

Combat Ready

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[0 : 00] From victory unto victory, Israel shall be lead, till every fall repent.

Combat ready. These are times of spiritual warfare that we're living in. And everybody said? Amen. It's a war, isn't it? It's a war. And when we look at all the evils going on in our world around us, it makes sense that the Bible says that the whole world lives under the control of a ruthless enemy. It says, and we know that we are of God and the whole world, life in wickedness. The Bible says you're in a fight with a committed enemy, a real enemy, an enemy opposed to all that is right and true.

Some people don't take that seriously. But this is real. It is real. It is real. Forces are waged against God, against the truth, against you and me.

And we are at war. We're in this unseen war, this war against unseen forces that are bent on bringing us down, tearing us away from loving God, taking away our love and devotion to the Lord.

[1 : 12] It's a battle on for the mind and for your love. And it's being waged on many fronts. And this is a battle, brothers and sisters, for Christian character, for godliness, for honour.

The Bible doesn't say that the Christian life is going to be some kind of tea party or a club for sissies and wimps. It's a fight, a battle, a wrestling match, a struggle.

Truth is, we are locked in an ongoing battle. We're called to be the church militants. And man's arch enemy is pitted against us.

He is truly public enemy number one. And it is possible to be ignorant of Satan, the devil and his devices. Many are.

He's good at what he does. He's a master of disguise. He transforms himself into an angel of light. He just transforms himself into this glowing, beautiful creature, masquerading as an angel of light.

[2 : 20] He looks good. He sounds good. He's a smooth talker. He's a good preacher. He disguises himself. He can be religious.

He can quote the Bible. And he sometimes comes to church. 2 Corinthians 11.15 says that his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness.

One of his titles is the Lord of the Lord of the Lord of the Flies. As someone put it, he's the God of the garbage dump. He's the God of the garbage dump. Who's ever been to the garbage dump?

That's what the devil's got lordship over, as it were. The Lord of the flies. And he employs various schemes and cunning traps. And it's timely to talk about this combat that we are to engage in.

And a number of people have shared with me lately how they're going through some things. These last several days about how they feel like they're under attack. They're in a war zone. The satanic strongholds and attacks that they're encountering in their lives.

[3 : 27] And the enemy has been hitting some of your heart. This war has no ceasefire. There's no truce. And you are on a battleground.

We all are. With a war being waged on many fronts. At the home front. The work front. The church front. There's no let up. And even if you're not directly under fire from the enemy, at the moment, you are still on the battlefield.

And you, brother, sister, you are a threat to the enemy. And so it's no wonder that he will attack you. There's a battle raging. And it's happening now here in the 21st century where we live.

It's a battle that at times is even within us. Even Paul. Paul himself said that he struggled. He had his own spiritual struggles. In Romans 7 he said, Sin dwells in me.

So you think you've got problems. Paul had problems too. You're not alone. The battle is being fought on the inside of us. It's a raging battle between the forces of darkness and the Holy Spirit.

[4 : 35] This battling, this wrestling match within us. A battle going on between truth and error. In your flesh, in your mind, in your emotions. It's a battle. A battle for your soul.

The good news is that the church of God is indestructible. Indestructible. Indestructible. We don't have to worry about closing the doors. We are indestructible.

That means you and me. The church of God. Because the Lord Jesus says, I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. It's saying that the church of God is strong. Because he's building it. And the gates of hell will not withstand the church. The gates of hell it talks. The gates talk about authority and rulership or control over a city.

What are the gates of our city, of our community? Could it be drugs? Godlessness. Gambling. Drinking. Freemasonry.

[5 : 40] The occult. Witchcraft. Cults. Poverty. False doctrine. The gates of our city. Many have been going through some tough things, as I say.

Health challenges. We know there's some sick people in different families. People that are not here today. Because the devil's been hitting them hard. Pastor Adam. Julie's going through a lot of trouble.

There's a lot of hurting going on. And the devil's digging deep. He's hurting people hard. People with job challenges. Not enough employment or income.

People with testing times within their families. Tough things going on. Someone told me last week that they have a relative now who lives next door to a witch.

And of all the goings on there. It's traumatic. It's testing. It's unsettling. People have sensed demonic attacks against themselves and their own family members.

[6 : 41] These are not isolated cases. This has happened just in the last week or two that I've heard all of these examples that I've mentioned. Just last week a woman sent me an email about the whole armour of God.

It said, I'm writing to ask you if at some stage that you could preach on the whole armour of God. This is such an important part of our walk of being clothed and protected with Christ daily.

End quote. Now that's a good stirring up of me. Please do that. If you'd like me to... Not that I'll always preach what you want me to preach on. I might preach against what you want me to preach. But I believe it's timely. I believe it's appropriate that we do look at this subject today. Because of all the things that are going on all around us. Somebody else contacted me and said this.

That just days ago they asked about the Antichrist and referred to Daniel 7.25. Where in part it says that the Antichrist will wear down, wear out the saints.

[7 : 45] Wear out the saints of the Most High. I believe that this Antichrist spirit is at work today. This Antichrist spirit is going on today, working today.

The devil loves nothing more than to wear out and wear us down. The enemy will seek to create discord, deception, division, discouragement.

And all around us, brothers and sisters, all around us there's these casualties that we see. People dying from the ravages of sin. People with many battle scars.

People wounded today. And this fight that we're in calls for military discipline. It calls that we should be combat ready. Combat ready.

There's a number of people in our own number who are having very real and severe battles with demonic oppression. Again, another example where someone was particularly oppressed by demonic activity.

[8 : 48] This is happening in our number. Amongst us. People facing the devil's relentless attacks. Trying to wear us down, wear us out.

It's par for the course and we must not be surprised at this. We're to expect it. The word tells us to. One man mentioned, another man mentioned, that he has been battling things and he has been conscious of the battlefield of the mind.

The battlefield of the mind. The battlefield is our minds. It's this arena where Satan and his forces constantly wage war in order to gain control of our thoughts, our ideas, our imagination.

This battleground of the mind. It includes our body, our emotions, our relationships. And the word tells us pulling down of strongholds. Strongholds.

These fortresses. These constructions in our minds. And it says in 2 Corinthians 10.4. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but they are mighty through God for the pulling down of strongholds.

[9 : 56] Spiritually speaking, these strongholds speak of a mindset, of a reasoning, of a world view. A thought pattern. We can sometimes get in the same grain as the world's thinking.

God wants to do a demolition job. A demolition job on our strongholds. In 2 Corinthians 10.5 it says, Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God

and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ.

That's what our Lord wants to do. Whereas the enemy is working in people's lives, even in church circles, as people don't know what to believe. With all the confusing doctrines around.

They end up moving on to flaky churches and hooking up with flaky outfits. Because sound doctrine doesn't figure high on their agenda, on their radar.

When people go looking for a church to settle in, you know, sound doctrine, it's almost like that's at the bottom of the list. It's all about all the other catchy stuff.

[11:02] But rather let's be in tune with what God would have us to do. You know, Satan loves it when people just swallow anything they get feared.

The nature of Satan is deception. It's his nature. It's his inbuilt DNA. He is the father of lies. John 8, 44.

If doctrine is skew-wiffed or off track, he's the author of that. He is the inventor of that. The father of lies. So our enemy will try every which way to deceive, to separate us.

And as soldiers, to separate us from the friendly forces. So in other words, our family, our local church, our community. He wants to harass us and disconnect us from our supply lines.

From Bible study, from prayer, where we can get supply. The supply lines, he wants to cut us off.

Just like a real enemy in war. And yet God has made provision for us, brothers and sisters.

[12:05] And that's what I want us to look at together today. God has made provision for us. It is the full armour of God. This is what I want to urge us to today.

And the word tells us that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. So you might want to follow along in Ephesians 6, as we just look at some of the items of this armour that God equips us with.

The weapons that God gives us are great. They have great power. They are mighty through God. Through God. Ephesians 6 from verse 10 through 18.

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Paul is talking to brethren. My brethren, he's talking to you, me, God's people.

Brothers and sisters, brethren. Paul is talking to God's people, the brethren, and he's readying them for the battle zone they face and how they are to prepare for it.

[13:19] These verses we read tell us how to be combat ready. How to make ourselves ready. He says, brethren, be strong. Be strong.

The Lord is our strength. He is the one who will strengthen us. It is his might that will help us to win through, to smash through, to break down, to pull down, to break through.

It is his might. Be encouraged, fellow believers, that the battle is whose? The Lord's. It's his battle. So be strong. It means here be strengthened, be empowered.

The battle rages on. We're in the thick of it. And our need is for the Lord's power. And this need is constant. It's saying that our power is supplied from without.

Not from within. You know, some, the cults say, your power, the power within. Tapping to the power within. No, it's his power that we need for this fight.

[14:18] Who gives this armour? God. It's his armour. He supplies it. He's our source. What are we to do with it? Put it on. Put it on. God commands us to clothe ourselves with this armour, to dress ourselves.

How much of this armour are we to put on? The whole armour. The whole armour of God. Put on the whole armour of God.

All of it. The Roman soldier wore all his armour. And perhaps Paul pictured the Roman soldier, whatever the case, the soldier wears armour for safety, for protection.

We could picture it as a Roman soldier. The Roman soldier was in the army seven days a week. And the word translated put on, it carries the idea of permanence.

Now someone was asking me, is it something you put on and put off? I read this commentary. It says the full armour of God is not something to be put on and taken off occasionally, but it's something to put on permanently.

[15:33] Permanently. So notice it says the whole armour, the full armour. That you may be able to stand. The word stand or stand firm refers in a military sense to holding a critical position while under attack.

Stand. You're under attack. Stand. We're told to stand firm. Hold our ground. That you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

The wiles of the devil. It's been said that the devil is a Methodist. No offence to any Methodist here. But the devil is a Methodist. The wiles of the devil.

In other words, it's talking about methods. If you transliterated it from the Greek, you'd have the word methods. God's got the devil. The anti-God has got methods.

He's got tricks and schemes and deceits and strategies. He's a sneaky enemy. He's good at it. He's good at being bad. And he uses deliberate methods that he's using against you and me.

[16:40] This might be very real to some of you today. Yeah. It is real. What are some of the methods, the tactics the devil uses? Temptation.

Could be lust. Love of money. Temptation. Tactics like pride. Hypocrisy. And we can get hypocritical.

Man's wisdom. Philosophy. Pride. Discouragement. The devil loves to discourage God's people. He doesn't want you to encourage yourself in the Lord.

He wants you to discourage yourself in yourself. Discouragement. Through obstacles and hurts.

Another tactic of the devil is religion. Good works.

A lot of people are sadly deceived by religion. The devil's very religious and he wants you to be just like him.

[17:41] Tactics. Methods. The devil schemes. He's cunning. He's crafty. And he's a deceiver. And he wants you and me to be just like him. Accusers of the brethren.

You know, the devil's an accuser, isn't he? He speaks evil. He wants you to be a critic and a fault finder. A lot of the devil's works are done by Christians. Sometimes Christians do the devil's work for him.

Don't be like that. Talks about sowing discord among the brethren. Don't do that. Don't do that. We're to help one another. We're to lift one another up. You know, back in the Old Testament times, there were murmurers and complainers.

And they were causing a lot of damage. In Paul's time, he talked about people biting and devouring one another. Let's not do the devil's work. We're here to support one another, aren't we?

We're meant to be. We're fighting on the same team, aren't we? For the same cause. So another of the devil's tricks is to make us comfortable. Comfortable. It's easy to get comfortable in Australia, isn't it?

[18:48] The lucky country. Comfortable. We all love to be comfortable from our car seats to our mod cons to our homes and domestic appliances.

Everything laid on. You know, just press a button. Get your little gadget out and it's all in your hand. All the things you need. We all love comfort.

Now, there's reasonable comfort and luxury in Australia. Plenty of food. A relatively easy life. The devil loves you to be comfortable.

He wants you to be comfortable. He wants you to get even more comfortable. People don't want to hear the word sacrifice. Oh. Oh. Don't want the preacher to talk about that.

I want something amusing. Something entertaining. Something light and breezy and easy. Just to give me a little spring in my step when I leave the place and have a little pep talk with the pastor.

[19:48] It's not popular to talk of sacrifice and a commitment to Christ. Another of the devil's tricks, again, as I say, is religion. The devil runs many churches on planet Earth today.

The Reverend Dr. Satan is the unseen head of modern apostate Christianity. And he runs many of the flash ministries.

He's pulling the strings. He's the puppet master. And many in our society just go along with all of this. Oh, he's the latest and greatest. His name's in lights.

He must be okay. He's got lots of millions of people watching him. And many in our society today buy into this stuff. They say if homosexuals want to be preachers, let's not frustrate them.

Let's ordain them into the gospel. Many churches are doing just that. And many say we don't care what God's word actually says. Many Christians are spending their lives just joining in with all that the world has to offer, absorbing the philosophies of a sin-sick world.

[20:54] The devil loves that. Another strategy of the devil is to make us fearful. He wants you to be fearful. Full of fear. Many Christians are full of all kinds of fears.

All kinds of fear. There's lots of names of fear. Some of them are quite amusing. Acrophobia is the fear of heights. I get that when I had to climb a ladder next door in a very tall building.

Acrophobia, the fear of heights. Maybe claustrophobia. You might be feeling a bit claustrophobic because there are a few people here today. The fear of closed places. Maybe pathophobia. Fear of diseases. The person sitting next to you could have a contagious disease. You might get some pathophobia this morning. But I think a lot of Christians have this problem.

Ergophobia. The fear of work. Ergophobia. The fear of work. Let's not have that phobia. Let's not have that one. The devil uses many cunning tactics.

[21 : 56] And so we see the schemes, the wiles of the devil. Verse 12 we read on. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of wickedness, darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

It's telling us here we're engaged in a struggle. A struggle. It says there, for we, what does it say? Wrestle. For we? We've got a professional wrestler here this morning who can tell us all about wrestling.

But we wrestle not against flesh and blood. As some people, you might feel like wrestling against who are flesh and blood. But no, we don't wrestle against flesh and blood. We wrestle against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

It's telling us here we're in hand-to-hand combat. We're in this close combat. We're in this battle at close quarters, hand-to-hand fighting, this struggle, this wrestling.

It feels like that sometimes, doesn't it? It feels like they're in a wrestling match sometimes. Yeah. I'm sure more hands would go up if you're really, truly honest this morning, that it feels like that.

[23 : 10] Life is like a wrestling match. An intense close quarters battle, a wrestling. And it's telling us here that we are being attacked on a personal level.

A personal level. You think of wrestling, it's face-to-face, isn't it? Hand-to-hand. It's an intense close quarters battle, a wrestling. And there's this spiritual conflict that we're involved with.

And not just against philosophies and ideas of man, but it's a spiritual battle. We're wrestling against the very enemy of our soul that we read of back in Genesis right through to the end.

We're battling against this eternal battle, these hostile spiritual forces that want to damn souls to hell. So, friends, today we must stand against the evil, the forces of evil that are prevailing in our world.

It's like someone said, it's like the world has become an insane asylum and the inmates are in charge. Isn't it? That's what seems to be the case. You wonder, who's leading us?

[24 : 12] It's not the Prime Minister, it's someone who's pulling his strings. You know, what's going on in our world, in our nation? There's an awesome struggle happening.

Think of the dimensions of this struggle that you are part of. The wrestling match that's going on in our nation. Now, look at what they're doing in Parliament.

There's a wrestling going on, isn't there? Hours and hours of wrangling and wrestling going on in our nation's capital. And where are the people who will take a stand when the many issues are just glossed over?

And godly laws and systems of government are under a threat. Ungodly laws are coming in, such as euthanasia, abortion, increased pornography.

Society's growing more godless at every step. Morals are declining. And when I stand before God, I'm not going to be measured by the world's standard, but by God. And His standard.

[25 : 13] I'm going to be judged by the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge me out of the dictates of His word. And I'm living by this, not by the standards of this world. So there's a wrestling match, and it's in the nation.

It's in the home. The wrestling match is in the home. It's in your home. It's in my home. Families are under attack. They're in a mess. And the solution is to apply the truth found in this book.

It can bring peace and harmony and holiness back into the home. You know, the devil wants mother to be against father. Husband to be against wife. Fathers to be against children.

Children to be against parents. And there's fighting going on. But God wants to bring peace and harmony and blessing to your home. There's a wrestling match, and it's going on in your home.

There's a wrestling match, and it's going on in the church. In the church, the Lord Jesus took a stand. He went to the house of God, and He took a whip of cords, and He used it, drove out the money changers into the street.

[26 : 14] The gospel is under attack, as we see false doctrines, Mormonism, materialism, Catholicism, atheism, charismatic teaching, immorality.

As Christians, we must be set for the defence of the gospel against such foes. A wrestling match. It's going on in churches, in our land.

Let's be a people who will study the truth, preach the truth, contend for the truth, and oppose error. And not neglect our soul.

May God give us the courage to stand and fight the good fight of faith. Be set for the defence of the gospel. Wrestle in prayer. Don't neglect to pray.

Find time to pray. Join in prayer. Sometimes there's good discipline just to come to the prayer meeting. So you're hearing others pray. An amazing wrestling match is going on.

[27 : 13] It's going on in you. It's in you. It's in me. It's in us. This attack that's going on. An attack of addictions, of habits. That control you. That embarrass you.

That tame you. And you've tried many, many times to break them, to get free. You must take a stand. Make a stand. With the power of Jesus Christ.

Helping you to wrestle and win through. So we are wrestling. So we should do this. Verse 13.

Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God. That you may be able to withstand in the evil day.

And having done all, to stand. Maintain your stand. It's a stand of victory. We're standing on victory ground. Sometimes it's those little things that eat away at our victory.

You know, in the word it talks about the little foxes that spoil the vines. Isn't it amazing how little things can really annoy? They can really disturb.

[28 : 18] I think about this carpet. And there's some people chewing gum. Yeah. And putting chewing gum on the carpet. Or sticking it under the chairs. It's a little thing. But it's very annoying. If you've got to clean it up.

So please don't chew gum. Or if you do, put it in the bin. So little foxes spoil the vines. Little things annoy. Don't they? Little things. Could be little things from your wife. Could be little things from your husband.

Could be little things eating away at you. Oh, yeah. You feel like that sometimes, don't you? Little things. Annoying things. Frustrating things.

It's the little foxes that can do much damage. And it's amazing in churches too. How sensitive people can be. I'm glad that there's some people here I've had some honest words with and they're still here.

Thank God for you. But it's amazing for me. There's some people that as a pastor, how sensitive some people can be. How some little thing will offend someone and then they'll get all in a huff and march off and leave the church.

[29 : 21] The devil loves Christians like that. Little things. Little foxes can do much damage. And some end up getting in a huff, in a puff and walk off and then the cycle repeats itself at the next church down the road.

Stop being so easily offended. Get some thick skin. Stand strong to battle. I'm not fighting you. You're not fighting me.

We're fighting together. And you can exalt me just as well. And I'm not going to get offended with you. We are in the evil day, aren't we? These are dangerous days.

It's talking about the day of testing. That's the day when you face a full-on attack. When it feels like all hell's broken loose. To use the colloquial expression. We face this ongoing onslaught of attacks every day.

Some of you are in the thickest of the fight. Even now. You might say, preacher, you're just talking a lot of theory. I'm going through it practically today. I know what you're talking about. I'm right in it.

[30 : 23] In the thick of the hardest, of the thickest of the fight. And it's hard going for me. God has one word for you. God has one word for you. Here it is. Stand.

Stand. Stand. Stand. Stand. Stand. Stand strong. Stand in victory. Our victory is something that has already been won for us. He has accomplished it for you.

You're standing on victory ground. Believers do not fight as much for victory as from victory. We're standing in victory. He's already won the battle.

So, stand. Stand. Stand. It means that we're going to be attacked. It means that we must not be frightened. It means that we must not droop or slouch or be uncertain or half-hearted in this fight.

There's no self-pity allowed here. It means that we are at our position and on the alert. Stand. Ready for action. It means we do not give even a thought to retreat.

[31 : 22] Amen. It's natural to want to retreat. It's natural to want to pack your bags and throw in the towel and get in a half and get offended.

Especially preachers like this one. And verse 14 it says, stand therefore. Stand therefore. Having your lines, you know, the middle of you, girt about by truth.

It's talking about your belt. And having on the breastplate of righteousness. So, it's saying, stand fast. Be immovable. Stand fast. Stand firm. There's a note of urgency to this.

It's talking about the belt of truth. The truth. The truth holds it all together. The spiritual armor. Now, the soldiers of that time had loose flowing garments.

And the belt held it into place so they could fight. And the belt demonstrates for us too our readiness for war. Our stand for truth.

[32 : 20] Stand true. The Lord Jesus says, I am the way, the truth and the liar. In today's world there's so many lies. So many errors and wrong teachings.

How we desperately, desperately need the truth. Search it out and find it. Search the scriptures. If we bring our lives into harmony with God's truth, his precious word, he'll guide our way.

We are in a battle for truth. So, let's be careful what we fill our minds with. Are we filling our minds with truth? Are we pouring this into our mind? Are we saturating our mind?

Are we guarding our mind with his words? What about our children? Are we watching what they are receiving? Let's communicate the truth to them while we can.

Mums and dads, communicate the truth to your children. You know, it's been said that by the time he's 18, the average teenager has watched six years of TV.

[33 : 23] That's amazing, isn't it? And yet, in that same period, he's only spent four months in church. Six years, four months. The tragedy is that most Christians can hardly sit through a one-hour worship, yet they can easily sit through a three-hour TV special.

Amen. Without a trace of impatience. That's a good quote, isn't it? That's the reality. That's the reality of our world. And it's more so with all these little gadgets now, isn't it? We're always tuning out to God.

We're always tuning in to what the world's beaming into us. Let's rather saturate ourselves with truth. You can get MP3 players and listen to the Bible on sound.

You can listen to the Word of God. Saturate yourself with truth wherever you can. It goes on having on the breastplate of righteousness. Here's the breastplate that covers our chest.

Righteousness. It means right living, doing right, thinking right. When we are in tune with God, we'll follow His way and want to live to please Him. Stand.

[34 : 30] Stand in the righteousness of Christ. You are the righteousness of God in Christ. That's what it says. That's what you are. He is our righteousness.

In Jeremiah 23 verse 6 it says that in His days Judah shall be saved, Israel shall dwell safely. This is His name. Whereby He shall be called the Lord our righteousness.

He is your righteousness. He is your righteousness. We are accepted in the Beloved. And Christ is our righteousness. He keeps you strong and true. His righteousness will hold you firm and guard your heart.

His holiness is over you and in you. He's told you. And you can be strong and confident. You can know He's covering you and keeping you.

Even when the accuser throws His all at you, His venom, His hatred. The Lord will keep us faithful and help us soldier on. Verse 15 it goes on.

[35 : 33] And have your feet shot with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Can you imagine a Roman soldier without his shoes on? Running across the harsh ground would leave his feet bruised and damaged.

He wouldn't be able to run through the rough ground with unprotected feet. And so too for we. God cares about where we walk. About what drives us. About the direction we're setting.

About the message we're talking. And taking with us wherever we go. It's the gospel of peace.

That's what it is. It's the gospel of peace. He is our peace.

Ephesians 2.14 says. The good news is we can know peace with God. Through our Lord Jesus Christ. And we can take that good news of peace. So everyone around about.

Friends, our walk, our journey is in a strange land. You know, Australia is a strange land, isn't it? It is.

[36 : 38] And we go into our own country. Our own country. And we that love the Lord, we're fellow countrymen. Amen. We're fellow citizens. We're fellow citizens of this nation of heaven.

As it were. And every step draws us closer to our promised home. I don't know. Who of you might be my neighbours one day? My next door neighbours one day. We're going to get used to one another, don't we?

And love one another. This is not our stopping place. We're going to be moving on from here. So even in the midst of battle. We can take with us this message of peace. To a world in conflict. How a soul can make peace with his maker. That's our message. Our glad message. The gospel. And we need not be overwhelmed. Don't be overwhelmed. When you're feeling like you're in the thick of the fight.

Do not fear the enemy and his tricks. He's a con artist. He's a con artist. He's a... No offence to any used car salesman. But he's like a used car salesman.

[37 : 41] Isn't he? He's going to sell you a lemon. And you're going to think you've got a Rolls Royce. You know, the devil's a con artist. And he wants you to be fearful of him. But there is peace for you in Christ, isn't there?

We have a peace that passes all understanding. That keeps our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. So we need not be overwhelmed with fear. It's the devil's trickery again.

We've got a calm, tranquil peace within. A firm assurance that it's rock solid, grounded, assured, a peace within. Verse 16, it goes on.

Above all, having the shield of faith, wherewith you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. Now the Roman shield was a huge construction.

It was like a door, like a big door. Four feet long, two and a half feet wide. It virtually covered the whole body. And it was like these planks glued together with canvas or calf skin with top and bottom edges protected with iron.

[38 : 43] It was a heavy duty shield. And so the Christian soldier's shield is faith. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

The shield of faith. It's God's promises, his principles in his word. We can trust him. It's faith. It's believing God with soul-saving faith.

Our trust in him. It's standing with that great shield of faith. Our Lord. His protection. His shelter. His care. His concern. And the enemy's arrows will fly at you.

Blazing arrows. Fiery arrows. Fiery darts. In the time of this writing, they would shoot these arrows and set them on fire. To hope to set the enemy's clothes on fire.

But this tells of darts fired against us as God's people. Fiery missiles that the enemy of our soul will launch against us. What are Satan's arrows?

[39 : 43] Satan's arrows. They could be lust. Greed. Temptation. The idols of this world. Worldly loves. But behind the shield, you need not fear.

Brother. Sister. You've got a shield that will keep you sure and safe. The shield of faith. And behind this shield, you have protection.

Its polished surface will bounce off the arrows that are launched against you. And you are safely guarded by the shield of faith. It says, for whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world.

Amen. And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Amen. This faith that we speak of is a faith that overcomes the world.

And this is the victory that we have. Using the shield of faith, we can claim that 7,000 promises in this book. Now that someone's guesstimate could be more than that.

[40 : 48] 7,000 promises to you for your Christian walk. Including verses like, That's a promise of God.

And take the helmet of salvation, which is the word of God. Sorry. And take the helmet of salvation. And the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.

As a believer, the helmet of salvation. We have a wonderful salvation. Now I'm preaching to Christians today. If you're not a Christian, it starts with this one. The helmet of salvation.

Make sure you're saved. So great salvation. The complete and finished work of salvation. God's saving. Absolute, amazing, saving grace.

The enemy wants to play mind games with you. As Christians too. To play mind games. To bring discouragement and doubts. But we have the helmet of salvation. It's our defence.

[42 : 02] We think of the helmet. It covers our thinking, our reasoning, our choices, our will. Think, for example, of Job. Job. He faced an incredible onslaught, didn't he?

He was the most just man in all the earth, it says. Righteous. But he faced an incredible onslaught. He was well off. He had a large family. He was a godly man. But in just moments, his world was turned upside down.

His riches taken. His farm. His livestock. His family struck with disaster. What did Job do? In Job 1 verse 20. It says, He rose and rent his mantle.

He tore his clothes. He shaved his head. He had a closer shave than me. And he fell down upon the ground and he worshipped. And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb. And naked shall I return there.

The Lord gave and the Lord have taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. Hallelujah. In all that Job did, he sinned not.

[43 : 04] Job was afflicted with boils. Reduced to poverty. He lost his family. His health was destroyed. His body was stricken with pain. And his wife began to accuse him.

On top of it all. And somehow, he got through. Then his friends came to comfort him. They said things like, Somehow Job, these tragedies have come upon you.

And you are the reason. It's your fault, Job. Great comfort, wasn't it? Even in the midst of Job's greatest despair, his helmet was still on.

Amen. And he was standing still. Yeah. It was despite his circumstance.

God held Job, and Job held God. Job held fast to his hope. He said, For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.

[44 : 07] He said, Though he slay me, yet will I trust him. Hallelujah. Yet will I trust him. He had the helmet of salvation firmly buckled on his mind with that assurance of God's promises.

And he smashed through Satan's attacks. And so we too, friends, have an adversary, but our salvation keeps us thinking straight in a world that's confused and misled.

And we can think right and know God's direction. The helmet covers our mind. We have much need of discerning of spiritual truth and spiritual deception.

To discern those two things. Truth and deception. And so by God's truth, we can discern wrong thinking and deception. We can study the Word of God, declare the Word of God, apply the Word of God, the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

This sharp sword is given us by the Holy Spirit. It's truth that cuts and scares the adversary. And we've got a calm assurance of this divine truth.

[45 : 22] It is the Word of God. And the tempter will attack our mind every chance that he can. You might be getting attacked right now. Sure as eggs, Monday you're going to get attacked.

And Tuesday and Wednesday, the tempter will attack your mind and your will. What did Jesus do when he was tempted? Luke 4, verse 4.

It is written. Amen. Hear Satan. Take that. It's written. It's written. That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

And we can proclaim it is written. Confess the Scriptures. Soak yourself in the Scriptures. Take it in. Amen. And try to plant it in your heart.

Every word of God is pure. He has a shield unto them that put their trust in him. It's purified. It's trustworthy. And you can suffer attacks of discouragement and doubt, but you've got a sure shield.

[46 : 25] A pure shield. His many exceeding great and precious promises. They're for you. For me. If we'll just take it in. And just lastly, another necessary part of the armour is prayer.

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit. Supplication, it just means asking God to supply. Asking for God to supply.

Supplication in the Spirit. And watching there unto you with all the saints. With all perseverance and supplication for all saints.

So let's draw closer to God in prayer. Find time to pray. Make time to pray. Pray with all kinds of prayer. Persevering prayer. Earnest prayer.

Intercessory prayer. Groaning prayer. Weeping prayer. Corporate prayer. Secret prayer. All kinds of prayer. Prayer in the closet. Prayer in the home. Prayer in the assembly.

