it's not like a game. In fact, there's a lot of games out there not far away from what I'm talking about that will lead us into deeper and deeper trouble with demons. But that, again, is a different story.

But know this. These are just facts from the Scriptures that I'm sort of in note form, just dropping them here. But know this, that demons, they're chained in the dimension of darkness.

And we need to understand this. They cannot exist in the light, that is, the light of God's presence. And we need to remember also that the Lord Jesus Christ, he is the victor.

He is the all-victorious one. And even he didn't fight with the devil. When Jesus was on the cross, he was opposed by demon powers.

I'm very, very sure of that. But he didn't engage. The cross is not about the Son of God engaging in some kind of hand-to-hand combat with the devil.

That is not what Calvary was about. Calvary was a legal issue that was being resolved. And having said that, there is a day coming when God will deal in the ultimate force with the powers of darkness.

But that's another story. Amen. The thrust of my message today with you is not dealing with demonized people, but on an enemy who is vicious and highly focused in reducing you and me to a state of spiritual ruin.

That's his intent. And that's what is on my heart as I'm sharing with you. I'm a marked man.

The enemy wants to so destroy me and take me out of action. And he wants to do that with every one of the true people of God. That's the thrust of my message.

Having said all of that, let me tackle another question. It's an important one. Insofar as Paul is talking about being a soldier, so we're not going out to try and hit the devil.

That's not the issue. Our job is more of a mop-up issue. Jesus has done the big work at the cross.

But where is the battlefield where this soldier is going to function? Well, I'll tell you where your battlefield is. It's actually everywhere you are. There's the battlefield.

This is where he's working. This is where he's after you. Everywhere where you are.

Everywhere you will go in the course of your daily life. Let me tell you, the battlefield is often in your home where you live. Really.

The battlefield is often in your kitchen, in your home. The battle is often in your living room. The battle is often in your bedroom.

And the battle is certainly in your TV or computer room. The battleground is also in the stores that we go in. It's in the workplace where we go to work.

You know what? It's even in the church gathering. It's everywhere. The enemy is pursuing me and pursuing you.

And he's a master strategist and he's more subtle than any one of us can understand. Do you understand that? Remember, his intent is to steal your faith, kill your testimony and destroy your life. So, don't ever forget, as we go away from this moment, with this fact that you're targeted.

It doesn't make me frightened, for greater is he who is in me than he who is in the world. And don't underestimate the enemy's tactics. In other words, whatever you do, do not allow yourself to be casual about this whole affair.

To be casual on the battlefield is a death wish, isn't it? You must not, and you must never, allow yourself to be found on the battlefield, and don't forget that's everywhere, you must never allow yourself to be found on the battlefield dressed for the beach, you know, with your flip-flops on and with a coke in one hand, and since you half know it's a battle with some sort of plastic bin lid in the other hand, you'll never make it. Paul says to Timothy, Timothy, be a good soldier of Jesus Christ. And a good soldier is a disciplined individual, male or female.

A good soldier is someone who, as the text said, which I started reading to you earlier, who refuses to compromise. He refuses. I love the words of Paul when on one occasion he's saying, well, all things are lawful for me.

But he goes on to say, but, and what words are these? I will not allow myself to come under their power. He said, I won't do it. You know, a good soldier never allows himself to become distracted.

He can't. You know, I understand and we all understand that in our daily lives, there's one of my granddaughters upstairs in this house where I am right now. Her husband's gone to work and she's got her three boys that she's looking after right now.

And there's enough to distract you. They're wonderful little boys. But what I'm trying to say is there are distractions that are very legitimate distractions.

I mean, we need to attend to practical things pertaining to our lives in a host of ways. Of course we do. So I'm not being ridiculous or foolish.

But we need to maintain our focus. I remember reading a long, long time ago, dear me, a very long time ago, I was reading a very heavy book about one of the very early Quakers. And it was a wonderful book, lots to think about.

But he said something in the midst of all of this heavy writing that was very human indeed, to make a particular point. He said, you know, when you're at work, he was suggesting a scenario, you're at work,

you're attending to your business there. But he said, then you suddenly become aware, he said, that with your pen, or whatever it was he was talking about, it wouldn't have been a fountain pen in those days, and it wouldn't have been a ball pen.

And he said, you realize you're writing on a scrap of paper near you the name of that young woman that has become your sweetheart. In other words, in the midst of all of your busyness, your mind is never far away from the one to whom you have given your heart and your love. That's exactly how it is to be with Jesus.

We must have him fully centered in our lives. The only way, the only way it's possible to truly live the Christian life is to give your all to God. Failure in this area will guarantee that you will be defeated.

There's no question about it. We must not allow ourselves to be taken up with other things and distracted by things that are completely incidental, and in many, many ways, and in many occasions, they're things that have no business to be in any way a part of our lives, or of our thoughts. Let me assure you, and Paul knew this because he wrote these words, that in 2 Corinthians 2, just a magnificent verse, I remember when God first lit this up for me, Paul said, verse 14, Now thanks be unto God which always causes us to triumph in Christ and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.

I can only mention that in passing. But the fact is Paul knew that total victory over this master strategist, this most subtle enemy that I have, there's victory that is guaranteed to me. This is what Paul is writing here.

Back in Ephesians chapter 6, where Paul's been writing, he says this in verse 11, and put on the whole armour of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. In the 13th verse he says, Therefore take unto you the whole armour of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand. This is wonderful.

I was born during the last war, World War, and my father told me, because there was this period, it was a week, a solid week of England being attacked, and in particular this week was the blitz of the city of Liverpool, that's where my family lived, that's where I lived. And my father said, you know what? He said every single night of that week, he said the sirens would go off because they'd detected that the enemy planes were coming in again during the darkness, and the sirens went off. And my dad said, you know what? He said we could set our clock by the sirens going off because it happened every single night, every night.

And the whole intent, he said to me, was this, to just wear us down, to just wear us down, because no, not again, because they saw what had happened the previous night, the damage and the deaths and devastation, and here it's again, and that's exactly what I think Paul has in mind when he speaks about the evil day, the evil day when the devil just keeps on, keeping on doing what he does. So masterly we have to say that. But Paul is saying here that there is a provision where, by the grace of God, in spite of all of this bitter hatred and malice toward the people of God, there is a provision which God has provided that guarantees that I can be immune and safe no matter what.

That's what Paul's talking about. Now, you know, in this passage that I've just alluded to, Paul enumerates a list of features which are part of the armour, and as I started out by talking to you about him watching the soldiers and looking at the way they were set up and dressed and so on, he saw significance in each one of these particulars. I can't go down that road on this occasion at all.

But I believe that Paul understood this, and this is very important and I must understand it and so must you, that my protection, my immunity here, exists and lies within this armour that he's talking about. And another way of describing that armour with all of its particulars is to say it is to be clothed with Christ himself. That's it.

And every one of those particular pieces, perhaps there'll be a time when we'll talk again about this and we can see how these are all features of the way God wants us to live and behave. Each component features an aspect of Christ to us. His sword is his, or our sword is his word, for example, and so on.

Amen. But the Apostle Paul says this, and I'll not turn to the text, but it's 1 Corinthians chapter 10, I believe in verse 13, where the Apostle says, with every temptation God provides a way of escape. And that doesn't mean that you look around for a fire door where you can get out of the situation.

Let me tell you, the way of escape from every fierce temptation and subtle work of the enemy is to be found in Jesus Christ and in your fellowship with him. He is your way of escape. Amen.

And this is one of the great spiritual secrets. I'm coming toward the end of my message here. This is one of the great and important secrets of the Christian life.

In the midst of the most vicious attack, the place of immunity is resting in him. My resting in him. And there the Apostle John says in his first epistle, he says, when we're in that place, I'm paraphrasing it slightly, when we're in that place, he says, the wicked one touches us not.

It's the safe place. It's the only safe place. Amen.

Charles Wesley said, Jesus, lover of my soul, let me to your bosom fly. And he goes on to speak about this safe place in him. While the storms are going on, while the tempest is still as high, he's saying, Lord, keep me safe in that place, in your heart.

Another song, a chorus of a song goes like this. Hiding in thee, hiding in thee, thou blessed rock of ages, I'm hiding in thee. Hallelujah.

Yes, we've got a great and powerful enemy, but we've got an even greater savior. And his arms and his heart is wide open to each and every one of you today. May he teach us what a value, a blessing there is in hiding our very lives in him and seeking nothing but him alone.

Amen. Amen. You know, let me just remind you, perhaps some of you are listening to this on a different network, but do be encouraged to go to the YouTube channel, which is called Turn to the Scriptures with Fred Tomlinson.

We've just added a podcast feature to that. And if you're interested in being notified about other messages, then do press the subscribe button and maybe even leave a comment there. But God bless you.

Let me just pray a brief word of prayer as we close. Father, we thank you for everything that we're able to share here, Lord, in this context of all that is so opposite to you, Lord, in this world in which we live. We thank you that there's a hiding place.

There's a cleft in the rock in which we may hide. And we pray, Lord, that you'll teach each and every one of us just how to abide there in that place, in spite of everything that is going on around us. We give you

our praise and our worship in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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