

Christian Armament 02 Armed With an Advocate

by Neil Fraser

We are well armed and equipped with the word of God, the spirit of God, and the advocate who deals with our sin and maintains us in a perfect standing before God.

Duration: 48:23

Scripture: Psalm 78:9, Matthew 6:33, John 1:4, John 2:1, Philippians 4:19, Hebrews 2:18

Topics: "Predestination", "Justification"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a story about an old lady who was sick and asked God for an orange. When she woke up, she found two oranges, which the preacher reveals he had given to her. The preacher then transitions to discussing the concept of predestination and God's plan for believers. He explains that God's purpose is for those He foreknew to be conformed to the image of His Son, and that through divine calling and justification, believers are already on the path to being glorified. The preacher encourages the audience to remember that all things work together for good for those who love God.

Transcript

Thank you for coming. Pray the Lord to bless the word to your heart. Now, my brother, don't forget to ask for that five dollars from your wife for my books.

And you wives, don't forget that you've got a better idea of what your husband needs than he does. So you'll buy my books. Now, shall we turn please to my text once more, in Psalms number 78.

We are taking this text as a base for our messages each evening of this week. And you remember that it's down in verse 9. The children of Ephraim being armed and carrying bows turned back in the day of battle. Now, as we have said already, it wouldn't have been half so bad had the children of Ephraim been poorly armed.

But they were well armed. And being well armed, they turned back in the day of battle. And we've been asking ourselves how well armed we are for our conflict with the world of flesh and the dead.

On Monday night we spoke of the sword of the spirit which is the word of God. We are armed with that. We have that in our hands.

Last night we spoke about the indwelling spirit of God. And in his forward movement, as seen in the Acts of the Apostles. Not so much the passive work of the spirit of God within us, but the aggressive work of the spirit of God making us witnesses for him in the world.

Now, tonight we want to deal with two things. And that is that not only do we have the word of God in our hands and the spirit of God in our breasts, but we have a man at God's right hand ever appearing in the presence of God for us. We shall see tonight that we have an advocate with the Father.

And we have a priest with God. We shall see tonight that as our advocate he has to be unlike us in that he is just and righteous. And as our priest he has to be like us in his humanity.

He is our advocate if we sin. He is our great high priest in our weaknesses and necessities. And so let's turn first of all please to the first epistle of John, chapter two.

First epistle of John please, chapter two. My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any men sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

And he is the propitiation for our sins. And not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. Now the gospel by John is the gospel of light and life and love.

The truth of light and life and love. The epistles of John are the test of life and light and love. And the revelation which John wrote is the triumph of light over darkness, of life over death, and of love over hate.

John is the only person privileged to write in all three divisions of the New Testament. He writes in the historical portion, he writes in the didactical portion, the teaching portion, and he writes in the prophetic portion. And in each of these, taking his cue I think from Genesis chapter one, he speaks of light and of life and of love in that order.

And now his epistle therefore treats of the test of light and life and love. Now the first thing we need if we are going to fight well for God is a proper knowledge of the work of Jesus Christ for us in the presence of God. There's a man in the book of Nehemiah whose name was I think Pethihiah and we read that he was at the right hand of the king for all his people's needs.

And Jesus Christ is our Pethihiah who is at the right hand of God for all the need of his people. Now one thing that John makes us aware of is that we have sin in us and we have sin upon us. He tells us in the first chapter that if any man, if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves.

Sin, drawing attention to the root which is in each of us. And then it says if we say we have not sinned, drawing attention to the fruit which is the result of that fruit. We lie and do not the truth.

Now when I began to read to you tonight from this epistle, we read John's second epistle. The first reason in chapter one, these things write I unto you that your joy may be full. And now as he begins chapter two, you'll notice please, he says these things write I unto you that ye sin not.

And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. Now you'll notice he doesn't say and when any man sins. As if sinning were inevitable.

See he has just said in chapter one that we have sin in us and because of that we have sin from us. The root bringing forth the fruit. But says he you're not to suppose that that is inevitable, that sinning is inevitable because of that.

In fact he says I'm writing to you that ye sin not. John knows that their joy cannot be full if they're conscious of sin. So he says in order that that joy be maintained, let me give you my second reason for writing.

And that is that ye sin not. Now there are two tenses in the epistle of John used for the subject of sinning. One is a continuous sense and the other is just the opposite.

It is called the aorist. It draws attention to a specific thing. A thing that's done and not continued.

And that is the tense in which John is speaking about here. And if any man sin, if he's overtaken. In chapter three he says he that's begotten of God does not continue in sin.

But at the beginning of chapter two he says now if any man do sin, a definite act. Not a course of sin indulged in which would be a proof of non-possession of divine life. But he says if it so happens, not when it happens as if sinning was inevitable.

But if such a thing does happen, he says we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. Now I'd like to point out dear friends two things here. First, it does not say if any man confess.

It doesn't say if any man confess, we have an advocate with the Father. It says if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father. It's not your confession of your sin as a believer that results in Christ's advocacy.

It's Christ's advocacy that results in your confession. He does not propose to take up your case as an advocate when you repent of your sin as a believer. The truth is that he has already taken up your case when you sinned.

If he hadn't already taken up your case as an advocate with the Father, God only knows how long you might continue in sin. So let me give you this statement which please notice. Try to mark it down.

It is not my confession that results in his advocacy. It is his advocacy that results in my confession. Amen? Do you grasp that? That's a great thing to grasp.

I've got many dear friends in various Pentecostal bodies. I love them. They're my brother and my sisters in the Lord.

They love the Lord. They sometimes make me ashamed of their zeal for the Lord and the joy of the Lord and the value they put upon the precious blood of Christ. I say that sincerely.

But there's this about them. They believe that the advocate only takes up their case as believers when they confess and will be to them if they should not confess in time before death might take them away through some tragic accident, through some heart attack. They feel, you see, they're on their own after they are saved.

And they must hold on to this thing that they have been given, you see. And that the advocate takes up their case when they confess. But should it so happen that they do not confess in time before such a fatal stroke they might be lost forever after being years and years in Christ.

They believe that having failed as a believer they have lost their standing. They have lost their salvation. They are back where they were before.

They need to be saved over again. Now if so, God is no longer their Father. He's their Creator to be sure.

But they're not in the relationship of a child with a father now that has been forfeited. But notice my text says, if any man sin we have an advocate with the Father. He's still the Father.

Amen? Now that's a great thing to get a hold of, dear friends. He's still the Father. And because God is still the Father, and He is still the Father, because our advocate has immediately sprung, and I speak reverently, to our case if we sin.

And it is not our repentance and sin that results in His work for us as an advocate. Indeed, it is His work as an advocate that results in our repentance. You get a hold of that? That's a tremendous thing to say, isn't it? In other words, He maintains us before God.

Notice what it goes on to say, and He is the propitiation. Not that He was, but that He is. It's a continuous present tense in the Greek language.

And He is the propitiation for our sins. And it's because of that perfect standing we have before God as our abiding propitiation that we are maintained before God every hour of the day. Blessed be His name.

I'm glad about that. How about you? Huh? Here are five words that I greatly enjoy. Let me give them to you.

For. Whom He did foreknow. Then He did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son.

And whom He did predestinate, them He called. And whom He called, them He justified. And whom He justified, them He glorified.

You see? Now that word for is a continuation of the previous verse. For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God. For.

Now what are the things that work together? Not primarily those things that are occurring in your life and mine day by day. Not primarily. The things that are working together are five things.

God's eternal foreknowledge. Resulting in His eternal predestination. Resulting in His divine calling of us.

And that's the day we responded to Christ. And whom He called, them He justified. And all that believe are justified from all things.

And whom He justifies, them He glorifies. There's no hitch. There's no failure.

Why? Because they're working together for good to them who are called according to His purpose. And God's purpose is that whom He foreknew from all eternity, them He ultimately. And if you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ here tonight, let me tell you, that four of those things have happened already in your experience.

Foreknowledge. Predestination. Divine calling.

Justification. You've got all four. All you're waiting for now is number five.

And whom He justifies, them He glorifies. You see? Now that's because, dear friends, first of all, if any man's sin, as a believer, we have an advocate with the Father, still the Father, taking up His work when we

sin. Jesus Christ the righteous.

Unlike the unrighteous for whom He pleads. Jesus Christ the righteous. And He is the abiding propitiation for our sins.

Not for ours only, but for the sins. So first of all, we are well armed, well equipped. Because we have one who deals with our sin as children of God, when that sin overtakes us, whenever it does.

That's the first thing we've got. The second is found in Hebrews. Which please turn to Hebrews chapter two.

Please. Verse sixteen. For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels, but He took on Him the seed of Abraham.

Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted. Now you'll notice that when it's a question of high priesthood, it's not a question of relationship with the Father.

We have an advocate with the Father. But when it's a question of priesthood, it's with God. And again, you'll notice it says here, It behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren.

An advocate must be unlike His brethren, who are sinning people. He must be Jesus Christ the righteous. But in priesthood, it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren.

Not in sin, to be sure, but in manhood. That He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation or propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted.

So the first work of our great high priest is to succour us in temptation. Turn now please to chapter four. In chapter four, and verse fourteen.

Seeing then that we have a great high priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmity. The vice version says, we haven't got a high priest not able to sympathize.

That's what it says. We do not have a high priest who is not able to sympathize. But was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace. Notice that. Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace.

That we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Now let us turn over to chapter seven. And we will read in verse twenty-four.

But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. Now here are three things that our high priest is ready to do for us.

He's able to succor us when tempted. He's able to sympathize in our sorrows and need. And he's able to save us to the uttermost.

Now please notice that this last verse I gave you. Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God. That does not draw attention to the initial act of coming to Christ as sinners for salvation.

We apply it that way. But he doesn't mean it that way. He means it this way.

Wherefore he is able also, because he's a priest, not a savior here, but a priest, to save them to the end. This uttermost here is not a word that means to extent. It means duration.

He's able to save them to the end. All that come. Now come in the book of Hebrews is not the initial coming to Christ as sinners.

In each case it's draw near. It's the word quite often draw near. I read it to you.

Let us draw near unto the throne of grace. He's able to save them to the end. That's you and me.

Who draw near unto him. Seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. You see.

So that at this very moment in the presence of God there's a man. And that man in other offices, besides others, is a great high priest. And he's able and ready to succor you in temptation.

He's able to sympathize with you. Have you ever felt you didn't have really anybody to sympathize with you? Or understand your need? Well you do have one. And do you ever wish that you had someone or you had the assurance of being saved right to the end of the journey? Right to the end of the journey.

I don't mean saved from hell. But saved from your fears. Saved from your anxieties.

Saved from your uncertainties. Saved from your questionings. Saved from your disappointments.

He's able to save to the end. There's a priest that you read about in the Old Testament. His name was Jehoiada.

He lived to be one of the longest in respect of years of men who lived after the flood. He lived to be a great age. He was a priest.

And as long as he lived, the young King Joash went from strength to strength. Read about this man in 2 Chronicles, I think 24. He went from strength to strength under the tutelage and help of this man, Jehoiada.

But Jehoiada died. Death overtook him. In the words of Hebrews, he could not continue by reason of death.

And from the time that man died, Joash went down and down and down and down until you're perfectly amazed the things he did before ultimately. While he was diseased and lying on a bed, two men came in and murdered him. And if you were to draw a graph of that man's life, it would go up and up and up until the high point is reached.

And that was the death of his priest. And from then on, he goes down and down and down and down and down. Because the priest could not continue by reason of death and could not save him to the end.

You see? To the end of his life. Now in contrast to that, we read that we have a Savior who can save to the end all those that draw near unto him. Now because of that, the apostle says, you and I have a throne of grace.

And it says, let us draw near boldly unto the throne of grace. And that word, draw near, is the message of the book of Hebrews. Even when you come to chapter 11.

Without faith it is impossible to please him. For he that cometh to God, he that draws near unto God. You see? Everything hitches, everything depends on our drawing near.

But dear friends, if you do not, if I do not draw near, then we don't get that sucker in temptation. We don't get that sympathy in our sorrow. And we don't get that salvation that we so sorely need day by day from things that we should have.

Hence the necessity of drawing near unto the throne of grace. And I love that text that says in Romans 5, It begins by saying, therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God. That's the thing we all enjoy.

By whom also we have access into a grace wherein we stand. We have a perfect standing in grace. We have a throne of grace to which we are invited to come in all our need.

And the tragedy is, we fail to come. Let me tell you about Esther. Queen Esther, you remember, was a lovely queen of Ahasuerus.

She won that beauty contest which was held long ago. The Gentile Vashti was deposed. The Hebrew Esther was brought in.

You've noticed, I'm sure, there are two books in the Old Testament bearing the names of women. The first is about a Gentile Ruth, who was brought in to the commonwealth of Israel. The book of Esther is the story of a Gentile who was deposed, in order that a Jewish girl be brought in.

And these two books are highly typical. Now Esther came to the throne, and you remember there was that plot against the Jews by him. He plotted nothing less than the total extermination of all the Jews in the far-flung empire of Ahasuerus.

And when Enoch went out on a certain Friday, the 13th was it, they were all to be slain. Mordecai cried the loud and bitter cry we read. And he sent a message to his niece, and said to her, you've got to do something about this.

You've got to intercede to your husband. She said, I don't know if I can. She says, there's a law in this country that nobody can go into the king's presence unasked, unless he holds out the golden scepter and bids you come.

That was the way, of course, that the kings protected themselves from assassination. And right in the book of Esther, in chapter 2, there's the plot to assassinate the king by the very men who kept the door. The very men who were supposed to save the king plotted his death.

And only the good services of Mordecai saved the king from assassination. Now Esther says, I haven't been asked into the king's presence for 30 days. Think of that.

Was he beginning to tire already of his lovely queen? And she says, you know the law, that if I dare go into him as he sits there, and he doesn't hold out the scepter, I'll be slain. But she says, I'll do it, and if I perish, I perish. She wasn't sure she could boldly approach the throne of grace and find grace and help in time of need.

You see, she wasn't sure of her standing in grace. And so she put on her beautiful robes, and she came and stood in the doorway. And the king looked up and saw his lovely queen.

And his heart went out to her. And he held out the golden scepter. And she came down to where he was, and she touched it.

And he said to her, what is it Queen Esther? What is your request? And I'll do it unto the half of my kingdom. And it was such a surprise to her, she says, well, I'll tell you tomorrow. I'll tell you tomorrow.

But you see the point. She wasn't sure of her standing at the throne. But she found to her joy that the king promised unto the half of his kingdom to give her what she asked.

But let me tell you folks something. My God shall supply all your need according to half his riches in Christ Jesus. Say, did I quote that right? My God shall supply all your need according to his riches, all his riches, in glory by Christ Jesus.

And do you know that you have got a perfect standing before the throne of grace? And you're actually invited, besought, to come boldly to the throne of grace. For that succor from temptation that you so sorely need. For that sympathy in your trial.

For that salvation from the power and lust and lure and defeat and disappointment of things day by day. Let me tell you some stories of people who touched the golden sector of the promises of God. And found the resources of God sufficient for their need.

I told you a story last night or the night before along this line. Let me tell you another one. There was a man who was traveling on a ship, traveling first class.

He was quite a wealthy man. But he wasn't agnostic. He didn't know that God, that he was there at all, could be reached.

And as he rose up one day from the dining table, where there was a beautiful bowl of fruit, he reached out and took an orange in both hands and put them in his pocket. He thought, I'll go over to the steerage end of the boat, the third class, and maybe I'll see somebody that I could give those to. And he had heard that there was to be some kind of a religious service going on down there.

And he thought, well, I'll go and hear them once more and see if I really got anything that I could, would be of help to me. So as he went and got the companionway, as it's called, the stairs going downstairs to the steerage, there was an old woman sitting at the top step. And she was sleeping in the sunshine.

He noticed her clothes were rather poor. And so he put his hand in his pocket, and he took out the two oranges, and he put them in her hands, which were in her lap, as she dozed in the sunshine. And he went down into the service.

And as usual, got nothing. But coming up, he noticed the old lady was awake. And he noticed that one orange had been eaten.

So he said to her, how did you like the oranges I gave you? Oh, she says, was that you that put them in my lap? He said, yes. Oh, she says, let me tell you about that. She says, you know, I was sick for a couple of days.

It's been a stormy passage. He says, it has. And this is the first day I felt better.

So I crawled up the stairs, and I sat in the sunlight. And she says, you know, I began to feel better. And I began to feel hungry.

And she says, I just lifted my heart to my Heavenly Father. And I says, Father, you know what? I could eat an orange. She says, Father, I could eat an orange.

She says, you know, I could eat an orange. And she says, I must have fallen asleep. Because when I woke up, I had two oranges.

Oh, he says, I gave them to you. Oh, she says, yes, yes, I know. But you were just the raven that God sent to feed me.

And as he walked away, he said, that's done me more good than all the sermons I ever heard. You see, friends, she touched the golden center of the promise of God. My God shall supply all your need, according to His riches and glory, by Christ Jesus.

Amen? I had a close friend, a friend, an old preacher. If I mentioned his name, some of you would know him. His name was Richard Varder, English brother.

And he labored for God in Canada a great deal. And he was laboring for God during a great depression. And he was living on a farm where there was very little to eat.

The farmers had seven successive crop failures in Alberta, Saskatchewan. And he was eating nothing but beans, beans, beans, beans every day on the farm. And one day he was in town, and he was very hungry.

And he had no money. And he passed a restaurant. And he lifted his heart to his Heavenly Father.

He says, Father, you know what? I'm hungry. I'm very hungry. And I don't believe it's thy will that thy servants should be very hungry.

And you know what I'm going to do, Father? I'm going to go into this restaurant and order the best meal they've got. And I've got no money. But I'm going to look to you to supply my need.

And then he went. And he ordered his meal. And when it was brought to him, he bowed his head and thanked God.

And he ate it. And he got up. And he approached the man behind the cash register.

He didn't know whether it was going to be a thorn of grace or not. And he put his hand over to his hip pocket in the usual gesture, although he knew there was nothing in his pocketbook. And when he did, the man behind the register said, It's all right, Dad, it's on the house.

When I opened this restaurant, I said, The first person who bows his head and thanks God gets his meal for nothing. He says, You're the first person who's done it. It's on the house.

You see, friends, that man touched the golden circle of the promise of God. And he found that God was all-sufficient. You see, could I do that? To be sure you could.

Could I do that? To be sure I could. So we have in the presence of God, a great high priest, who because he continues ever, has an unchangeable priesthood. The trouble was with young Joe Ash, he had a changeable priesthood.

His benefactor died. And there was nobody left to sacrifice him. And down he went.

But you and I, dear friends, will never be able to say that we do not have, or that we do have that kind of a priest. We have one who has an unfathomable priesthood. He ever lives it.

And he opens the throne of grace. And he comes and says, Bring me your need. Bring me your need.

Draw near. But the tragedy is, we are too busy. And we draw upon our own resources.

And we know little of salvation. Day by day from our circumstances. I was teaching the students in Emmaus some years ago about this matter of faith.

And when the class was dismissed, a fellow came up to me and said, Mr. Fraser, I can tell you another one. It happened in our house in Canada, in our farm. And it was in the days of depression.

And he says, And we were eating nothing but potatoes and beans every day. Until finally, my little brother said to mother, Mother, do you know what? He says, I am praying that God will send us pork chops today. And his mother says, You can't pray for pork chops.

There are none. And she was a Christian woman. You can't pray for pork chops.

He says, I am going to pray for pork chops. And he did. And that morning, that farmer's wife, sister-in-law, Catholic woman, came to the door from miles away.

She says, You know, we slaughtered the other day and I thought you'd like these pork chops. And the boy's mother felt very small. And little boy felt very big.

Oh, dear friends, the throne of grace, the Word of God in our hands, the Spirit of God in our hearts, on the throne of grace open. God help us to know salvation right to the end of the journey. For Jesus' sake.

Amen. Shall we pray? Gracious God, our Father, we thank Thee for him who never slumbers nor sleeps. Our Advocate, the Father.

Jesus Christ, the Righteous. And our Great High Priest, appearing in the presence of God for us. O God, we confess to Thee that we have not availed ourselves as we should.

Like Esther, we would hesitate to come. But help us, Lord, tonight to discover we are invited boldly to come. To draw near.

Help us to know more day by day of taking time out to draw near and wait and see God operating for us for all our need. We pray. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, thanking you in the name of the Holy and Blessed Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Amen.

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