

# The Christian's Call to Battle ■ The Strength of the Enemy

by Tim Conway

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*This sermon emphasizes the need for believers to be aware of the enemy's tactics to instill fear, separation, and discouragement within the church. The focus is on Ephesians 6:10-18, highlighting the spiritual battle against the devil's schemes and the importance of putting on the whole armor of God to stand firm. The sermon encourages believers to confront the enemy with the truth of God's Word, the righteousness of Christ, the Gospel of Peace, faith, salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.*

**Scripture:** Ephesians 6:10, Romans 16:20, Hebrews 2:14, 2 Corinthians 4:4, James 4:7, Deuteronomy 20:4

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

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## Description

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## Transcript

And I want to talk about the enemy today. Brethren, I think the enemy can use a time like this to sit the church down, to make the church afraid, to make the church separated, to make the church at home, to make the church where it's all hunkered down. That's exactly where he'd like to see the church.

Not stirring up one another to love and good works. Not stirring one another up to radical ideas about how to reach this world and to be salt and light. Brethren, I want to talk about our enemy today.

So, as a springboard text, we will be using the same text we looked at last week. Let's go there, Ephesians 6. We'll dive into this. I have way more in my notes than what I can ever bring out.

And we'll go for about an hour and you'll get what the Lord leads me to say. So Ephesians 6. I'm just going to read verses 10-18. Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.

Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic

powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all, to stand firm.

Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth and having put on the breastplate of righteousness and as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the Gospel of Peace. In all circumstances, take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit with all prayer and supplication.

To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints. And we'll stop right there. You remember.

You all know this. I think most of you know this. There in Luke's Gospel, Luke is talking about the cost of discipleship.

He's talking about what it costs. Jesus is talking about it. Luke records it for us.

Jesus is saying, you remember this, unless you forsake all that you have, you can't be His disciple. He talks about if you love mother or father more than Him, you're not worthy of Him. You've got to hate mother and father actually.

Very strong language. But you know, that's the portion of Scripture where He says, what king, if he's going to war against another king, does not first sit down and deliberate? That's what I want us to do. Why? You know what? We're called to go to battle against one, right? I can't really find where he's called the king, but I can find where he's called the prince and I can find where he's called even the god of this world.

We're going to battle against him. He's a ruler. He's an authority.

We could put king there. He's a king. That's what a prince... You've got royalty here in a certain sense.

There's royal darkness that we're confronting. We're going to battle against a king. And I want us to sit down for a second and deliberate and size up our enemy.

Because what king won't do that? I mean, if you're going to battle, that's just wise. He's laying down that principle. That's wise.

Now he's applying it to being a... You know, if we're going to become a Christian, we ought to probably take an evaluation of what we're in for. Well, I would use the same principle here. We've got to do battle against the devil.

Let's size him up. Let's see, what's he made of? And here's what I want to do. What does God tell us? You see, that's what I'm interested in.

When I go to the Word, what does God think? Undoubtedly, there's lots that could be said about the devil. But what does God in all of His infinite wisdom tell the church that we need to know about this one, this evil one? What do we need to know about Him? In fact, not just what does God tell us, what does God repeatedly tell us? I mean, what is one of the things that God tells us over and over and over again that obviously is one of the most significant things about the devil? And different thoughts may be coming to your mind, but maybe I'm going to talk about some things that you haven't thought of. In fact, as I studied

this, I was reminded of some things that I already knew, but it was helpful to just realize it again.

But then I also saw some things that I want to show you that I just found very interesting. The first thing I want you to know about the devil is he's a wrestler. And you say, where do you get that? Well, if you heard what I just read, we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against.

In other words, we wrestle against the rulers and the authorities and the powers and the forces. Here's the thing. When you hear somebody say, put on your armor, Joshua was just telling me about something he was doing and some physical contact that he was having with another guy and they were kind of wrestling.

And you know, he didn't tell me that he put on armor. In fact, he very distinctly had something different that he put on. And I just, I would ask you this, don't you get the feeling that Paul is kind of mixing his metaphors here? I mean, when you, here's the thing, when somebody talks about putting on armor, I mean, if I'm thinking about like an armored, you know, an armored division, I'm thinking about, you know, tanks coming across the field.

The feared German panzers. That's the kind of thing I see. Or even if we think about knights and they put on their armor, you mean, you know, they might be on horses and they've got their javelin or javelin you throw, the joust? What do they call it? Lance.

And anyway, you can imagine, shields, swords, you got the whole armor. But you wouldn't, see what I would expect is put on the whole armor of God for we wrestle, not we wrestle, for we go to battle. We go to war.

We go to fight. It's like wrestling. What's that? Why would Paul even do that? Paul, why do you mix that up like that? Why would you insert that right there? Well, here's the thing.

You know what? If you think about D-Day and our troops landing on the beaches of Normandy there in France, you see the ships coming in. You see the men. You got the bunkers.

The Germans are up on the high ground with their built-in concrete reinforced. Their bunkers up there. They've got their machine guns.

They've got their artillery. They're firing. You see this kind of thing.

But you know, there is a time in battles like that when men came to hand-to-hand combat. There would be times when you would find yourself actually wrestling with somebody. There were times when they attached bayonets.

There were times when guys ran out of ammunition. There were times when men were in such close proximity where you actually would find them grappling with each other. The reason Paul brings in wrestling here is because he wants us to see this isn't just lobbying artillery from far away.

This is mortal hand-to-hand combat. This is close conflict. The devil doesn't fight us from afar.

Wrestling is close. In warfare, you can imagine these two great opposing armies. But what Paul wants to bring in here is he wants to bring in... You know what happens when two guys go to wrestling? I mean, when you're in battle, you touch each other.

You grab each other. One of the guys grabs the other one or you both come up and you lock together. That's what this is.

You imagine being on the battlefield and you've got all your armor on and suddenly you find yourself so close that you're actually wrestling for position. And what it's saying is stand. It's like you're in this wrestling posture.

If you've ever watched wrestling, you know that's what you're trying to do. Sometimes the starting position is one of the guys is already down. But basically what you want to do in wrestling is you want to stay standing.

And that's the issue. You've got an enemy that comes in close contact. Keep standing.

And the idea is when you're wrestling, there's personal engagement. Typically when you're thinking about wrestling, it's not group wrestling. This is a one-on-one, individual, close, personal combat.

And that's what this is. The devil comes for us individually. Now he may strategize about a church as a whole or God's people as a whole, but know this, look, Paul's talking to us as individuals.

And the devil targets us as individuals. That's what wrestling is all about. We're told to do everything.

Do all. Having done all, stand firm. You need to do what's necessary to keep standing.

Why? Because there's a fierceness in this battle that's trying to take you off your feet. You have to repulse and repel these close-up attacks and keep on doing so. I mean, look, you've got the wrestler over there.

He comes at you. You guys engage. And you're able to keep your footing and you separate for a moment.

But you know what's going to happen? What do you do? Do you turn your back on him and go to Whistling Dixie? Well, you're going to be in a chokehold and slammed on the ground like that. Listen, Paul's using his terminology on purpose. And this is real.

And I'll tell you, people die. People get taken out. We want to be serious.

The great business of the life of the Christian is to keep standing. So, here we are. We've got this king coming against us.

You remember how it was with Ahab? You remember what the enemy said? The enemy said, Don't fight against anyone but the King of Israel. You like that? When you're going to battle and you know that all the ranks and the hordes of wickedness, they're like, you know what? Don't fight against anybody except that guy. Or go after that lady.

They're coming and it's like take her out. Everybody's got their sights. They're focused.

I just want to sit and deliberate about what we're up against. What does God want me to know about the enemy? What does He tell me? So, brethren, you look, and you start looking at every place where the devil's talked about, you get a recurring theme. And I know you might be thinking, lies, deception.

Yes, undoubtedly. But you know what? There's something that seems to be stressed a lot more. Not just a little more, a lot more than that.

It's his strength. Maybe you've just not seen it. Maybe you have.

But maybe it's never jumped out at you because it's almost like you need to be hit by all these passages at once to really realize this is what God wants you to know. You're not up against a novice. You're not up against a lightweight.

You're dealing with a being who is incredibly powerful. Now, I want to show you something. Turn in your Bibles to Revelation 12.

Revelation 12, I thought, okay, well, I want to show the church what God does tell us about the devil. And primarily, I want to show you first just how the Scriptures emphasize his strength and his might. And so I'm thinking to myself, I know where I want to go first.

I want to go to Revelation 12 because it talks about him having ten horns. And ten is the idea oftentimes, especially in Revelation, it's symbolic. It's got to do with completeness or wholeness.

And a horn has to do with power. And I thought there's a great symbolic representation of his power. But you know, let's look at it.

Revelation 12.3 Another sign appeared in heaven. Behold, a great red dragon. Okay, now stop right there.

Go down to v. 9. Who's this great dragon? Make no mistake about it, the great dragon was thrown down that ancient serpent. Yep, he was back there in the garden. That's him.

Who is called the devil? Yep, we know who that is. Satan, the deceiver of the whole world. Okay, now if you have any question about who the dragon is, that question's gone.

So you go back up to v. 3. Behold, a great red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and on his heads seven diadems, which basically seven jeweled crowns. But here's the thing. I thought, ten horns.

I'm going to tell them about the fact that you get a big horn, you've seen some of these Texas Longhorns. You've seen those. You've seen the University of Texas mascot.

I mean, strong strength. Those big rams up in the mountains. The idea of horns, you think of a deer having the biggest rack possible.

That speaks of the masculinity of the deer, the power, the strength, the dominance. And so I'm thinking, yeah, take them there, ten horns. But you know what I did? I simply said, let's search ten horns.

And I found something very interesting. Let's go back to where this starts. Let's go back to Daniel.

Daniel and Revelation have some very interesting parallels. Let's go back to Daniel. Ezekiel, Daniel, right before Hosea.

Daniel 7. Now listen, brethren. In Revelation, Jesus is symbolically represented as the Lamb. How many horns does He have? Anybody remember? Seven.

And seven eyes. What are the seven eyes? Seven spirits of God. Again, it's symbolic.

Now, whoa, wait a second. The dragon's got ten horns, and Jesus only has seven. Don't think like that.

That's not what the symbolism is meant to do here, brethren. It's not meant for you to think, oh, ten's stronger than seven. Seven is a number of perfection.

But you know, ten, as much as we talk about completeness and whatever, you know, that's nice and that's nifty because the theologians will say that. The ten horns seems to indicate something else. Notice here in Daniel.

Daniel 7. Look at v. 20. What you have is ten horns. You see it right there in the beginning.

Now, if you go back to v. 19, it's about this beast. Okay, ten horns. Now, it says about the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn that came up and before which three of them fell, the horn that had eyes and a mouth and spoke great things, and that seemed greater than its companions.

As I looked, this horn made war with the saints and prevailed over them. Now, I recognize there's a lot of symbolism right there, but I just want you to recognize ten horns. And you get this idea.

This horn made war. Now you can argue, well, that horn isn't one of the ten horns. Here's the thing.

You get ten horns here and you've got horn things going on. But war was made with the saints and prevailed over them. The people of God are prevailed over.

Okay, just keep that thought. Let's go to v. 24. As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom, ten kings shall arise.

Another shall arise after them. He shall be different from the former ones and shall put down three kings. He shall speak words against the Most High and shall wear out the saints of the Most High.

You get kind of a similar thing there. You get this idea about these ten horns and it's in the context of first, basically defeating, prevailing, making war with the saints, and then wearing out the saints. Okay, let's go back to Revelation.

Now when we go to Revelation, you go back to v. 12. So you've got v. 12-3. He's got ten horns.

And you know when you go down to v. 17, he's furious with the woman. The woman is a picture of the people of God. Went out to make war on the rest of her offspring.

These are the people who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. And so, what you have is, again, ten horns, and you've got this v. 12, you've got great wrath, and you see that he basically is attacking the people of God. Okay, you go over to v. 13, or chapter 13 rather.

Go to chapter 13. I saw a beast rising out of the sea with ten horns and seven heads. Huh, anything said about the saints here? V. 7, it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them.

Then you go to chapter 17. Chapter 17 and v. 3. He carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names. It had seven hands and ten horns.

Hmm, anything about the saints here? V. 6, I saw the woman drunk with the blood of saints and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. Here's what's interesting. Wherever you find these ten horns, you find God's people.

And you find God's people and every one of them being attacked, and not just attacked, but being prevailed over and being conquered and being killed. And by the way, that's the only way that Satan can conquer the people of God. Because if you go back to v. 12, there's no question about it that these same people who are being allowed to have war made on them and to conquer these saints, we also recognize that in chapter 12, v. 11, the saints conquer Him by the blood of the Lamb.

So you want to be clear about what, only to the degree that He can prevail and wear out the saints. Brethren, I'll tell you this, He is trying to wear us out and He will kill us if He can. And He will raise up these beasts to kill us.

Beasts and horns, they may represent kings. They may represent nations. But I'll tell you, when you watch the nations of this world and what they do, believe me, Satan is empowering them.

He is empowering them to take out God's people, to attack God's people, to fight God's people, to wear out God's people, to prevail over God's people, and to be drunk with their blood. And you can say, brethren, I'll tell you, one of the last things you want to say, I'll tell you one of the great ways to be put to sleep. You know how they swing something to hypnotize people.

You know what the great hypnotism of the American church is how comfortable things have been for so long. How quiet it's been on the American front. And I'll tell you, I fear that the church in many ways has just been put to sleep.

And you better be careful because we have an enemy. The things you watch are happening in the world right now. There are forces.

It's not flesh and blood that we, oh yeah, we wrangle and we wrestle with men and women. On a human basis, we do. But it's not flesh and blood that's behind all this.

There's something behind this. And I'll tell you what, when you see 10 horns, what you can think of is this. It is power that is directed in a tenfold strength or in a complete way against God's people.

That's what is showing up in these verses. You really can't get away from it. There's a conquering, there's a prevailing, and there's a wearing out of God's people.

And it's just, brethren, to wear us out. Just wear us out. You could get worn out by this situation right now that we're having with the COVID thing or with the race thing or with numerous things, the tearing down of the statues, whatever you think about all that, whatever's happening in the politics, whatever's our inner cities, the cities around us.

Look, there are things happening. But as I said last week, be certain of this, that you've got spiritual forces and these cosmic forces, these spiritual powers of evil in the heavenly places. Heavenly places, it's above us.

The Prince of the Power of the Air, it's above us. There's these spirits that are above us. They're moving.

They're seeking to wear out, seeking to attack, seeking to kill. We've lived a long time where we've said, oh, you know, that all happens in China. That all happens behind the Iron Curtain.

That all happens in the Middle East. People get treated like that. Do you think Satan has not been just as active here? His schemes are just different.

But I tell you, he hates us with just as much of a furious passion here as he does there. And he's looking for ways and he means to take down the church. His craft and power are great and armed with cruel hate, we sing.

This is what we're up against. This is the enemy. Now listen, think about this.

Not just do we get the ten horn imagery. Why didn't Paul just say earlier in Ephesians? Why didn't he just call Him the Prince of the Air? You see, we're so used to calling Him the Prince of the Power of the Air. Have you ever stopped and wondered? Well, first, why does he even call Him the Prince? And then why does he put power in there and why does he put air in there? Air? If you call Him the Prince of Evil, okay, we would understand that.

The Prince of the Power of the Air just seems so weird. Really, we get used to our Christian verbiage, but sometimes we just have to stop and say what's that saying? But it is the air. Like it says spiritual forces in the heavenly places.

Wow! Prince of the Power of the Air? We're talking about above. But it's not just Prince of the Air. It's Prince of the Power of the Air.

Even that is weird. Who says that? The Prince of the Power of the Air. We would say a powerful prince who's in the air.

The Prince of the Power of the Air. But you know, Paul doesn't leave that word power out. It's got to be in there.

You've got to have that word power. Or you think, in all your time working at the zoo, did you ever hear the lions roar? What was that like? I've heard somebody say that. I'm trying to remember.

I used to walk close to there and pray and I'm wondering if I heard it. I remember somebody talking about hearing... Listen, elephants, they're big, they're smart. Yes, they'll terrify you.

But we don't think of them as the king of the jungle. Even hippos, they kill more people in Africa than any other animal. But you know, they don't look... yeah, they've got their big open mouths.

But have you ever seen them on land? It's like these little stumpy... it's just they don't look that bad. But when a lion roars, that is absolutely fearful. And when Peter's grasping for some imagery, he says you want to know what the devil's like? He's like that.

He's like a roaring lion. That's what Scripture says. How about this? That last account where you have Acts 9 where Jesus lays hold of Paul on the Damascus Road.

But then later in Acts, you get the account two more times because Paul recounts it. You know the last time he recounts it there in Acts 26? He says this, he says, Jesus said to me on that road, He said, Paul, I am going to have you go to the Gentiles to open their eyes and now listen to this, and turn them from darkness to light and from the power of the devil to God. And notice, power doesn't even get used in there with regards to God.

Now obviously, God's stronger. But isn't it amazing that when Jesus Himself is talking to Paul, the time He uses power has to do with the devil. And He said to those Jewish leaders, Jesus, Jesus, why didn't You say to deliver them from the evil of the devil? Or from the lies of the devil? Why didn't You say the power of

the devil? And then on that other occasion when He's talking to the Jewish leaders, He says with all the human language at His disposal, He said if I'm going to liken the devil to anybody, I'm going to liken him to a strong man.

But not just a strong man. A strong man fully armed. That's what He likens him to.

Jesus. You know what? He cast out many demons. But don't you ever believe that it was because the demons were pushovers.

You remember the seven sons of Scevon when they tried to put one out? One demon. It didn't go well with them. It mastered them.

It overpowered them. They ran away naked and beat up and bloodied. Or you remember the legion.

Yeah, there was more than one there. They left Him alone. They just got to the place where, uh-uh, don't touch that guy.

Leave him out there in the tombs. Because he breaks chains and this isn't a good thing. If you really want to see it, you begin looking over and over and over.

What you're going to find is strength. I mean, think. He's called the evil one.

The devil. Yes, there's one chieftain above all the rest that gets prominence in Scripture. But you know when Paul even wants to tell us about his hordes of wicked spirits that follow the devil around, you know what he says? You know what he calls them? Rulers, authorities, powers, and forces.

Not lightweights, not weaklings. It's called the kingdom. I mean, this thing is so well-arranged.

You know what it says in Revelation 12? That He swept down a third of the stars with His tails. You begin to study a little bit in Revelation, you find stars. The seven angels of the seven churches.

Stars in Revelation are angels. And He swept down a third of them. And we don't know how many that is, but it's enough to make up cosmic powers, plural.

Spiritual forces, plural. That make up something that Jesus Himself called the kingdom. And it is a kingdom not divided.

It means they're all in this with a strategy. Okay, Christian, here He comes. We've kind of sized Him up a little bit.

Strong, roaring like a lion. The king of the jungle, fierce, furious. Robed in power, His ten horns fully armed.

Are you ready? And you know, it's not like noise, like the bombs going off. See, Scripture talks about His weaponry like fiery darts. They're not physical darts.

They don't stick you in the body. They stick you in the brain. They stick you in your thoughts.

Fiery darts. You read Pilgrim's Progress. It says when Christian did battle with Apollyon, there was a hailstorm.

He just threw them at Him. It goes on in here. And see, it's quiet.

And remember this, with all of His vast power and might and cruel hatred, He doesn't come in military uniform. He comes as an angel of light. He looks good.

He's a deceiver. The devil's weapons. Okay, let's think about His weapons.

Let's think about Him. What's He called? What are His titles? I mean, if you just start thinking about the devil's arsenal, where's his strength exerted? Yeah, fiery darts, but let's look deeper. What are the means? What are the channels? If we just start thinking about His names, devil means? Come on, you've listened to Charles' message.

Devil means? Satan is adversary. The devil has to do with slander. And Satan, adversary.

He's the accuser of the brethren. Tempter. Deceiver of the whole world.

Jesus says He's a liar. But not only a liar, He's the Father of lies. Now, if you're anywhere near Revelation 12, I want you to see something.

Revelation 12 v. 15. The serpent poured water like a river out of His mouth after the woman. Now remember who the woman is and who her offspring are.

We saw that in v. 17. These are the people that keep the commandments of God. The testimony of Jesus.

These are Christians. These are the saints. And so what do we have here? The serpent poured water like a river out of His mouth after the woman to sweep her away with a flood.

Again, we have a highly symbolic book. Don't think actual water any more than you want to think actual ten horns. What comes out of the mouth of the devil? Lies.

He pours out a flood of lies. If you don't think there aren't lies happening right now with regards to pandemic, with regards to the racial things, with regards to the political things, with regards to everything happening in the world right now, then you need to wake up. There's a flood of lies.

And notice, the flood isn't indiscriminately sweeping away people everywhere. The flood is aimed in a direction. See, this is what I am trying to tell you.

The world is already deceived. These lies that come and the media propagates them and the politicians propagate them and Facebook propagates them, and it comes like a flood. And the one from whose mouth it comes is powerful, ten-horned, a prince, a force, the power of the devil, strong man, fully armed.

And He pours forth this flood with very distinct intention. And it's meant to go sweep away the woman with this flood. These are the weapons.

And the thing is, what you have to remember is when Jesus said He's the Father of lies, He also said this. He's a murderer from the beginning. Now think with me.

Back in Revelation, He's called the great red dragon. You know what you find when you find red in Revelation? You find blood. He's got blood on His hands.

He's a murderer. He has a weapon. He has a knife.

But it's not a physical knife. It's lies. It's His deceptions.

Listen, darkness. Think with me here about the darkness. When Jesus was speaking to Paul on that Damascus road, He said this.

He described salvation this way. He was going to send Paul to the Gentiles to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God. Now get that.

You've got light, darkness, God, Satan. The power of Satan. It's parallelism.

Those things are equivalent. The light is equivalent to God. It's parallel to God.

The darkness to the power of the devil. Now, think with me. When Paul's talking to us in Ephesians 6, he calls these demons spiritual forces or the cosmic powers of evil over this present darkness.

Doesn't he call them that? Over this present darkness. Cosmic powers over this present darkness. Well, think about the darkness.

What are we talking about here? Sometimes we say, ooh, that's dark. We kind of mean that's evil. But remember this.

Remember what the darkness is really all about. Remember it from 2 Corinthians. That He holds the unbelievers in an unbelieving way.

He darkens their minds to keep them from believing. This is the truth. The God of this world.

Isn't that amazing? The God of this world. Who would call Him that? You and I would not. We would never have called the devil the God of this world.

Ever. Isn't that amazing? The Spirit of God tells Paul, call Him that. The God of this world.

He's not saying He is God, but that definitely is a term that stresses something of His dominion and His power. But here's the thing. The God of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ.

And you go down to v. 6, For God who said, let the light shine out of darkness as shown in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge. You want to know what light is? It's got to do with the knowledge of God. Darkness, ignorance of God.

The God of this world blinds the minds. When you talk about darkness, the cosmic powers over this present darkness, what they are doing is people don't know God. People don't have that light.

Mankind is ignorant of God. Do you recognize there's about 7.5 billion people on the face of the earth? Do you know what this is telling us? He's the deceiver of the whole world. You know what He did right in the very beginning? God's not for you.

God's against you. God knows that in the day you eat of that fruit, you're going to have wisdom, you're going to have light, you're going to have knowledge, but He just doesn't want you to have it. God holds out on you.

God isn't really for you. God doesn't really have a good plan for you. God doesn't have good intentions towards you.

Oh, and by the way, you're not going to die if you eat it. You see, that's the same way He is now. It's this ignorance of God.

You know what He wants us to believe? He wants us to believe we can't go to Christ. We have no business going to Christ. Oh, you can't take the Lord's Suffering.

You've done too much bad this week. You can't go to Christ after what you've done. And you don't want to go to Christ.

Because after all, He's talked to most young people out there about Christianity, even your children. Isn't it amazing? How would your child get this idea that somehow Christianity is just going to suck all the fun out of their life? When they've had parents that have done nothing but tell them all their life that it's not that way at all. Why would they even be? Because there's a force that you can't see that is whispering in their ear all the time that is keeping their brains dark from seeing what? This light, this glory, this knowledge, this beauty of God, the truth about God.

Man is ignorant. And what the devil does is he diverts all this attention. Now, he keeps the world in darkness and he keeps them blinded, but remember, the flood of lies comes towards us.

What's it meant to do? Same thing. He doesn't want you believing God is who God is. He doesn't want you to believe that God is for you, that God's on your side, that God's really going to be faithful to His promises.

He wants you to believe that God is against you, that God is a killjoy, that to follow Him and be close to Him, he wants you to believe that God doesn't want anything to do with you. God is distant. God stiffs on you.

God doesn't answer your prayers. God has something against you. God does good things for other people, but not for you.

He wants you to believe that. He's constantly coming and telling us, brethren, there are a lot of promises in there that if we really believed, oh boy, what might we not do to turn the world upside down? Oh, there's a pandemic in the land. You all need to sit tight.

There's this, there's that, there's the other thing. Just shut you down. Put you to sleep.

Brethren, this flood is aimed at us. These lies. How do you confront lies? Okay, let's just go back to Ephesians, if you're not there already.

Look at this text in Ephesians 6. I want you to see something about the nature of our weapons. The weapons of our warfare that get itemized for us here. What can we see? Is there a common thread? Is there a common reality? Look there at Ephesians 6 and verse 14.

First thing, belt of truth. Okay, does Jesus tell us anywhere in Scripture where truth comes from? Thy Word is truth. Okay, so you can trace the first one back to Scripture.

How about the next one? Breastplate of righteousness. Okay, now look, I recognize that when we start talking righteousness, we have two ways we can go with this. We can talk about the righteousness of the deeds of the saints.

We can talk about the righteousness of Christ with which we are robed. And I'll tell you this, I really believe that He means the later because I believe that the doctrine of justification by faith is one of the greatest ways to confront the devil of all the tools that we have and all the promises we have, all the truths. Again, where do you get that doctrine? Where would you get an understanding of the doctrine of justification by faith? Or imputed righteousness, which is using the term there.

Righteousness. Where would you get that? Where are we going to be people of deep doctrinal conviction? Back to Scripture. How about this? Shoes for your feet have put on the readiness given by the Gospel of Peace.

Okay, where are we going to find the Gospel? Where is that Gospel expressed to us? Scripture. In all circumstances, take up the shield of faith. Where does Romans 10 say that faith comes from? Hearing what? The Word of God or the Word of Christ.

Okay, again, drawn back there. Keep going. What do we have next? Take up the helmet of salvation.

Now, here's something to think about. The helmet of salvation. If we're talking about the assurance of our salvation, I don't think that's just talking about being saved.

I think the helmet is when you have an assurance that you are saved. And we know this from Scripture. The Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we're children of God.

But you know what? Typically that does not happen in a vacuum. In fact, I doubt it ever happens in a vacuum. What I have personally found in my Christian walk in life is that the times where I have had the Spirit of God attest to my being a child of God most strongly is when my mind was meditating on truths from God's Word.

And as I was reading God's Word. Or out walking and reciting God's Word. Or thinking, much like I've told you about, how Flavel and how Jonathan Edwards were contemplating on different aspects of the Person of God, the Person of Christ.

And how they had such incredible experiences. But I believe again, I believe that if we're looking for... There's no place... In fact, one of the texts that I may speak on down in Corpus comes from Psalm 121. I was reading Psalm 121.

I was studying it. I was meditating on it. I was carefully, slowly working through it last week.

And I got to pronouns there that specifically said, you. And it was like the voice of God was so... The voice of God came right out of that book to me. That's when that happens.

And I would just say this, this whole idea of the assurance of our salvation, which I think is what the helmet of salvation is all about. Again, you can trace that back to Scripture. And then you've got the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

Well, there's no question there. And even if you go to prayer, I'll tell you this, all prayer, you've got to be praying the promises of Scripture. You've got to be praying the attributes of God that you find in the

Scripture.

Our prayer life should be guided and directed by the Scripture. Our expectations in prayer should come from Scripture, about the promises that are attached to Scripture. I would say in every one of these, you can tie this back.

Listen, this is our source of truth. How do you confront a liar? How do you confront a murderer who murders with lies? This way. Christian, it's true.

We do contend with men and women in this world. But there's something that's not flesh and blood about all of it. There's something behind it.

And what Satan has done is he's infiltrated. He's infiltrated the news, the school systems, the college systems, Hollywood. You know this is true.

You know this is absolutely, abundantly true. Governments, religion, these forces, they're out heavenly places. Prince of the power of the air.

They're out there. They're above us. They're moving.

They're scheming. Their nature is evil. Their intentions are evil.

Their work is evil. They're evil in their objects and their purposes. And you remember this, their flood is aimed at the woman.

And he means to sweep her away. This great ruling chieftain. All these hordes of evil.

They're real. They're around us. They're strategizing.

They're moving. They don't sleep. They make war against the saints of God.

And the thing is, listen to this, the weapons of our warfare, Paul says, are not of the flesh, but they have divine power to destroy strongholds. So you just remember this, they may be strong and they're called strongholds. Here's another place.

The strength of them. And yet, he says the weapons of our warfare, not being carnal, so don't resort to carnal weapons because you can never win this battle. But listen carefully.

Listen to how he words this. Divine power to destroy strongholds. But it's the next verse that is massively telling here.

We destroy arguments. Arguments. What else do we destroy? Every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God.

Isn't that interesting? What he's saying is this. People argue. Hearing any of that on Facebook? You have people arguing all over the place, setting forth their opinions.

And what it says is these opinions, these every lofty opinion, all these arguments, they're against the knowledge of God. They're anti-God. They're anti-Christ.

They're against Him. Men don't know God. They don't know Him.

Seven and a half billion people. And you realize the mass majority of people in this world, they don't know God. And they've been blind and they're deceived.

And here's the church. And see, he's trying to deceive us. Because here's the thing, as much as he can move us off of the truth, he disarms us.

You've got to recognize that. When all your armor comes back to the Word of God, as much as he can move us off of the truth and off of the promises, he disarms us. Listen, he cannot take your salvation away.

If you're real. Now he's trying to damn all of us. And he sees people go out and make shipwreck all the time.

So he's trying to shipwreck us. But he knows in the end, he knows the promises of God better than we do. And he knows that if somebody is genuinely in the grasp of Christ, he can't pry them out.

Because he knows. Folks, there's two adjectives used that you ought to use too. One is stronger.

Stronger. He's stronger. And he that is with us is what? Greater.

Remember those two adjectives. Stronger and greater. And he knows.

The devil knows. But you know the best thing he can do if somebody's really in the grasp, has been torn away from him, he's a strong man, but one stronger than the strong man is to disarm you and knock you down. You know, you can have a guy on the battlefield and he's alive, but he's out there and he's bloodied and he's on his face and he's barely crawling around.

Pretty ineffective. Not really helping his side out at all. That's the best thing to do.

Put him to sleep. Knock him out. Knock him down.

Put him out of the battle. Brethren, I personally am convinced that the Old Testament just spills over with imagery and types and shadows. And so when I see David taking on Goliath, I see you taking on the devil.

And I don't believe that's a stretch. I believe it's there on purpose to show us what somebody trusting God, no matter how small they may be, can take on a giant. We're up against a giant.

We don't do this in our own strength. It's the strength of the Lord. But listen, listen to David.

He comes onto the battlefield. He says to Goliath, you come against me with... and he starts to list off his weaponry, his armor. You come against me with sword, with spear, with javelin.

Brethren, talk that way to your adversary. Devil, you come against me... what does he come against us with? Lies, fiery darts, slander, deceptions in all of his might as an angel of light. Yeah, you come to me like that.

We'd say that. But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts. That's what David said.

And that's what you should say. The God of the armies of Israel whom you have defied. You remember back there in Daniel, it says he speaks against God and wears out the saints.

This day the Lord will deliver you into My hand and I will strike you down and cut off your head. Anybody ever read Romans 16? The God of peace is going to do what? Shortly crush Satan under human feet. Our feet.

The saints in Rome. People just like us. Made of the same stuff, trusting the same God.

David says, all the earth is going to know that there is a God in Israel and that the Lord saves not with sword and spear. For the battle is the Lord's. When the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, this is what I love, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine.

The gates of hell will not prevail against you, brethren. Take the battlefield and run to do battle. But you've got to do it with truth.

And you've got to do it absolutely confident of the promises of God. Brethren, live like you believe what God says in this Book. Don't act like these things mean nothing.

God did not promise you what He promises in this Book. For nothing. He means for us to live like we believe it.

To really believe it. To really run with it. Brethren, we can say to the devil as we run quickly to the battle lines, the kind of things that are said in Scripture.

What's said in Scripture? The offspring of the woman. We can say to them, the offspring of the woman has come. What's the offspring of the woman going to do? What? What did God say? He's going to crush his head.

Satan, your head's been crushed. He disarmed the rulers and the authorities. Isn't that what Colossians says? He disarmed them and put them to open shame.

Doesn't John tell us that he came to destroy the works of the devil? Doesn't Hebrews tell us something about... ooh, there's another power verse. Who has the power of death? The devil. Hebrews 2. And what does it say about Christ? What did Christ do? It says that through death, Christ destroys the one who has the power of death.

That is the devil. You can recite these things. Remind him of those two adjectives.

Over and over. Over and over. Stronger, greater.

And He's with us. He's with me. And you can take the battlefield.

That's what David did. Did David know? You sit down and try to arm-wrestle Goliath. That doesn't work.

But when your trust is in the Lord and you take the battlefield, our weapons are not carnal. Our weapons are not stones even. Our weapons are different than that, but our weapons are powerful through God.

And they can destroy strongholds. That's what we're up against. He's a liar.

Brethren, what it says is they conquered Him by the blood of the Lamb. That's it. And I would even say that that comes back to the doctrine of justification.

I'll tell you, the doctrine of justification is one of your greatest weapons against the devil. Because He'll come to you and He'll want to show you. Remember, He's a slanderer.

So He's going to come to you and tell you about your life all the time. He's going to tell you why you're useless, why you're pathetic, why you should just sit down and do nothing, why you shouldn't try anything. He'll give you good reasons to not go to Jesus.

Seriously, you just talked to your husband that way? You're going to go to Christ now? Those thoughts you just had? He doesn't want anything to do with you. He's going to constantly try to disarm you, keep you away. You know what he recognizes? Distance from Christ because it's the power of the Lord.

It's you being close to the Lord. It's abiding in Christ where your strength is found. That's where your hope is.

It's in Him. It's looking at His blood. Why would it be that He would want us to take and hold up a piece of bread and a bit of juice that comes from the fruit of the vine? Why would He do that? So that we can look and we can remember something.

The blood of Christ. That we can find our hope there. So that, you know what? Even after the things that we do, we can say to Him, you know Satan, what you say is true.

That's what Christian said to Apollyon. He said, you know what you say is true, but the Master I serve, He's very forgiving. And that's the doctrine of justification.

You know what the doctrine of justification does? It says, even though Goliath may be over there and he may be accusing me of all these things, and they may be true, I can say, what's that? Even when I was dead in sin, Christ came and had mercy on me. Even when I was altogether guilty and I had a list of sins 10,000 miles long, He washed them all away and He forgave me. Now that He's forgiven me and He's with me, do you think He's going to abandon me because I, yes, I messed up this week, I did this, I didn't talk right, I didn't do this right, I exhibited some exhibition of pride.

Is He going to abandon me now? I mean, He promised to never leave me or forsake me. And you can take the battlefield, the doctrine of justification, you can say no matter what I've done, you know what, that gives me hope, that gives me expectation. He's with me, He hasn't abandoned me.

Even you, who's going to bring an accusation against the elect of God? It's God who justifies. You see, it's so powerful that Satan can come along and he can tell you all sorts of things, but all you have to do is go back to the cross. The cross speaks loudly.

Let Him speak for you. Let the cross speak for you. Brethren, He's a liar.

We got to be people of this Book. We got to be people that believe this Book. Brethren, I would encourage you, take the battlefield, be bold like David.

There's a God in Israel. And you can take that battlefield with that expectation. He that is with you is greater and He is stronger.

And you have weapons so empowered by God that you can overcome strongholds. They may be called cosmic powers of evil in the heavenly places and spiritual forces or cosmic powers over this present darkness. But brethren, their names may be threatening sounding and they may sound impressive.

But I'll tell you this, a Christian properly armed is more impressive because of the God that's with him. It's what Christ has done for us that makes us impressive on the battlefield. And Satan will tell you, you're not impressive.

You can say to him, no, I'm not. You know what? He's given me such weapons that your gates cannot resist and I'm coming for them. Brethren, I would just say this.

I don't know when the next time is I'll speak here, but I would say this. Live on the promises of this Book and set yourself to live the kind of life and to take the battlefield in such a way as to bring down these strongholds and to be a threat to Him. Make Him more furious.

Make Him hate you more. Make Him fear you. Because that's the issue.

David killed Goliath. That's the promise we have. This is what's so frustrating and makes Him so furious is that pathetic weaklings like us are taking ground from Him being strengthened by the strength of the Lord and in the power of His might.

See, that's what frustrates Him. Why don't they give up? See, He's trying to wear us out. And there's no question, He may kill us.

Drunk with the blood of the martyrs. You know what? I really believe it. Life here for the Christian is going to get harder and harder.

But that's not a time to cower back. Pandemics are not a time to crawl in a hole and hide. The devil be happy that happened.

We need to stand for the truth. We need to be people of the truth. And we need to take the battlefield.

There are giants in the land, brethren. Not just in those days. There are giants now.

And they're called forces and they're called powers. And you can't see them. And you know what? Even to whatever degree you can see them, they're robed as angels of light.

Very deceptive. Their lies are subtle. And they come at us as a flood and they mean to wash us away.

There's only one way you're going to be able to discern the spirits. There's only one way. And that's for you to be people of the truth and know the truth.

It's going to be that truth by which you're going to arm yourself with all these different aspects of the armor of God. You know what Jesus did when He took the field? He ran out on the field. He's the true David.

And He went against the true Goliath. Remember Him taking the field? What was His armor? Say it. I'll tell you what it was.

It was the book of Deuteronomy quoted three times. I wonder. I wonder.

Do we have people here skilled enough to use the book of Deuteronomy to resist the devil so he flees from you? In fact, I would ask this question. Do we have anyone here who hasn't even read the book of Deuteronomy in the last year? Brethren, we need to be people of a book. I don't know what you do with all your time.

I don't know what you do on TV or on your computer. If you don't know this book, and you don't believe this book, this is the sword. This is the one... I mean, all the weapons come back to this, but this is the one weapon that's offensive.

Offense versus defense. We're not just defensively postured in this battle. David ran to meet the Philistine.

But you're not going to be able to run and meet the Philistine if you're not armed. Don't go against the enemy not armed. It's a fool to take the battlefield without your gun, without your helmet, without the artillery, and the tanks, and the planes, and the bombs.

It's foolish. Why would you go out there? What are you going to do? What would you say about a guy who just ventures out on the beach at Normandy on D-Day just in his swimming trunks? Dead man walking. Brethren, this is real.

And if God wants you to know anything, He tells you over and over and over. He's strong. He's a force to be reckoned with.

He is a strong man and He's got ten horns. And He's got His sights on you. Brethren, in a season like this, our prayer meetings need to be full.

We need regular seasons of fasting. You need to be people who live in this book. We need to be people going after souls.

We need to be people seeking to love one another in extraordinary ways. We need to be people that are not forsaking the meetings who are meeting together to stir up one another to more love and to more good works and to more offensive actions in the battle. This is where we're at.

This is the reality. Father, I pray. I pray, Lord, that we would be a force to be reckoned with in the spiritual realm.

I pray that the brethren here would be awake. Lord, help us to know how to use the promises of God. Lord, to believe.

We heard about faith in the first hour. Lord, we believe. Help our unbelief.

Lord, we need You to arise. I pray, Lord, blow in this land. Equip us to be able to help these people that are dupes of Satan and that are blinded by the God of this world and kept from seeing the truth.

I pray, Lord, help us to blanket the world with this truth in the hopes that people might see. And I pray, Lord, You'd open people's eyes and I pray that at such a time as this that there would be a revival in this land. We need an awakening.

We need a refreshing. We pray, Lord, that You would cause fire, fire from heaven to come among Your people. Lord, Lord, help us.

We pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

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