

The Whole Armour of God - Part 4

by Leonard Ravenhill

We must take up the whole armor of God and live by faith in Christ to experience the reality of our position in Him and have dominion over the enemy.

Duration: 1:14:26

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Acts 7:22, 2 Corinthians 5:20, Ephesians 6:10-12, Philippians 4:13

Topics: "Armour Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher reflects on the different responses people have to the moving of the Holy Spirit. Some are receptive and responsive, while others are indifferent and uninterested. The preacher emphasizes the importance of making the right choice to follow Jesus and walk on the narrow path of righteousness. He also highlights the need for believers to live in heavenly places and explore the possibilities of God's grace. The sermon concludes with a prayer for the younger generation to grow in wisdom and not be hindered by spiritual stagnation.

Transcript

We continue in thy presence. We trust we've been living in your presence, that we don't have to come here to find thee. We just come here to, as it were, accelerate our joys and our faith and our inspiration.

We think of an old saint who said, could we be cast where thou art not, thou were indeed a dreadful spot, but with thee my God to guide the way to equal joy to go or stay. We thank you again for this eternal offering that Jesus made. Through his one supreme sacrifice we have boldness, not arrogance, not fleshly boldness.

We must draw near with trembling, recognizing again thy holiness and thy majesty, that by no means are you the servants of men, we are the servants of God. We're glad, Lord, that you have called us. We sang earlier that mysterious thing this afternoon.

We know not how the spirit moves, convincing men of sin. We've seen at times when a tornado has swept through a town. Across the street the house was demolished, at the other side the house was intact.

By the same token we see the movings of your spirit on one life, maybe in a service. Someone else is like stone and removed, uncaring, unhearing. But we thank you for that happy day that fixed our choice on thee our savior and our God and that choice is still fixed.

If there's anything that life teaches us it is that we made the right choice. When we made that choice we took the right turn in the road and not the wrong one. We serve the right master.

We are on a narrow way that's not very popular but it leads to life. There's a very crowded way it leads to destruction. The way that we go is the way of righteousness and the way is the other of unrighteousness.

We thank you again for these precious young people that are here. We would pray that they may grow old slowly, grow wise quickly, not stumble in holes where some of us have stumbled. Not be a spiritual retarded if they do live to our age as many of us are now at our age regretfully.

They'll have eyes to see what we have not seen and ears to hear what we have not heard and wills that will obey thee. Recognize again Lord there's a great big sorrowful sinful world hell-bent this afternoon without God and without hope. Seeming millions that can hardly be numbered, many of them willfully, blindly, arrogantly going the way of the world, the flesh and the devil and many of them just blind and without even the knowledge of the gospel of the grace of God.

Again Lord we wonder how much you've really got out of our lives this week. How much have we pursued thee or have we pursued the dollar or have we pursued some other thing that had occupied us? Does it fascinate us more? Does it really grip our hearts more than the blessedness of being a child of God by faith in Jesus Christ and then the lostness of those millions who must hear? Maybe in a stinking concentration camp in Russia this afternoon, maybe in some camp of servile labor in China or as we read even today in Mozambique there where Christians have been tortured and made to learn things they don't want to learn. Their church is destroyed, their bodies persecuted.

We're going to help them rather than help Rhodesia which is surely more Christian. We see this strange, strange pattern. We pray for our president and ask you to remove political blindness from him.

Give him we pray the eyes that can see and understand. We pray that as he picks up your word if and when he does it, that it may live and throb and stir him and disturb him and maybe make him sleepless. Surely one nation will arise in all the nations of the world in righteousness and truth and holiness.

We pray Lord that it may please you even to provoke us to anger. We remember that your servant didn't want to go to pagans when the chosen people of God were languishing and yet that was your method to provoke them. We confess again Lord our very limited understanding of world affairs.

We don't know who runs us or the country or anyone else. We do thank you that above all we know that there is a God who sets up men and puts down men. We cannot challenge that wisdom, we cannot understand it but there it is.

And we pray again father that they may come to your house. We look away from the white house or political houses or intellectual houses and again believe that the heart of this nation or any other nation must be quickened by the power of the spirit of the living God. That our supreme need at this moment is that you raise up prophets, men after your own heart.

They may come with terrible strength, they may come with awful utterance, they may come Lord until we'd like to run away as where tall people ran from Stavnerola when the anointing of God was on him and Florence was maybe the most corrupted in the world and he stood against the papacy and he stood against every institution and he cried aloud until that city was purged and then they took him and crucified him. But again Lord in wrath we pray remember mercy. We again do remember the captives all over the

world.

Lord maybe their lot might have be our lot before too long we know not. We pray that somehow that word of comfort may reach them. Maybe some bible being smuggled to them or some teacher in their midst or some memory can be stirred.

We thank you again for every missionary of the cross. They challenge us with their sacrifice, their devotion, their zeal, their love. We thank you the river of God is full of water sufficient to bless them and bless us this afternoon.

As we come to your word we thank you it is your word. We recognize it is not the word of man it would have been destroyed by now. We bless you that holy men of God speak as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

We pray spirit of God move on us, move in us, move through us. Reach out to others through us where you cannot reach through others to others. Speak through us to others what you cannot speak to others through others for others.

Again we thank you the race is not to the swift and the battle not to the strong. Our trust is in thee and those who put their trust in thee shall never be confounded. So again bless this word and open it we pray to the eyes of our understanding in Jesus name.

The epistle of Paul to the Philippians, pardon me Ephesians. Ephesians chapter 5, I'm sorry I said 5 and it's 6. Chapter 6 let's read again from the 11th verse or verse 10. Finally my brethren 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 for we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities against powers against the rulers or the princes of the darkness of this world against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Maybe your margin reads like mine does there. Mine has a mark spiritual wickedness is number three and it says wicked spirits and number four is high places so we're wrestling against wicked spirits in high places therefore take unto the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand. You remember perhaps that when Peter was reporting about the house the visitation of the spirit in the house of Cornelius he finishes that comment in acts 15, 8 and 9 in which he says God who knoweth the heart bear them witness giving them the Holy Ghost even as he did unto us and put no difference between us and them purifying their hearts by faith and then he adds this significant thing known unto God are all his works.

Well for sure nobody else knows all the works of God. There is a scripture that says he made his works he made his acts he made his his acts known unto Moses and his ways his ways known unto Moses his acts unto the children of Israel. But there's a there's a mysterious pattern of God's working that nobody can work out right in this day but they're known unto God.

Now the man that wrote this epistle remember again it's a prison epistle. If you young folk want to memorize and there's no reason why you shouldn't if you were a good Jew by now you would already have memorized the whole old testament by the time you get to 20. And I often wonder why they're so zealous and we're so lazy.

We do live in easy street you know I don't care what you say we're the laziest bunch of Christians almighty God's ever had to deal with I'm convinced of that. You may not like it and I'm going to tell you the truth

anyhow. You can swallow it or lump it or spit it out doesn't make any odds I'm telling you the truth.

We live as though eternity is never going to catch up to us we're all going to get a free pass to every glorious thing in eternity which is pure nonsense. All right known unto God of all his ways but Paul wrote also that magnificent in fact unsurpassed poem of love one Corinthians 13 that happens to have 13 verses. And you remember that in that wonderful poem he there are some very blunt little sections one of them I think I referred to two weeks ago in which the apostle says when I became a man I put away childish things.

I'm going to work on that. I'm quite sure that there was a conscious transition from spiritual immaturity to maturity. There was a place where God put on him a mantle.

There was a place where God put on him authority. And if God does that you'll never beg the question you'll never ask well I'm not quite sure I don't really know I've wondered about it. Now there's another thing that he says there in that same wonderful point and he says now we see through a glass darkly.

Don't you wish we didn't? You might say yes I think no I think it's the mercy of God. As an old hymn says keep thou my feet I do not ask to see the distant scene one step's enough for me. Supposing God lifted the veil for you for six months in your own life not somebody else is your own life.

Would you like to know every step God's going to take in the next six months? Good. So a hymn writer says so on I go not knowing I would not if I might. I'd rather walk in the dark with God than walk alone with the light.

But you see if you're a child of God by faith in Jesus Christ I'm going to tell you this again because I need to know it. That Satan can't come and touch your life without a permit from God. I don't care if you're going through hell.

I don't care if you lose every penny you have the shirt off your back everybody turns their back on you. So what? Most of us lose most of our friends are not much good to us anyhow. What good have they done you in the last six weeks or months or years? And you see God is in the process.

God is a jealous God. If he wants you he'll go to any expense to get you. You see.

And he works all the time with eternity. We're dim our vision is dim. Now Paul says here a little further on in this chapter there's six of Ephesians.

I am an ambassador in bonds. Pardon me let me go back into verse 19. For me that utterance he prays.

I sign every letter with this if ever you get a letter of mine you'll know it's Ephesians 6 19. And for me that utterance may be given unto me that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of for which I am an ambassador in bonds. Now do you like that for spitting in the face of the devil? A little earlier he says I'm the prisoner of Jesus Christ.

I'm not the prisoner of Caesar. I'm not the prisoner of circumstances. I'm not the prisoner of those conniving Jews.

I'm not the prisoner of those people that have been after my blood all the time in the synagogue. I am the of Jesus Christ. I'm his property if he orders my step he orders my stop.

And he says the only way that God could get these wonderful epistles out of my life was to stop me doing the job I've been doing so long. I've been breaking my neck, preaching the gospel in season, out of season, in weariness, in fasting. And so God says uh you need a rest go to jail.

And as I say again you can prove I don't care what claims to the spirits in life you and I may have. One proof is this that when you're in jail you're saying you're saying you may not feel like it. What feelings got to do with it? My old friend Tom Hare that traveled with me.

I never took a song leaver. I took a praying man with me and Tom Hare traveled with me for some years. He liked to tell the story he said about the little Irish girl who went home and her granny said to her well did you enjoy Sundays too? Did you learn the text? Did you learn the new chorus this week? What was it? Oh I know God is still on the phone.

She said I think you've got it wrong. Oh no I didn't. Little boy next to me was singing it too.

He was singing God is still on the phone and he will remember his own. Well she wasn't far out was she? Well isn't he there? Sure he is. Working everything out to the counsel of his own will.

You know what I'm awfully thrilled about? That God doesn't take advice. You can sit down and counsel with him as you like and you know what he'll do? He'll let you talk your head off and turn his ear so he'd never heard a thing you said. Who's going to make God wise anyhow? Now there's a strange contradiction apparently in the second chapter.

In the first chapter we're told that Christ is exalted in the heavens. In the second chapter we're told we're seated with him. Now tell me this what have you been seated this week? I've been in bed most of it.

But I've been seated with him. There were certain confessions I will not make. Physically I may have to make them.

But in other areas no I'm seated with him in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Well wait a minute you just read having done all to stand. It says we're seated with him and stand.

Now that's a bit of a difficulty isn't it? To sit and stand at the same time. Rather like the man someone went in and said well how are you feeling? And he said well not so good. I just thought John going out.

Yeah and Joe down the street there too. So what's upsetting you? He says well Joe came in and he says I know things are rough. He said keep you back to the wall.

And Jim came in and he said keep your nose to the grindstone. And Bill came in he says keep your hand to the plough. And another fella came in he said you know if I do that I'm going to be a cripple.

I don't I'm going to stand anyhow if I do everything brother tell me. Well can you sit and stand? No no no not physically. And yet unless you're sick you can't stand spiritually.

You see unless we're seated with him in the place of authority. You know you hear people say my it's wonderful if the Lord comes today. Why? Well with all the drawn ten thousand of the bank.

Well I think he'll lead you to the great tribulation anyhow. Because he says he says oh no man anything. So he's in trouble right away.

It's interesting maybe with Dave Wilkins from the other week. He said as Martin and I talked with him. He said you know I'm urging my people not to be one penny in debt.

Do not involve yourself in one penny in debt. God doesn't want it. Get out of it.

Thought that's a pretty good point. We're seated with him in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. People say oh I'm looking for the coming of the Lord.

Well how can he come for you if you're living with him? We're already seated with him in heavenly places. We're already made heirs of God and joined heirs in Jesus Christ. Now the area of appropriation is entirely different I admit that.

You see you've got some awesome words here in the 12th verse of this sixth chapter. It says we wrestle not against flesh and blood, against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against what? Against wicked spirits in heavenly places. Now that's enough to scare you to death.

If you're going to face that formidable host of things that are against us because we've come out of darkness, that's the kingdom of darkness. It's awesome. Don't you fool with it.

Don't think you can manage it on your own, never in your life. I say it would be awesome but for this fact. You see in the first chapter in verse 18 it says the eyes of your understanding being enlightened that you may know what is the hope of his calling and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.

What is the exceeding greatness of his power unto us who believe according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places. So he's above all those principalities and powers. I don't care what dimensions you have.

You can try and get the acreage if you like or the mileage or what's involved there. But above all those systems which were thrown out of the heavens and are somehow floating there in space between the upper heavens and the heaven of the birds that Jesus Christ is exalted. The Irish sing a beautiful song to the tune when all my labors and trials are o'er.

Far above all is my savior enthroned. Crowned is the lamb who for sinners atoned. March we on fearless and down they must fall.

Living by faith in him far above all. You see this is actually where we should live. We're supposed to be living in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

We're supposed to use Lowry's words again to be exploring the possibilities of grace. Now you've got an awful lot of words there. I don't know if you noticed them while I read them.

There are about five different words involving power and strength and might and dominion. And you know we skip over them. Almost as though reading Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.

I've said and I still say the Church of Jesus Christ was halted somewhere between I think the Resurrection Morning and Pentecost. I don't think that I know anything on earth now that's comparable to the New Testament. You see let's go back.

We sang it. I noticed a little fellow Scotty was saying it and I was saying amen in my heart because I've been saying over and over this week that psalm 8. What was man made for? Well in Genesis 1 23 it says

he was made to have dominion. And the psalmist elaborates that doesn't he? Oh Lord our Lord how excellent is thy name in all the earth.

You've set your glory above the heavens and so forth out of the mouths and babes and sucklings that thou o'erdairst. Friends because of thine enemies that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger. When I consider thy heaven the work of thy fingers the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained.

What is man? Outside of those vast galaxies and systems. What is man that thou art mindful of him? Or the son of man that thou visitest. Thou hast made him to have dominion.

Now but look at the dominion he has in the in the first chapter of Genesis 26. What dominion does he have? Over the sheep, over the oxen, over the birds, over the fish. Ah but wait a minute.

It's a very limited dominion. There were no demons, there were no cities, there were no kingdoms, there were no kings, there were no Gilegites, Amorites and Hittites and all the other hypes around. He's walking into a veritable garden of Eden.

He doesn't have much to have dominion over anything. There's nothing going to tear his flesh up. But he has dominion, he has order.

Now let me tell you what I think is a second creation. I like that hymn of Charles Wesley that says love divine all love excelling. The second standard says finish then thy new creation pure and spotless let us be.

Two weeks today God willing we'll have an altar rail here. We're going to have communion. I'm going to ask you between then and now to check up and see how much you've gained ground since last Easter.

Don't check your husband or your wife, check it yourself. Then come to the altar with a token of thanksgiving or apology. Let's see how far we've moved.

So you see man was made to have dominion. He has a very restricted dominion in the in the first chapter of Genesis 26. And then you find him emerging there in Acts 1 8. Jesus says you should receive power the Holy Ghost coming upon you.

I don't think there's anything more shallow than the interpretation of the spiritual life today. It's all just you get rid of a bit of selfishness. You exercise one or two things.

In God's name what do we do against principalities and powers? Jesus indicted us a few things to display like jewels that in a Charles Wesley today take to arm you for the fight. The panoply of God. See the word of God is so beautiful.

It may appeal to the ladies to read John 15 where the true vine silent and beautiful flowering bearing fruit. Sure that's one picture. The other picture is a picture of combat hostility.

Immediately you start reading Ephesians 6. You recognize there's nothing here in line with the transcendental meditation. He suggests that the Christian warfare is agitation, opposition and danger. Now these this man comes out and the Lord says to him look you go forward and have dominion.

Then these men come out of the upper room. They haven't got a very good record any of them. They're pretty much a bunch of failures.

They're going out to another world. I suggest this is God's second creation. These are men who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ, indwelt by the Spirit of God.

They're going out to a totalitarian world, a sophisticated world. You should receive power. They'll need it because their bodies are going to be battered.

You should receive power. They'll need it because intellectually they're going to waken up and write these epistles. You should receive power.

They need it because they're going to combat against the powers of darkness. They're going to cast out demons and even raise the dead. But more than that they're going to suffer martyrdom many of them.

God Almighty has to do something for a man that runs away when a girl puts her finger up and says listen I don't know him and begins to curse and blaspheme. The very man who said everybody will let you down but I won't let you down. Peter's made a better stuff than that.

And yet we find him cursing and swearing. And yet on the day of Pentecost he stands up against the whole nation. And instead of a girl putting her finger up he puts his finger to the whole nation.

He says ye crucified the Lord of Glory and I want to tell you that man that you crucified God that not only allowed him to die he raised him up again. He says we're ambassadors. You see that's a fantastic word Paul uses.

He says sometimes men are by ambassadorships. Well some do some don't. The man that does it goes to the least challenge to his powers.

The man that goes to a tricky nation needs to know a few languages and he knows that when he goes there he goes an ambassador. He says to this nation you agree with this? No. Well I want to tell you we're not afraid of you.

Listen sir if I sign that document I have behind me the whole army the whole air force of America every intercontinental ballistic missile I've got the whole mighty power of America. I'm an ambassador it's in my hands. Now translate that to your thinking will you this week? That you and I are ambassadors of Jesus Christ that all the resources that he gained there in eternity are available for the church of the living God.

Well my God-wise church said no. Why should you have a plaintiff so oppressive except the house of God? Jesus says I'm sending you forth. Oh sure he had already said to them going into all the world and preach the gospel and and heal the sick and cleanse the lepers.

We stopped there but he also said raise the dead and if you do one do the other do none. You see if ever church ever moves back to apostolic power we get revival that'll shake the world in six months. I've got a shadow of doubt in my mind about that.

We've all got it we've got churches so complete they don't need a thing. Well God almighty says well settle down I'm I'm going my way. God only looks to the poor whether we're individually poor or collectively poor it's the poor that God blesses.

Bow down I'm here and hear me says the psalmist. I'm poor and needy. All right he's sending him out to a world that's full of challenge.

What are a bunch of men coming out of that upper room? Do you know what somebody says? Do you know why they're singing and shouting? I'll tell you I happen to know. I took a look through the window I saw some of them dancing and shouting. They've been on the beer.

The simple fact is the church never does anything when it's sober anyhow. It's only when she's drunk she does anything. Do you remember when Festus was listening to the apostle Paul and suddenly forgot his manners and jumped up and and and he shouts.

He's no right to do it. It was breaking every law protocol and decency and he says Paul you're beside yourself. Much learning does make me mad.

In other words he says you're drunk you're intoxicated with something and Paul says I am mad. I'm mad with the grace of God. I'm mad with the love of God.

I'm mad with the power of God. I've no apologies to make for it. Isn't it tragic that men are talking again today in the old dusty rotten old political language they were talking about 40 years ago.

As blind as bats and as dumb as the chairs we're sitting on. You can't put umpty dumpty together again. There is no way of restoring justice amongst nations except you cure the hearts of men and women.

If you've got the current issue of decision there there's a story about Bishop Cavengery. I told you the other week that it was reported he'd been captured and I got a later report just the other day that he wasn't. He was going back into the village with his wife and I think three children and the villagers ran out and said they're in your house with machetes.

They're going to cut your head off. They're going to rip you open. Please run.

Please run. And I guess he was in his automobile. He turned and fled.

He got to England and I think now he's in oh I don't know somewhere Pennsylvania. But somebody asked why in Africa with all its problems he could walk up on one side of the platform and a white bishop walk in the other and embrace and hug each other and stand and shake hands and magnify the Lord. Because he said there's only one thing that can make the hearts of men whether they're black or white pure and that's the blood of Jesus Christ God's Son.

And that's all it is a fallacy isn't it. We've had the League of Nations. We've had the United Nations.

We have the Hague before that and we'll go to hell before we repent. I'm sure as there's a hell we'll go to hell unless we repent. As a nation there's no hope for us.

It will take the mercy of God to bring a deluge of conviction and sorrow upon us. But again these men of God again let me say this they were going out to what they were going out to a world of conflict and strife. I pray much for these young folk that come as I said earlier I pray God they'll grow slow and grow wise quickly.

After all the leader of the early church I'm sure the most dazzling personality wasn't more than maybe 19 years of age full of faith of the Holy Ghost young fellow called Stephen. And I get more in his life as I read it he was full of faith he was full of wisdom he was full of power. Again I say we're so dead lazy.

Now I don't take any credit for this so what difference does it make it was only one church of Jesus. But just the other week a man said to me he said Ray he led almost every good sound volume I pick up of historic theology comes from England or Scotland or Germany. Why? And I said the volumes you pick up when a boy was 12 years of age he learned the second language in school and by the time he was 14 he had an AB degree and by the time he was 16 he had his master's and by the time he was 18 he had a PhD or something going like that.

You see they weren't cursed with all the blessings we have like lousy TB and things like that. I remember going into an old mill when our little Paul now missionary thank God in South America was this size. I said Martha let's go in this old mill and there was an old beaten up old mill and there was a loom nobody'd work it today.

At the end of the loom there was a plank and there was a nail driven through it the nails sticking up there you know coming up through like this. The man there said you know what that nail is? I said no I know it's a nail. Oh that's where David used to put his candle he used to bring a candle and and stick it on while he was working and he he'd run to his machine and when everything was right he had he had a book there he was studying and he'd look at the machine and read and read and he brought his little candles in his pocket.

You don't do that now. We can hardly study with electricity and flashlights. Everything's handed to us.

Children won't need brains soon when they're six years of age they'll have to buy them a computer to go to school. We're going to make sure they can't add up. We're just going to dismantle their thinking and dismantle everything else and get us in a mechanical age.

It's going to be some world 10 years from now if Jesus doesn't come and there is no revival. Hardly there's thinking about. But again let's go back to this.

We're we're in a warfare. They were in a sophisticated world. I don't know what yeah yeah now I think of it yeah.

There are three massive pictures in the world. Two of them in Forest Lawn. The one on the crucifixion which is about half as long again as this one.

How many have you seen that? Seen it? Beautiful picture. And then there's the resurrection. And in Dallas they have one on the death penitence.

I meant to see it but the machinery was broken down. I'd like to go see it. These men wandering around in the in the portico of the temple.

They've come out of the upper room. There are tongues of fire. You can tell each one.

Peter and James and John. They tell me of the tremendous background music there. Now it won't do you much good except thrill you.

But it's good to think of it anyhow. But you know it's another of God's wonderful tricks. You know if God had decided to wipe out men and send Gabriel and the angels to take over the job on the death pentecost it would have been wonderful but it would have left us all pretty cold wouldn't it? And you get a bunch of failures.

Peter and James and John and the rest. You know I'd like to know what happened in that ten days. Have you ever tried to guess? Do you think Peter was saying, hey Thomas I wish you'd quit doubting because as soon as you quit the fire's going to fall.

Or do you think Thomas said, you know what Peter I think in your heart you're still a coward. I think if you'd admit it you know the glory of God would fill the temple. Do you know what I think they were so humiliated before the Lord that nobody pointed a finger and accused anybody else.

They were so prosperous and humiliated and conscious that the Christ was ascended and they were going to be those who carried out the most amazing mission in the world. Isn't it strange he didn't give them a bank account? We can't go anywhere without one these days. Every mission society wants them.

Every blessed radio guy's begging your money, your money, your money, your money. As well if you don't give it the kingdom will fall apart. I wouldn't give them a dime.

It's up to you give them what you like. You know if the financial system in the country collapsed all those big organizations would collapse. They run on money, they run on prayer, passion.

These men come out of the upper room, I'm trying to get it through to these young fellows particularly. They weren't intellectually superior, they weren't socially high in their standing, they weren't like Isaiah who was almost a prince. Before God got hold of him they were very raw material.

Well not the same thing in the days of John Wesley. John Wesley was one of the greatest geniuses that ever lived. I'm convinced of that.

He had a company of men, John Bradford, John Nelson, a host of them around him. Not one of them was equal to him intellectually. Everyone was equal to him spiritually.

They could pray as long as he prayed, fast as long as he fasted, endure what he endured. They were one heart and one mind. There was nobody trying to exalt the other man.

There's no one wanting priority over the other. And that's the whole secret of blessing. Sometimes we pay our hearts out, rightly so, about revival.

And yet the secret's there in the prophecy of the psalm, isn't it? That where brethren dwell together in unity, there the Lord commandeth the blessing. Where there's nobody seeking priority, nobody trying to get a place in the sun or display his ministry at the expense of somebody else. Well that's one of the secrets.

Anyhow it's pretty clear from the word of God. So these men go out. Now a little high.

We think today the church has great odds against it. I don't doubt that it has and particularly in western China. But I doubt if it ever faced more than they faced in that day.

Remember it was a slave system. Remember again the Romans were in power. I've often, why in the world did Peter and John go to the temple at the hour of prayer? They didn't believe in what their temple believed in and the temple didn't believe what they believed in.

You see, sometimes God will tell you to do something that's the very opposite of what you think. You say, Lord what's the good of going there? And then the Lord says, you see that man there all twisted up like a

pretzel, just go talk to him. Have you noticed Peter didn't pray for him, he spoke to him.

Okay let's go back to these two words a few minutes here. Where to sit in heavenly places, where to stand and where to withstand against principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this world. And put on the whole armor of God and you know up to that point there's no mention made of prayer at all.

And then you come down after the helmet of salvation in the seventies, praying always, listen to that, always with all prayer in the spirit, watching there unto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints and for me that utterance may be given to me. Now I don't know what you think about that but I think that's praying. But you know is this, is this word about standing that's been getting to me lately? Standing against what? Oh I heard one person say look if you get the power of the spirit on you and you really stand in the spirit you can, you can change other people's will.

You can't do that unless your demons are there. God doesn't do it, why should you try? Who are you to change somebody's will? If you can change the will one way, somebody else will come and change that will back again. The glory of man is that he has a will, he has an independent will.

Now let's look at this tough little scripture here in the 18th of Matthew. Let's read from verse 15. Moreover if thy brother shall trusteth against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone.

If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother, but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church, but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. Now that's hard to fit in with love bearers of all things, believers of all things, but you see God's the authority and not me.

Some people say you love your friends to the nth degree or your enemies do you? You know I can remember one day, this might sound almost blasphemy to you but I'm going to say it anyhow, because I realized one day God told me to do something with my enemies, he won't do with his. He told me to forgive my enemies, he's going to burn his. That's his priority.

He's a holy God, he's a righteous God. Nobody has broken my laws, they may have hurt my feelings, nobody has broken my laws, nobody has defied me, nobody has rejected my son, nobody has denied my word, nobody has tumbled on the blood. You see we don't have discipline in church anymore.

It's a very different thing you see there. I talked with a woman over in the island, I could not believe it when somebody said the secretary of the flock that we live with has joined the Jehovah's Witnesses. I talked with her after she said Mr. Rayville, they're the most disciplined bunch of people in the island.

If you do wrong, if you don't report it, somebody else reports it, you go before a mob in the church and you sit on one of the last three pews in the church until you've been kind of cleansed and you've repented and got things straight. You don't get by with it in our group she said. You're guilty of adultery or doing some other thing.

Right a minute you're in the stock. But you see this is what this script is talking about isn't it? About a man who has a fault between you and him and so forth. All right let's come to verse 18.

Verily I say unto you whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you that if two of you shall agree on earth as

touching anything that ye shall ask it to be done of them of my father for them of my father in heaven for where two or three are gathered in my name there am I in the midst of them. Now to me that's a pretty tough scripture.

I would have read it this way. Verse 18. Verily I say unto you whatsoever you shall bind in heaven shall be bound on earth.

It doesn't say that. It says that whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. You see the arms if you like Christ is the head of the church.

We are the outreach. We are the body. Now he's talking about side two which I think is one of the most challenging things in the Christian life.

Now look I have said very often I bind this thing. I loose this thing and now I'm not too sure I have authority to do it. Why not? Because it says if two of you agree you see Jesus always sent his servants out two by two.

He sent Peter and John out. He sent Paul and Barnabas. He sent Paul and Silas.

Now there are many ministries and I'm not going to regiment them God forbid. If you're the ministry keeper that's your business. I'm saying that when it comes to this is true.

Now listen if you say I bind on earth there's only one way you can prove it and that's saying that you're bound is bound and you don't dare bind it again because it doesn't need binding because if you bind it again it's unbelief. If you bind it you've bound it. If you bound it it can't get free.

If God determines that's what he says. Now I can no way increase the strength and wisdom and power of God but I can abort it. You see I talk here about prayer and intercession and supplication and so forth.

I'm getting an idea in my mind. I haven't fully developed this. I believe there is a place where you pray through and like that you stand.

You don't have to say another word. You don't have to pray about it. There's a story we quote very often.

In Genesis chapter 17, Genesis 17 8. Then came Amalek and fought with Israel at Rephidim. Moses said unto Joshua two salt men and go out fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with a rod of God in my hand.

So Joshua did as Moses had said unto him and fought with Amalek and Moses and Aaron and her went up onto the mount of the hill. All right verse 13. Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

Verse 14. The Lord said unto Moses write thee for a memorial in a book and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua. Now if you went back to chapter 4 that rod in the hands of Moses was the rod of Moses.

Now this rod has become. He says I went on to the mount with a rod of God in my hand. I don't know how to describe that except it must have been an amazing sanctification that a normal rod that maybe it prodded sheep with or it reached down with that crook and got it under its leg and pulled it out gently when it had been down in the rock.

That rock is suddenly taken hold of and it becomes a weapon, a terrible weapon. He says I stood with a rod of God in my hand. What happened? Well there's a battle down in the valley.

The Amalekites forever after the children of Israel and Moses was there on the mount and Moses got the victory. Why? Well let me tell you again he didn't pray one prayer. We talk as though he wrestled.

Not sure he did not pray at all. Do you know what he did? He did. There are some things higher than prayer you can pray your head off but if you're not obedient you won't get any place.

And the secret was his obedience. God said go up on that mount and stay there with your hands up. Now that must have been a pretty tedious thing.

He wasn't a young man and as it got older in the day his hands began to go down so they propped one arm up and they propped the other arm up. That rod which had been only a shepherd's rod became a mighty rock. Just in the previous verse 14 he'd smitten the rock and split it.

Now that rock becomes, that rod becomes terrible. A little lady's going to take that rod and do one of the most devastating miracles. I heard a stupid man say not long ago man if you came to our church and saw miracles, huge three things they never saw in the Old Testament.

I said you ever divide the trees? What's raising the dead compared with spinning a whole ocean in two? While five million people cross it. And then as soon as they got across you pull the plug and drowned a bunch of them. A rod of God.

Hey Craig I wonder what God's rod is in your life or or Jake or John or Jay some of you guys. Are you expecting Gabriel to come one morning with a crown on your head? You think you're never going to you're never going to put the Christian life out for me to see. If any man tells you he knows all the answers ignore him he's a pest.

Get rid of him. He doesn't know it because still as long as you live and the longer I live I realize that great is the mystery of godliness. I don't understand God's selections.

I don't understand God's working. I know this that this rod becomes so terrible in the hand of a man. It's an ornery rod.

You could have bought them a dime a dozen we would say. But once God gets hold of it he can smite a rock and he sends a river of life following them wherever they go. He can lift that rod up in the name of God and the Amalekites go down like nine pins all the time as long as he's there in the place of authority.

You say well later he should he smoked the rod the rock with the rod. Yes but that that God was trying to lead him to a place of faith he hadn't got to yet. You see there'll come a day when God will take your rod away too.

We depend so much on gimmicks. You must do it this way or do it that way. If you don't do it the way we remind people brother you're out.

If you don't baptize them that way you're out. If you don't get the baptism away I got it you're out. Forget it.

I can show you 50 different people who got the baptism of the spirit 50 different ways. I can show you a little man I have his record about this size little Stephen Jeffries no bible school knowledge but one day he

read A.B. Simpson's book the fourfold gospel. I remember that phrase he begins by saying healing is not what healing is not the main part of the gospel it's not the total gospel but that it is a part of the gospel nobody can argue little Stephen Jeffries read that about 1900 and oh where where where 1910 maybe at 12 in England and it set a bonfire in him.

The only bit of clergyman about him was he spent about a shilling on a celluloid collar that went backwards away and he put an announcement up in the church in a building that he'd have a healing crusade.

The first afternoon he went in he had 120 people his song leader he said to the song leader see how many there are in he said well how many does the place hold he said 3,300 he said every seat's occupied except the 3,200 he said we've about 120 people in at the moment little Stephen said praise the lord for an empty house yeah why don't we wind the thing up tonight get out of town because he said the lord was talking to me this morning he said there's a little woman in the crowd and her son has a five foot short a leg five inches short and at the end of the meeting that leg is going to drop like that the little boy is going to run off the platform his mother run after him and the congregation run after her and tonight they'll be fighting to get seats and it happened exactly like that you

wonder how the lord knows wouldn't you no i don't wonder how the lord knows i wonder how enough to listen oh we need a company we've got to get a few millionaires behind us and a lot of flattery songbooks and a big star song leader and a hammond organ and heaven knows what i never knew revival begun that way yet i'm reading only today about little little um evan roberts when dear old sd my went along to hear him and the little guy is only about 22 years of age and and he stood up and talked about the wrath of god the man in the house and in the in the gallery shouted back i'm not an atheist i'm i'm i'm uh i i'm not an infidel really i'm just an agnostic i don't know and he says the wrath of god is upon you and somebody was going to strike up the ordinance and actually my first no let me

hear the groan of men who are lost let me hear the groan of men who are lost he said i've preached 30 years with dry eyes i've preached 30 years with technical knowledge of the holy spirit and all the other wonderful bits of theology i never had a broken heart for lost men and women you can't say how god will do it stephen jeffrey says that the scripture is very clear and i obey as you call for the elders of the church i'll anoint you and he had a man with a bowl full of oil little stephen went took his coat off and put his hand in the oil and scrubbed the surface oil on and he had people then he laid hands on and boy when he hit them they went out not for three minutes like the modern way you know instant miracle down up and you're done no sorry none of that they were laid out for hours

they had a stack of old army blankets like this when the women went down they were covered so there'd be nothing unseemly that's what his method he said i can't see any others you anoint with oil in the name of the lord that's the scripture his brother-in-law george had his greater miracle had miracles just the same but he never used oil but i'll tell you what he had an awful word of authority they took one of our neighbors a man that was just twisted as a skulk screw and he smelled like a skunk something that bathed in today's mother bathed him when he was born he was the biggest derelict in the district and somebody took him in almost out of compassion and said this is a god of mercy let him do something for this stinking mess well george jeffries i think was one of the most handsome

men i've ever seen he didn't wear a clerical collar he wore the usual white collar and he took massive gorgeous wavy hair deep welsh voice and at the end of the meeting he said there must be some who long

for healing and somebody said this bring him up a couple of thousand people in that old church and they laid him at the feet of the man of god and george looked at him and said my brother you've got more need than physical healing you can do without that you're a lost man began to talk to him about jesus that man one of the most rough blaspheming men in the whole state i guess began to weep and in a within 15 minutes he was a born again man even just george jeffries rather just took over him and said in the name of the son of god rise and walk he jumped up as straight as that two

thousand people did two thousand in books went up in the air they all they all went home with different hats but it didn't make any difference anyhow they were so excited going out and they'd hardly any automobiles they were going for street cars and everything else well that's all very well i still don't think it's the highest thing there's no nation under heaven had more miracles than this nation in the last pint of zoos a street and i've been in this coolman meetings when there were more people outside than in and i talked to them many times about miracles she didn't know a thing about them anyhow and didn't wait and didn't claim she had any gifts through healing she said there are times when faith rises more than others and so it does you see the thing is if you people say well if if

you if you have a word of faith for instance again whatsoever i buy my mouth is bound i say all right well if you said it in faith if you really meant it if you had the authority it was done well aren't you going out on the limb no you're going out on him there's no such thing as going out on the if it didn't work well then you didn't have faith you had presumption now there's nobody infallible we've been to city after city where somebody i say oh does your father no no no you see my brother was dying of leukemia and there's a couple of men in church and they prayed for him fasted for two weeks and they got a word he wasn't going to die but he died so what david williamson said to me the other day he said you know gwen's very bad len but he says i'll tell you what if she dies and i put in

the grave i'll still believe in divine healing just didn't happen to work for my wife i died that doesn't stop my faith god's not here to answer my program sure faith seems to rise it's just just what i want maybe sometimes that's the worst thing that could happen what i'm baffled but again you see here is here is earth controlling heaven because while moses is here and he's doing what god says while he holds his arms up god says all right as you obey i'll pour down blessing i'll pour down blessing now you let your arms down and you stop the whole system in heaven i'm saying there is a word of authority i haven't got there if you have well you pray for me i get confidence in prayer i know what god wants me to pray about but you see there are places where you can draw boundaries now you

have no power over those power of other people's wills i don't believe that but i'll tell you what you can you can make claims on god in certain situations now i don't know why this came up in my mind today i've read it for years you know there was a revival this the shang tung revival dr cold pepper was in it if i remember the boisterous little woman what is she uh smith surface fluid she's what 86 years young boy i'd like to see her and maxwell have a race he's about 80 and he goes like a train all the things that happen in that shang tung revival i'm convinced the basis is this first of all purity be sure you're not wanting anything for your own glory to make it easier for your own lord secondly purity leads to prayer prayer leads to power power leads to authority there's no jump to it

i can't find a man who has had authority in prayer that got there in a jump i told you before mrs reef house said to me one day brother raven you see that room dabby meaning a husband went in that room at eleven pardon me at six o'clock in the morning and he stayed till six at night 11 months every day except the days mother that nothing ought to come to this conclusion while i've been lying in bed we're not going

to get revival our way you either meet god's way or forget it we're not going to get revival by praying once a week you think that the proof of your spiritual life is not you not that you pray when you have to not that you just pray when you want to you pray because it's an inward urge but you have to pray you see when when we stand when we've been all to stand we're fighting

from the throne downwards we're not fighting for what we want we're fighting for what god wants the amalekites will be destroyed god wanted them to be destroyed the only way to be destroyed is he says moses you hold up your hand and as long as you obey me they'll be live communicating all right this great word of authority was it's difficult to say i i find it difficult to put in order you know it's like me asking you what makes your automobile work you say the motor is that right well take the wheels off and try it oh well the wheels go well take the transmission out and try it what makes it go everything is coordinated all right now again i would have thought it would have said wrestle and pray and then they've done all that stand instead of that and then because you have on the whole

armor of god you can you can push back all these principalities and powers but you see it's too late to want authority in the moment of crisis do you remember in luke 8 you you read in luke how many times it speaks it talks of jesus remember matthew shows jesus as a king and mark shows him as a servant and luke shows him as a son of man and yet as the son of man it says over and over and over again that jesus rebuked rebuked rebuked they were in the boat going over the sea but jesus thought with all the ministry they had and all the lovely things jesus would have done they'd have waken him up and said lord you're gonna drown you're gonna drown do you remember what they said the darling don't you care that we perish not too selfish is it lord don't you care that i've been carrying this

load so long he says no and i'll tell you what it's 10 years longer if that's the way you're gonna feel about it i'm trying to get you to a place where you don't care if that burden lasts another year longer anything else as long as you say i'll prove your grace in this situation i'll prove your strength in this situation i'll prove your power in this situation but they said don't you care that we perish i like i like to play on those words it says they were crossing the sea a storm arose he arose and there was a great calm what did you pray about it no he rebuked it so back in from the eighth to the fifth chapter he goes into the house of simon peter's wife but you see the first pope did have a wife no uh peter wasn't the first pope anyhow but he went into the house of simon's wife's

mother lying sick of a fever and he said well of course the thing is we've got to have a group to pray about this no he didn't what did he do he immediately rebuked the sickness that was on him but that is prerogative you see later in that 12th chapter of first corinthians he gives gifts from cement now i've never met you may have i've never met a man who claimed to have a gift of healing somebody put my order robertson depression no i don't have it i remember more than once we i don't have it all lesser likes i've heard a lot less alike so they have it in any case it says gifts of healing i believe a man could have a gift of healing once in his life and that's all god wanted to have anyhow you see we're so prone to put halos on man say oh you you pray about that no i believe god gives

men gifts of faith in certain areas some men can pray for cancer easily some men say well don't ask me about cancer but i'll pray for deafness tell you what i very seldom find anybody that's very very eager to go pray for a blind man very seldom and i've discussed this with some of the big shops around the world named you know and they all say well you see it takes more faith what do you mean more faith doesn't strain omnipotence to open eyes any more than cure measles as far as i'm concerned omnipotence is omnipotent but you see he's given gifts unto men now it seems to me that that power diminishes because

when you get into the into the epistle of james he says let them call for the elders of the church now you've got to a body ministry and the body should function in that area i'll

pray with some men but i say look don't ask me to pray because i've no faith to pray for that man i'll agree with you now agreeing doesn't mean that you believe the word of god is true no that's not at all you see that's why when you when you read that 18th chapter there in the uh in matthew those things are all tied in very closely together i say unto you whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven again i say to you that if two of you shall agree as such in anything that they shall ask it should be done for them of my father which is in heaven now the obvious thing is that first of all you know it's god's will to do that thing i don't believe all the pressure in the world to make god do something he doesn't

want to do i believe it makes me get to the place where i realize i'm impotent but this is something that god desires to do and i'm not going to block the channel what's beneath this tying binding and losing is you go to a meeting and there's somebody always gets up in the middle of the meeting go to the bathroom or somewhere and you get annoyed they do it every week at the same time it says bind them so that they sit down somebody else colors you after the meeting they thought 15 minutes you got sick of hearing them bind them and shut them up before you get out they said i'm going to talk to you but i don't know what's happened you say you'll be better next week you bound them well that's all right but i think it's paltry i still think here we're talking in the dimension of bondage going

back again i didn't finish in the shang tung revival there were some outstanding things but you see what they did under god they put a boundary around that city now it's a walled city there's a very very rich kind of potentate there he'd heard the christians had come he'd heard about revival he'd heard about thieves acknowledging what they'd done murders acknowledging they'd murdered people putting accounts right oh man alive he got scared if this comes my way i'm gonna have to get rid of a lot of money and acknowledge a lot of theft and acknowledge a lot i'm getting out of town so he saddled his donkey and as he went past the church they were singing yeah yeah silly old bunch of christians there wouldn't get me in there you know team of horses wouldn't get me in there i'm getting out of

this town i'm getting out of this town and he got to the porch and when the donkey got there he decided that's as far as he was hiking that day he stuck his four legs out as low they were wood and the man got out and twisted his tail and nearly pulled his head off and kicked him and he wouldn't back he turned him round and the donkey set off and walked went right past the church again well i can make it outside of the city before sunset he got to the gate again and the old donkey got something in its legs they went can't move it push it wouldn't move pull it break its neck beat it didn't care look so what can i do well try turning it round so he turned it round and it walked right up to the church and then it got the stiffness again he suddenly realized that god was talking to him and

somebody had put an iron curtain of faith there and this man is not getting out of that now i call that binding and i called it lucent when it isn't something trivial or small when it's something majestic because that man became one of the key kingpins in revival in that town i'm quite sure of this but if you and i are primed up in faith and expectation there comes a place a situation may come as quickly as that and you stand against it after all that's what the man of god did the great i was going to say potter was it peter peter no it was paul in acts where about acts 15 and then we went to the house of that rich beautiful lady they didn't give him a mayor's welcome to the town didn't snip a piece of ribbon as he went in he didn't have a hundred dollars plate banquet for him after all

he's only a man of god he's only one of the greatest men that ever lived and he slipped in and a delightful lady said sir i've heard you worship god will you come in my house please he said delighted to do it and remember there was a girl with a spirit of divination tormented them for a day or two suddenly the man of god didn't say do you think we should pray about this he said come out of her thou evil one and it says he came out it was a spirit there he had authority now again we'd better be sure we have the authority it's one thing for me to desire to do it it's an entirely there's a lot of things i desire to do i don't attempt because i don't have authority to do it remember the sons of skeever because the father was a priest they said well i'll tell you what boy we can get a jump

ahead of the old man all we have to do is reserve the formula we've been around those famous evangelists and all you do is say in the name of jesus christ the son of god come out of him and uh and maybe those are the mazes anybody the spirit came out played football with them kicked them all around beat them up gave them a whale of a time oh i think that's delightful i hope satan will have to say that of me at the judgment seat because he said uh you know jesus i know and paul i know sure than you paul cast out spirits of divination they got his name number one on the danger list in hell i'd rather have my name i hope it's somewhere in the first ten anyhow i'd rather be on the danger list in hell than 20 degrees above billy graham or old roberts on earth i'll tell you that that doesn't

save me the rankings that men get they're all false anyhow and prove that to you because one day a lot of the last is going to be first not as first will be last i might be somewhere in between but i'm glad i'll be there anyhow but listen there's a place of authority i'm going to work on this a bit more i don't know whether we'll go to it next week maybe we will there's a place where we stand we've prayed through we've assurance that god is we know he called us into partnership with him you've got somebody you can call in your hour of calamity if you haven't you should have because again it's if two of you agree i'm more convinced than ever that this is what god wants he wants partners in faith to stand against the principalities and powers against the rulers of the darkness of this world

you know it seems to me it gets darker every week the political situation gets more complex just this past week i read milton friedman article read it if you haven't read it the path we dare not take in the february issue of readers digest he points out there how chile went down the road chile went down the road until 40 percent of its gnp gross national product was being used on the nation that keeled over england is already 60 it hasn't keeled over but he says within five years democracy as we've known it and he admits that most of the democratic system as we know it jurisprudence everything we base our culture on here came from england anyhow but the freedom that england has known for centuries from the battle of runnymede if you like 1220 whatever it was the magna carta was given from

that day she's been a shining light raised up more missionary societies more bible societies elimination in history and yet down the drain today he says within five years a democratic system as we know it in england and freedom as we know it in england will have ended what's it going to be another russia another socialist state was it so walter scott had the old saying on the back of his watch i think i had it once on a on an old one i had i should get it engraved on this it's later than you think it's later than you think for all of us and the only people will stand are those who stand and withstand and stand and withstand when we don't understand but know this as mystifying as it is god is working everything after the council of his own will there's nothing out of hand he does not to

explain it to me he can leave me baffled and mystified but i want to tell you i've got my two feet stuck on this rock christ jesus and i'm not moving again it's all the powers of hell break loose he by himself has

sworn i on his oath depend father we thank you again for the quietness of the sanctuary take this word and speak it afresh to our hearts as you would have us understand it save us from being spiritual paupers when we can have all these witches in jesus christ save us from being boy scouts when we can put on the whole armor of god can we cover it for these young people they've got to get treated particularly as the summer months come with a challenge to free air and lots of swimming and all the other things that won't help them a bit spiritually help them to be good soldiers of

jesus christ disciplined soldiers obeying every precious command you give to them bless these younger ones still as they go out to a school life tomorrow that's pretty sordid and evil keep them we pray unspotted from the world and granted in their homes they'll see in their parents the beauty of the lord jesus christ and we give you praise in jesus name

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/20/SID20613.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/leonard-ravenhill/the-whole-armor-of-god-part-4/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net