

Men of War Mighty Men

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[0:00] Joel 3 verses 9 and 10 It's a call to war here in this passage.

A call to war. And really that is the day we're living in. It's a call to war. A call to arms. We need to sound the call to arms.

To prepare war. Why? Because the devil is taking territory. The devil is taking territory from the ministry of the gospel.

It's being eroded in many quarters. And the church's message is being weakened on many fronts. In many places today, as I've shared in recent times, in recent messages, how you see an erosion happening.

It's like you hear it said of political groups at times that they white-hand them. They come in and seem like they're a part of it, but really they're white-hancing the structure.

[1:38] And this is what's happening with the church of God, in a sense. So, thankfully we've got a steel frame building. But really and truly, the church of God is being white-handed, as it were, in the world today.

Because the enemy is working, taking territory. And this message is for us. Brother, sister, tonight, prepare war. Get ready for warfare. And Paul urges Timothy just that, to war a good warfare.

And in 1 Corinthians 16, 13, Paul says, Watch ye, stand fast in the faith. Quit you like men. Be strong. And the sense there, quit you like men, means act like men.

It means we should act like men of God. We should stand fast in the faith and be strong. Mighty men are needed in this hour. You could think of the Battle of Britain.

It was a faithful few that they were seen to be holding the enemy back. And it's as if it's like that in our day and times, where the remnant, I know there's our friends from other churches here tonight, that are holding fast, holding the fort, as it were.

[2:47] And yet, as we know, the Word says, the Lord Jesus says, that His church will prevail over the gates of hell. We'll actually be storming the gates of hell, is the picture there.

We're not having a fortress mentality, hiding from it all, as if we're in a bunker. But we are meant to be an invading force, an advancing army, not just an army that's kind of hiding from the enemy, as it were.

And mighty men are needed. Joel says here, heroic men, valiant men, men who will stand. Men of valor, men of zeal, men of courage, men mighty in battle.

And you are those men here tonight. Men and women alike. Soldiers, spiritual soldiers in a spiritual battle that's all around us. As we know, the enemy is infiltrating just about every means of media, including church-wise and including ministries that are popular today.

But there is a need for men to stand in these days. The battle is on. It's a battle for families, a battle for marriages, a battle for manhood. And warfare is happening.

[3:57] Maybe at times we don't regard it that way, we don't consider it that way, but it is truly the case. Forces of ungodliness are arrayed against us. We see it on the political scene as well.

As you can see, the choices we have, scarce choices really, who to vote in to power. Few godly choices to make.

And your family is vulnerable. We are vulnerable from these influences that ultimately will govern us, as well as the media that will entertain us and keep us occupied.

And you are being affected. And sometimes we don't even pay attention. Without even knowing it, this is happening to us. This is happening all around us. We've got some information there about, for example, where the political parties stand on the back table.

You might want to take that for interest's sake. And our enemy is the master of camouflage. He's a master of it. A master deceiver. Right from Genesis, when he first showed his ugly face, he

misquoted the Word of God, didn't he?

[4:58] He misquoted it, he twisted it, trying to make it suit his own hands. Twisting and misquoting the Word of God, and he still does that today. And he's got his own Bible versions now. He's gone even a step further.

He has a gospel. He has doctrines. He has ministers. He has churches. He has apostles. He has prophets. He has even signs and wonders, we're told.

And he even has angels. The Sun Ministries today make much of angels speaking. So, well, the Bible says watch out for that. That's something to be very careful about what angels you listen to, because it's the fallen angels as well as God's angels, isn't it?

As the Word tells us. So, it's time, brothers and sisters tonight, it's time for you, it's time for me, to prepare for war. To prepare for war. To wake up is the second aspect.

As we see Joel 3, he says, wake up, the mighty men. There's a need for a wake-up call. A wake-up call. Oh, that men would stand up, speak up, rise up, and wake up.

[6:01] That is our need today. For men to wake up. We know that, I guess you could say, the devil's favourite music is rock music. He wants to rock you in your cradle.

That's how he wants to keep the saints occupied. He wants you to be gently rocking in his cradle, and he'll sing you a sweet lullaby to keep you just that way, to keep you asleep from what he's about.

And it's time to be awake. It's time to wake up. It's time to be stirred up. It's time to be shaken from our apathy and lethargy and sloth and laziness.

Because this is the great affliction that's endemic in Christianity today. Christians are apathetic and lazy and not willing to step out of their comfort zone.

But God says, it's time to wake up. Wake up the mighty men. Rouse them. Rouse them from their slumber. Rally the troops. Fact is, many Christians are asleep.

[7:03] Fast asleep. And Satan wants to keep you that way. He wants to keep you asleep, in acting, ineffective. We must wake up the sleeping church.

Now, some of you would know that I do keep an eye out for people sleeping and try to embarrass them. So, just in case you're feeling like that, just be careful tonight.

Because I might say, wake up! Wake up the mighty men! Wake up! Today, the church needs a wake up call in these days of apathy and lethargy, a wake up call for our spiritual lives.

How are you spiritually? When's the last time you checked your spiritual pulse and saw how much life you've got, how much breath you've got, we need hard truths for hard times.

We need men to be awake. Men and women to be warriors in training mighty men, men of war. And yet, so many today would rather be mice than men.

[8:00] They would rather be mice than men. Whimps. Tripping on the smallest thing to cause offence, to cause some excuse they can make, some cop-out they can give as to why they're not a part of the army.

Why they're AWOL, absent without lead. It's such a tragedy that most of the army is not reporting for duty a lot of the time.

We need to defy the enemy and rouse the troops. Wake up the mighty men. It's time to wake up or perish. Paul writes in Romans 13, 11, in his high time to awake, out of sleep, for now is salvation, our salvation, nearer than when we believe.

Now there's a story I read about a young child. Accidentally, this young child took some sleeping tablets and the family called the doctor who immediately sought to address the issue, pumping the stomach.

And then the doctor said to the parents and the brothers and sisters, they said, watch this boy. Watch this boy and make sure they do not go to sleep. They were instructed to keep him awake for several hours.

[9:13] If necessary, they had to slap him about to keep him awake, to stir him, to stop him from sleeping, to keep him awake. So that pain could act as a stimulus to ward off the effect of any medications that might have passed into his blood.

If they loved him, they had to keep him awake. They had to stop him from going asleep. And friends, if you love the church, then you will want to be awake in these days, not asleep, not letting the enemy rock you to sleep.

Wake up, mighty men, awake to righteousness and sin not. Paul says in 1 Corinthians, 1 Corinthians 15, 34, are you going to be a mighty man?

Are you going to stand and be counted? Are you going to be on the front line if it be called for?

We've read this morning of missionary exploits in Papua New Guinea, people being shot.

They're in a war zone, literally, on the front lines for Christ. And what do we have to complain about? Brothers and sisters, let's be honest. Let's be honest tonight.

[10:21] Aren't you going to be a mighty man? Or are you going to win power? Men are God. I'm addressing men, but this is women too. Stand. Stand.

These are days we need to wait and be alert. For our families, for the faith, for the right to fight. To fight for it. One preacher said, the measure of a man is what it takes to make him quit.

You know, if we all just went by feelings, but all have quit. myself included. The measure of a man is what it takes to make him quit. We need stickability.

We need endurance. We need fortitude, perseverance, brother and sister. The godly woman, Esther, had that, that courage, that courage to step outside of her comfort zone.

Esther had the courage to do what she was afraid to do as she went into the king. Esther was a woman of courage. She had boldness.

[11:20] Boldness to go into danger to stand for the right, to stand for the Lord. Have you that kind of boldness to go into uncharted territory?

If it be the case. We read of explorers of old where they advertised their voyage and it was only the man that would apply because of the, what faced them and they painted a picture of the hardships they would endure to volunteer to be part of the crew.

And will you be the mighty man? We know of some they venture into places of danger, of persecution, of mockery, to stand on a street corner and preach the gospel.

It takes fortitude, it takes stamina, it takes resolve. And that's what we need today. We need mighty men who can stand and go where it's not comfortable to go and do what it's not comfortable to do.

An old time preacher, Bangle from the Salvation Army, Bangle said this, he said, Boldness is a fruit of righteousness and is always found in those that are full of the Holy Ghost.

[12:29] They forget themselves and so they lose all fear. This was the secret of the martyrs when burnt up the stake or thrown to the wild beasts. Fear is a fruit of selfishness.

Boldness thrives when selfishness is destroyed. God esteems it, commands it, he commands his people to be courageous and make spiritual leaders only of those who possess courage.

As we read in Joshua 1, verse 9. Do you feel overwhelmed? We all can. Defeated, inadequate, get back in the fight. Get back in the fight.

Give him another fiver in the face. Punch him. That's what we need to have that fight in us, that fight that Paul writes of, of that wrestling, of that boxing, of that racing, of that endurance, of that combat, that contest, that agonía that Paul writes of.

to get back in the fight, to dare to be different, to not follow the crowd, to go the easy way, to be mighty men, men like Caleb. Caleb was a mighty man, one of them.

[13:40] Caleb of him, it says, in Numbers 14, 24, my servant Caleb, because he hath another spirit with him and hath followed me fully, him I bring into the land.

He has another spirit, a different spirit was in Caleb. There was something different about him from the crowd of the day, those that were trembling at the thought of the giants in the land. Paul was another mighty man.

He says, we were bold in our God. Bold in our God. Moses was mighty, it says, in Acts 7, 22, mighty in words and deeds. Apollos, in Acts 18, 24, was mighty, mighty in the scriptures.

A mighty man. Where are the mighty men today? Today, in this hour? Could it be the finest hour? Could it be our finest hour in the battle of Australia, so to speak?

Where are the mighty men today? Today, tonight? They are a rare breed. Who are they? Men who will stand, men who will not shirk, men who will not weaken, men who will not quit, men who are

committed to the kingdom and the king, who are willing to sacrifice, who are prepared to fight, to fight the enemy.

[14:56] It's a fight. You know, we use these illustrative terminology of fighting, of combat. It's real. This is not fiction. It's not make-believe.

It's real. We're told we're in a spiritual warfare. It is a warfare. And we are meant to be awake. We're meant to be committed to the kingdom. Prepare to fight the enemy.

Prepare to continue against all the odds, if it be so, to be mighty men in our families, in our churches, in our workplaces. Mighty men.

There's a need for mighty men because these are desperate days. Desperate days. Who will rise up in this perishing world? This is a gospel that people need.

The fields are white unto harvest we referred to this morning. The time is now. It's not white. Four months and then come at the harvest. A mighty man is needed.

[15:55] Mighty women. Mighty men. God has called us to be those people. That people will rise up. For too long the church has simply been a social club. And we can be just that too.

In fact, I think at times we are just that. Sadly, just that. A social club. Friends, that should not be the case. We're meant to be an advancing army. We're meant to be on fire with the truth.

Alive. Truth on fire. Preached and proclaimed. Witnessed by every one of us. That we should be about that. And our Lord wants that for his church.

Not to be some social club but a crusading force. A combat unit behind enemy lines. And for every one of us, for every church, the question is, is the Lord's will being done.

I know I've referred to of late the trends that are downward and they're elsewhere but they could be here too. We've got to guard everything here too. I've got to guard what I say and whoever says anything here, that it be the truth.

[17:04] And that our music is not compromised, that our stand is not faltering in any capacity because we could all fail. It's easy for us to point the finger at other churches but we all need to be aware that we're all flesh and faulty and adequate.

Hence the Lord's will being done. Is God in it? That's what matters. Is God in it? Otherwise, there's no point to it. There's no point at all. Just as well close the place down because except the Lord built the house, they labour in vain that build it.

Psalms 127.1 So we need to be a faithful people, a faithful assembly, a faithful gathering of God's people together doing His will. Mighty men, mighty women, recognising the urgency of the hour and not just wanting to keep it all to ourselves but to extend it beyond these walls.

These walls are just a place for us to meet but the walls, the places beyond are what we want to reach out. We don't want to be neglectful of the harvest field that's all about us.

And God's judgment is against our land. The land of Australia, God's judgment is against it as we see what likely will happen that we'll be ruled by an atheist prime minister.

[18:23] Friends, Australia is in deep waters, in deep waters tonight and we need to do business with God. Every one of us do business with God to seek His face.

It's time, time to prepare war, to prepare war, to awake, to wake up the mighty man and lastly to consider our weakness and strength.

We can question tonight and you may do this today, what can I do? Little old me, what can I do? I'm not strong enough, I'm not smart enough, I'm not trained enough, I'm not able enough and we can all think that way as I do often.

Our friends today, it's in your weakness that He is strong. That is what counts. As we read in Joel 3.10, let the weak say, I am strong. Let the weak say, I am strong.

Not the strong say, I am strong. Let the weak say, I am strong. So, you might have heard all of this and thought, He's talking about somebody else tonight being the mighty man and the mighty woman.

[19:38] But you are that man, you are that woman. As we read in Judges 6.11, the account of Gideon, there he was hiding away in the winepress and verse 12, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, this is Judges

6.12, and said unto him, the Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.

And Gideon said unto him all his excuses and concerns about things not being as he would have liked or where are the miracles and et cetera. Why has this befallen us?

Why is this happening? And verse 14, and the Lord looked upon him and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites.

Have not I sent thee. So here was Gideon, he was totally hopeless and inadequate and he was voicing it and God says, You are the mighty man, I have sent you, go in this thy might.

So he saw the strength of Gideon, the character of Gideon, he saw that despite Gideon's doubts and fears, that Gideon was the man that he had chosen. And perhaps you feel like a Gideon tonight, maybe hiding from the enemy, feeling despair, tearing, weak in your own ability, let the weak say, I am strong.

[20:56] Say that tonight. I am strong. I am strong. You are strong tonight. I mean, as much as we don't go into the positive confession stuff, that's what it says.

Amen? That's what the word says that you can say. So we can, that's scriptural tonight. So God is strong in our weakness, in our inadequacy, in our lack of strength as we exalt Christ.

And Paul was told by the Lord, my strength is made perfect in weakness. So it's all the better, isn't it? But in your weakness, his strength will be made perfect.

2 Corinthians 12.10, for when I am weak, then am I strong. And let us not be weary in well-doing. Brothers and sisters, we will reap if we faint not.

Galatians 6.9. So the Lord taught Gideon that he was the man in all of his inadequacy, in all of his weakness, in all of his lack of faith of the time, that despite Gideon's weakness, God was going to use him.

[21:59] And later we see even again, where Gideon had his massive army, God whittled it right down to 300 men. And those that lapped the water with their hand, God wanted to show Gideon again that his awesome power works despite our weakness.

And in our weakness, that was the army had to be weakened for God to get the glory. For Gideon to have the faith to rely upon as he advanced and as he encountered the enemy, Gideon's army had to be weakened that it was to be strong by faith.

We read of the heroes of faith, for example, in Hebrews 11. It says in the context there of 33 and 34 of Hebrews 11, of the things they did, they subdued kingdoms, they stopped the mouths of lions, they quenched the vines of fire, they escaped the edge of the sword.

Out of weakness, they were made strong. Again, who was it that was there in Hebrews 11? People just like you and me. Out of weakness, they were made strong.

Waxed valiant in fight. Sorry, I'll say that again. Waxed valiant in fight. Terms of flight, the armies of the aliens. These were the men and women that God chose.

[23:13] And think of it, if you will, soldiers. What do they do? They train and train. They have hard yakka. You know, the commander barks at them and brownbeats them and humiliates them and disciplines them.

And they go through an endurance test as they go through that basic training of being a soldier. Why? Because they need to endure. They need to endure hardness.

And likewise, we do too. We need to be trained to combat fatigue, to fight fatigue, to learn endurance through thick and thin. And sometimes the Christian life is just that.

It's an endurance event as an army is trained for it. Likewise, we need to go the distance and the fight is a daily battle for all of us.

But we're encouraged in 1 Corinthians 15, Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

[24:16] for as much as you know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. So if it's in the Lord, it's worth every bit of it, isn't it? It's every bit. Every bit of discomfort that might come your way is worth bearing.

I know there's some that are in ministries, sending materials far and wide through the post. There's folk in ministry in neighbouring suburbs ministering. It's hard yakka out there.

It's a battle out there. And there's opposition. There's not much compliments. There's not much pats on the back. There's not much praise for you. But you are mighty men, mighty women. And how do we get mightier?

How do we get stronger? I put it to you as we talked about earlier today. Prayer is the means for that strengthening of the soul. Pray for God's strength.

I read this just today. Abraham prayed and Lot was spared. Isaac prayed and Rebecca conceived. Jacob prayed and Esau was pacified. Job prayed and trials were ended.

[25:18] Moses prayed and Amalek was defeated. Joshua prayed and sin was found out. Samson prayed and strength was regained. Hannah prayed and Samuel was born.

David prayed and sin was cleansed. Solomon prayed and wisdom was given. Elijah prayed and the fire descended. He prayed again and showers fell. Hezekiah prayed and invaders withdrew.

Jonah prayed and was given another chance. Daniel prayed and the lions were muzzled.

Nehemiah prayed and the king listened. Pizza prayed and was saved from drowning.

A publican prayed and went home justified. A thief prayed and went to paradise. Paul prayed and sight was restored. Stephen prayed and saw the Lord.

Cornelius prayed and was told what to do. John prayed and gained a vision of the future.

Sometimes we lack because we don't pray. We lack strength because we don't pray.

[26:18] Friends, pray. Let the weak say, I am strong. Strong. Mighty men. Mighty women. Prepare for war.

Prepare for war. Wake up and realise that your weakness is his strength. It can be. It is possible.

Against overwhelming odds, you can stand your ground and say as Paul, in all these things, we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

Our victory is not in our own reasoning or strength or ability. It's as we are faithful to God. As we call sin, sin. As we live in accordance with his word and as we put it into action.

As the holy God is honoured in everything that we do. So that we question what we do. So you question what I do and make sure that it's right. That we don't deviate. That it's not to the left or to the right.

It's straight ahead. Straight down with the plumb line of God's word. It's time to prepare war. It's already about you. You are already in it.

[27:24] You are at war now. Some of you are just acting like it's peacetime. Friends, you need to see it is war. Prepare war. Wake up.

Stop your slumbering. Stop your sleeping. There's one here asleep tonight. Someone give her a kick. Please. Wake up.

Wake up. I must have been preaching too long. Wake up. And discern that your weakness is his strength. It can be.

And you can know truth is entering tonight. Now thanks be unto God which always causes us to triumph in Christ. And thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. I've been talking tonight to Christians. I've been talking about being a soldier. Friends today, listen, you may not be a Christian. Do business with God.

[28:21] If he is prompting you of your sinful state, only you can answer that. as he would beckon you to come unto him. And friends, don't miss that.

I pray. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you for every saint, for every soul, Lord, that you would be glorified, that we might see the war that we're in and not take it lightly, that we might realise the enemy to combat.

And the strength is prayer. The strength is faith. Lord, the strength is our weakness that you come and reside in and use us despite us, that you would be glorified, that your church would be built and extended, Lord, that other churches might grow too in these suburbs about us that uphold the message of truth, that you would be honoured in every ministry we pray.

In Jesus' name, Amen. I love to tell the story of haunting things above of Jesus and his glory.