

# Stand Firm Against the Powers - Part 3

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Date: 20 November 2011

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[ 0 : 00 ] On this, the last Sunday of the Christian year, Christ the King's Sunday, we come to the last study in our series of studies in the Apostle Paul's letter to the Ephesians.

And as we come to the end, a big part of me wants to go back to the beginning and do it all over again. The fact of the matter is, although we may never again give direct attention to the text of Ephesians, we will never, ever be far away from the message of the text of Ephesians.

For as I trust you have come to appreciate, the letter of the Ephesians is all about reality as it is, centered in Jesus Christ and shaped by Jesus Christ.

Although we may never fully understand this reality, we are living in it. For I trust you have also come to believe that the alternative reading of reality that is Ephesians is a true and accurate reading.

I trust you are coming to the deep conviction that what the Apostle Paul develops in his letter from a jail cell is the really real. For the third time now, I invite you to give attention to the concluding paragraph of Paul's letter.

[ 1 : 27 ] But because this is the last time we're going to formally spend time in Ephesians, I'd like to also read the beginning paragraph. So here again, Ephesians chapter 1, verses 3 through 14, which is not typed for you.

Just hear that. And then we'll read again 6, 10 to 20, which is typed for you. Hear the word of God. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.

Just as he chose us before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love, he predestined us to adoption as sons and daughters through Jesus Christ to himself, according to the kind intention of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, which he freely bestowed on us in the beloved.

In him, we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us in all wisdom and insight.

He made known to us the mystery of his will, according to the kind intention, which he purposed in Christ with a view to the administration suitable to the fullness of times. That is the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on earth.

[ 3 : 00 ] Also in him, we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to his purpose, who works all things after the counsel of his will to the end that we who were first to hope in Christ should be to the praise of his glory.

In him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation, having also believed you were sealed in him through the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance with a view to the redemption of God's own possession to the praise of his glory.

Finally. Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the full armor of God that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God that you may be able to resist in the evil day and having done everything to stand firm.

[ 4 : 10 ] Stand firm, therefore, having girded your loins with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

In all, taking up the shield of faith with which you'll be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one and take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.

With all prayer and petition, pray at all times in the spirit. And with this in view, be on alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints and pray on my behalf that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth to make no one with boldness.

The mystery of the gospel for which I am an ambassador in chains that in proclaiming it, I may speak boldly as I ought to speak. The Lord add his blessing to the reading of this is good word.

The beginning paragraph. An alternative reading of our identity and our location in the world.

[ 5 : 25 ] In Christ. And in the heavenly places. Yes, in Vancouver, in Canada, 2011, in a modern postmodern secular city.

But also and more fundamentally in Christ. In the heavenly places. Which is to say we live and move and have our being.

In the visible realm. And in the invisible realm. We live and move and have our being. In the material realm.

And in the spiritual realm. We live and move and have our being. In the earthly realm. And in the heavenly realm.

Thus the concluding paragraph. An alternative reading. An alternative reading. Of our struggle. To live this new reality in the world. If we lived and moved.

[ 6 : 29 ] And had our being. Only in the visible. Material. And earthly. Our struggle would be. Only with the visible.

The material. And the earthly. But because we also. Live and move. And have our being. In the invisible. Spiritual. And heavenly realms.

Our struggle is also with. The invisible. Spiritual. And heavenly realms. Now this we worked through. The first time we gave attention to this text.

In the sermon. On October 30th. Because of this more accurate. Understanding of our struggle. We need very different resources.

In order to stand in this struggle. And this we started to work with. In the second time we looked at this section. In the November 13th sermon.

[ 7 : 26 ] Last Sunday. Stand firm says Paul. Four times he says it. Stand firm. Verse 11. That you may be able to stand firm. Against the schemes of the devil.

Verse 13. That you may be able to resist. It's a form of the verb stand. In the evil day. Verse 13. Having done everything. To stand firm. And then verse 14.

The exhortation. Stand firm. Therefore. Stand firm. How? Be strong.

In the Lord. Not just be strong. We are not thrown. Back on ourselves. In this struggle. We are thrown. On Jesus Christ.

Be strong. In the Lord. And in the strength. Of his might. And. Take up. And put on. The full. Armor. Of God. Of God.

[ 8 : 25 ] The full. Armor. Of God. As we noted last time. The armor. We are to wear. Is the very. Armor. God wears. This is the armor.

That Jesus uses. In his encounter. With evil. In the wilderness. The full. Armor. Take up. And put on. The full. Armor of God. We need. Every piece.

One piece. Protects the head. But not the feet. Another piece. Protects the lung. But not the head. Take up. And put on. This full. Suit. God provides. And as we saw.

Last time. This suit of armor. Involves. Both. Defensive. And offensive. Pieces. There are five. Defensive. Pieces.

The belt of truth. The breastplate. Of righteousness. The gospel shoes. The shield of faith. And the helmet. Of salvation. And as we noticed.

[ 9 : 21 ] Last Sunday. These five. Defensive pieces. Turn out. To be. Jesus himself. The belt of truth. Is Jesus. The truth. The breastplate.

Of righteousness. Is Jesus. Our righteousness. The shoes. Of peace. Are Jesus. Our peace. The shield. Of faith. Is Jesus. And his faith. And the helmet. Of salvation.

Is Jesus. Who saves us. As the psalmist. Sings. You. Oh Lord. Are a shield. About me. You're. My glory. You're the lifter. Of my head. Now. As we give attention. To this text. For the third. And last time. At least formally. Let us focus.

On the. Offensive. Pieces. Of the full armor. There are two. Only two. Given the nature.

[ 10 : 14 ] Of the battle. They're the only two. We need. And given. The nature. Of these two. They're the ones. That make it happen.

They're the only ones. That we need. Verses. Seventeen. And eighteen. And. Take the. Sword of the spirit. Which is the word of God. And with all.

Prayer and petition. Praying. At all times. In the spirit. The two. Offensive. Pieces. Of this armor. Are the. Sword of the spirit.

And praying. At all times. In the spirit. Now. Why these two. And why only. These two. P. Equals. O. Plus. I. Remember. That little formula. We got it. From Walter Wink. A disciple. Of Jesus. Who has. Thought. And written. A lot.

[11:10] About spiritual. Warfare. You will find. Some good help. In his series. Of books. They're named. They're entitled. Naming the powers. Unmasking the powers. And engaging.

The powers. Now. I don't agree. With everything. That he develops. But I have. Found great help. In this formula. That he gives us. P. Equals.

O. Plus. I. P. Stands. For the powers. That are work. In the world. And in the city. O. Stands. For the. Outward. Visible.

Material. Earthly. Factors. And the. I. Stands. For the. Inward. Invisible. Spiritual. Heavenly. Factors. P.

Equals. O. Plus. I. I quote. Wink. Again. The powers. P. Are not. Spiritual. Spooks. Inhabiting. The air. And leaping.

[12:04] On us. Unwary. That's an earlier. Way of putting it. Nor. Are the powers. P. Merely. Institutions. Political. Or economic. Systems. Ideologies.

Or social. Structures. That was a modern. Way of putting it. Neither. Is adequate. Though both contain. Some truth. The powers. Whether benign. Or satanic.

Always. Consist. Of an. Outer. Visible. Form. Constitutions. Judges. Armies. Leaders. Buildings. And.

An inner. Invisible. Spirit. That provides. The power. Its legitimacy. Credibility. And clout. That. That's not.

So hard. To imagine. Is it. P. Equals. O. Plus. I. Now. Wink. Challenges. Those of us. Who live.

[12:58] In the west. And those parts. Of the world. Under western. Influence. He says. That because. We have lost. Touch. With this. Biblical. Vision. Of reality. We are left.

Tinkering. With the. Outer. While ignoring. The inner. Real change. Comes. When the inner. Is changed. When the eye.

Is changed. And this explains. Why nations. Can go through. A revolution. And nothing. Changes. Dictators.

Can be toppled. Longstanding. Systems. Of bureaucracy. Can be rearranged. But nothing. Really. Changes. That's because. The inner.

Spirituality. Remains. Intact. The inner. Spirituality. Remains. Unchallenged. The spirituality. Which gave. Rise. To the dictatorship.

[13:52] And which gave. Rise. To the oppression. Oppressive. Bureaucratic. Systems. Has not been. Changed. P. Equals. O. Plus. I. And there's. No real. Change.

In the powers. Unless you. Change. The. I. And that. Is what the. Two. Offensive. Pieces. Of the full. Armor.

Are designed. To do. They. Address. The inner. Spirituality. Of nations. They address. The inner. Spirituality. Of cities.

They address. The inner. Spirituality. Of institutions. And corporations. And sports. Empires. They address. The inner. Spirituality. Of religion. And the church.

Take up. The sword. Of the spirit. And pray. At all times. In the spirit. First. Offensive.

[14:47] Piece. Of the armor. The sword. Of the spirit. Not the sword. Of the flesh. It's not the sword. That any human being. Can design. It's not the sword.

Of any metal. Heavy. Or otherwise. It's a spiritual sword. It's the work. Of the spirit. It's the work. Of the spirit. Of God. The Holy Spirit. This sword.

Is imbued. With the life. And power. Of God. The spirit. And what is the sword? It's the word. Of God.

Says Paul. The word. The living God. Speaks. The word. The Holy Spirit. Speaks. The word. The word. Made flesh. Speaks. The word.

Jesus of Nazareth. Speaks. Take up. This word. The apostle. John. Who's. My favorite. Apostle. Brackets.

[15:43] The last book. Of the Bible. The revelation. Of Jesus Christ. With images. Of the risen. Jesus. In chapter one. He has. Jesus. Standing among. The seven. Golden lampstands.

Which represent. The seven. Churches. And he has. Jesus. And he says. Of Jesus. That out of his. Mouth. Comes a sharp. Two-edged. Sword. Then in chapter.

Nineteen. He has. Jesus. On a horse. And he. Says. That out of his. Mouth. Comes this. Sharp. Two-edged sword. So the whole book. Is bracketed. By the image. Of the sharp.

Two-edged sword. Why? The message. Of the last book. Of the Bible. Is Jesus. Wins. And the message. Of these two.

Images. Of the sword. Says. Jesus. Wins. Simply. By speaking. His word. Not only.

[16:37] Informs. His word. Performs. His word. Makes things. Happen. Our words. Make things. Happen.

Do they not? Our words. Can hurt. And heal. Our words. Can tear down. And build up. How much more. The word. Of him.

Who made all things. And holds all things. Together. Let there be light. And there was. Lots of it. Let there be. Animals.

And there were. Lots. Of them. Get up and walk. And a lame man walks. Come out of him. And the demons flee. Hush. Be still.

And the waves and winds. Are died down on the sea. Lazarus. You come out. And a dead man. Walks out of the tomb. The word of God.

[17:30] Not only. Informs. It performs. When God. Speaks. Something. Happens. And. When God's people. Speak.

God's speech. Something. Happens. Isaiah 54. For. For as the rain and snow. Come down from heaven. And do not return there.

Without watering the earth. And making it bear and sprout. And furnishing seed to the sower. And bread to the eater. So shall my word be. Which proceeds from my mouth. It shall not return to me empty.

It shall not return. Without accomplishing that. For which I sent it. The writer of the New Testament document. We call Hebrews. Works with this.

Most fully. And he makes. A startling claim. In Hebrews 4. 12. The word of God. Is living. And active.

[18:23] Sharper. Than any two-edged sword. It's living. Read the. Letter to the Hebrews. And you discover. That every time.

The author quotes. The Old Testament. He always says. The Holy Spirit. Says. He never says. The Holy Spirit. Said. Said. For him. It's not a dead book.

It's a living book. It's a living word. And it's active. He goes on to say. Piercing as far as the division. Of soul and spirit. Both joints and marrow. Able to judge the thoughts.

And intentions of the heart. Able to penetrate. Any form of darkness. Able to penetrate. Any expression of bondage. Able to overcome.

Anything raised against. The knowledge of God. Able to break through. Any lies. About who God is. And what God is like. And able to break through. Any lies. About who we are.

[19:17] And what it means to be human. Able to bring us. Into the light. And into the freedom. One at the cross. Take up. The sword.

Of the spirit. Speak. The word. Of God. And watch. What happens. Something. Something. Always. Happens.

Something. Redemptive. Always. Happens. Maybe not immediately. And maybe not visibly. But the word. Spoken. In the world. Always. Makes. Something.

Happen. In the world. Stand firm. Take up. The sword. Of the spirit. Now. Is this not what we see Jesus doing.

Throughout the gospels. Do we not see Jesus. Wielding. This sword. In the wilderness. In that face to face encounter. With evil. Three times.

[20:13] It is written. Three times. He responds to the tempter. Saying. It is written. Round one. If you are the son of God. Turn these stones into bread.

Jesus answers. It is written. Man does not live. By bread alone. But by every word. That proceeds out of the mouth of God. Round two. The tempter. Tries to wield.

This sword. He says. If you are the son of God. Throw yourself off this cliff. For it is written. He will give his angels. Charge concerning you. And on their hands.

They will bear you up. Lest you strike your foot. Against the stone. But the tempter. Had taken that word. Out of context. And the word out of context. Is not the word of God. To Jesus. So Jesus says. On the other hand. It is written. You shall not put the Lord. Your God. To the test. Round three. Jesus is shown. All the kingdoms of the world. And the tempter says.

[ 21 : 08 ] If you'll just bow down. And worship me. You can have all these things. You won't have to go to the cross. Jesus responds. Be gone Satan. It is written. You shall worship.

And serve. The Lord. Only. We see Jesus. Using this sword. When the religious establishment. Begins to hassle him. Many times.

The stubborn. And hostile Pharisees. Are coming at him. And Jesus responds. By saying. It is written. It is written. We see Jesus. Use this sword.

On the cross. In the great battle. With evil. Six. Of the seven. Last words. From the cross. Are either. A direct quotation. From the old testament. Or a meditation.

On the text. Our struggle. Is not against. Flesh and blood. But against. Spiritual forces. And powers. Take up. The sword. Of the spirit.

[ 22 : 01 ] Speak. The word. Of God. And something. Happens. Something. Happens. To. The spiritual. Forces. And powers.

To the powers. Something. Happens. To the powers. Us. I hang on. To that story. That Luke. Tells. In the tenth. Chapter. Of his gospel. Jesus. Sends. Seventy. Of his disciples. Out on a short-term. Mission. And he tells them. That they are simply. To announce. The gospel.

They're simply. To speak. Jesus. Gospel. They are to say. To the cities. The kingdom. Of God. Has come near. The seventy.

Obey. In city. After city. After city. They simply say. The kingdom. Of God. Has come near. The kingdom. Of God. Has come near.

[ 22 : 55 ] The kingdom. Of God. Has come near. The seventy. Then return. With news. Of all kinds. Of kingdom. Things. Beginning. To happen. People are healed. People are reconciled.

People are freed. From all kinds. Of bondage. And then. Jesus says. To them. As you. Were speaking. The gospel. I was watching. Satan.

Fall. Like lightning. The disciples. Were speaking. This gospel. To human beings. Human beings. Were hearing. The gospel.

But so. Were the invisible. Powers. And forces. Paul says. In the middle. Of his letter. To the Ephesians. Chapter 3. Verse 10. Through the church.

The wisdom. Of God. The good news. Of God. Is being. Made known. To. The rulers. And authorities. In the heavenly places. Whenever believers.

[ 23 : 52 ] Announce. The good news. To other human beings. Jesus. Is Lord. The kingdom. Of God. Has come near. We are. Announcing. The news. To. The principalities.

And powers. And the. I. In the. P. Equals. O. Plus. I. Is being. Addressed. And things. Begin. To change. In the city. I. Was watching. Satan. Fall. Like. Lightning. It is.

Happening. Right. Now. You. Are hearing. The good news. But. So. Are the. Invisible. Powers. In this. Part.

Of the city. It happens. Every time. You gather. In small group. For bible study. In a home. In office. In houses.

[ 24 : 45 ] Apartments. Coffee shops. Whenever. Disciples. Of Jesus. Open. The book. And speak. Its message. Human beings.

Are hearing. In. In. But so. Are the. Invisible. Spiritual. Powers. And forces. In that part. Of the city. And things. Begin.

To happen. I. Was watching. Satan. Fall. Like lightning. This. Explains. Why. The powers. Work. So. Cleverly. And. Constantly. To keep us. Out of the book. They work. To fuel.

Our busyness. So that. We think. We do not. Have time. To get into the book. You know. A. Closed bible.

[ 25 : 38 ] On a shelf. Threatens. No one. But. Open it. And. Speak. Its living. And. Active. Word.

And. The rulers. And. Authorities. In the heavenly. Places. Begin. To squirm. You can. Then. Also. Understand. Why. The powers. Work. So. Cleverly. And. Constantly. To distract. Ministers. Of the word. With all. Kinds. Of other. Demands.

That. Keep. Them. From living. In the word. And doing. The work. Of the word. Read. The book. Of acts. I think. The theme. Of the book.

Of acts. Is the progress. Of the word. In the world. Yes. It's about. The emergence. Of the church. In the world. But it's the emergence. Of the church. Being brought.

[ 26 : 32 ] Into being. By the word. And being. Sustained. By the word. And every. Major. Turning point. Luke. The author. Of acts. Will say. And the word. Of God. Kept spreading.

Now. John. Stott. In his. Marvelous. Commentary. On the book. Of acts. Suggests. That. Jesus. Enemy. Tried.

To. Stifle. The spread. Of the word. And therefore. The emergence. And growth. Of the church. In three. Ways. Three. Different schemes.

Scheme. One. Was. Persecution. The early church. Comes. Under persecution. Very quickly. It did not work. It never. Works. Persecution.

Only drives. The people. Of God. Deeper. Into the word. Deeper. Into Christ. And persecution.

Scatters. People. Into the empire. With the word. Scheme.

[ 27 : 29 ] Two. Deception. A couple. Named. Ananias. And Sapphira. Lied. To this emerging.

Church. They had sold. Some property. Which many. Of the new. Believers. Did. In order. To fund.

Gospel. Ministry. But when. They presented. The proceeds. To the church. They lied. About the exact. Amount. That is. They began. To play. Games.

With the truth. That is. They began. To play. The devil's game. In manipulating. The truth. And you can read. Acts five. To see. What the head. Of the church. Did about that. And then.

Scheme. Three. Diversion. As the church. Emerged. A problem. Arose. In the ministry. Of serving. Food. To widows. And those.

Entrusted. With the ministry. Of the word. Found themselves. Under pressure. To get involved. In this problem. They did not think. That they were. Been. That they. That serving. Tables.

[ 28 : 23 ] Or serving. People. Was beneath. Their dignity. Not at all. It's just that. In order to do. The work. Of setting up. Systems. For caring. For widows. And doing the work. Of dealing.

With all. The complaining. It meant. They were diverted. From the hard work. Of the work. Of the word. So they say. To the church. It's not good. For us. To neglect. The word.

To serve tables. They propose. Then. That the church. Called deacons. And that the deacons. Are given. All these. Other. Wonderful. Ministries.

But we. They say. Will devote. Ourselves. To prayer. And to the ministry. Of the word. Satan's. Attempt. To stifle. The progress. Of the word. In the world. Was met.

By the calling. Of deacons. Deacons. Are absolutely. Critical. To make sure. That the ministry. Of the word.

[ 29 : 17 ] Takes place. Stand firm. Take up. The sword. Of the spirit. Second.

Offensive. Piece of armor. Pray. At all times. In the spirit. In the spirit. In the spirit. Reminds us. That our praying. Is not our work. Only. That the spirit.

Is helping us. It reminds us. That the spirit. Is working. In our prayers. The spirit. Moves us to pray.

The spirit. Helps us to pray. The spirit. Teaches us to pray. The spirit. Empowers us.

To pray. How do we address. The I. In the P. Equals. O plus I. We pray. Verse 18.

With all prayer. And petition. Says Paul. Praying at all times. In the spirit. Being on alert. With all perseverance. And petition. For all the saints. Do you see. And hear that word.

[ 30 : 09 ] All. All the time. With all the forms. With all the saints. And with all perseverance. And as we do. Something.

Happens. Always. Something. Happens. Maybe not immediately. Maybe not visibly. But something. Always. Happens. In the world.

When we pray. In the spirit. This. Is powerfully. Portrayed. In the last book. Of the Bible. The revelation. Of Jesus Christ. You can see.

I've already moved. From Ephesians. Into revelation. In chapter 18. Chapter 8. John. Watches. As. Jesus Christ. The lamb. Breaks. This.

Last. Of the seven seals. Of this scroll. It's the scroll. Of history. It's the scroll. Of the meaning. Of history. And then listen. To this. When the lamb. Broke the seventh seal. There was silence.

[ 31 : 04 ] In heaven. For about a half an hour. And I saw seven angels. Who stand before God. And seven trumpets. Were given them. Another angel. Came and stood at the altar. Holding a golden censer. Much incense.

Was given to him. That he might add to it. The prayers. Of all the saints. Upon the golden altar. Scroll. Of history. Seals. Are being opened. Seventh seal. There's silence. In heaven. As all the prayers. Of all the saints. Are being gathered up. The point. It is this. And it's powerful. John is being shown. That one of the driving. Forces. Of history. Is the prayers. Of God's people. New Testament scholar. George Beasley Murray. No one was more aware. Than John. Of the limitations. Of what individual. Men and women. Can do to change. The course of history. And to bring in. The kingdom of heaven. Particularly. [ 31 : 59 ] In face of cosmic forces. Ranged against them. And the transcendent nature. Of the kingdom itself. But we can pray. To him. Who has almighty power. And it would seem. That God has willed.

That the prayers. Of his people. Should be part. Of the process. By which. The kingdom comes. Then he writes. The interaction. Between the sovereignty. Of God. And the prayers. Of the saints. Is part of the mystery. Of existence. And faith. Is called. To take both. Seriously. Take up. The sword. Of the spirit. And pray. At all times. Of the spirit. And the eye. In the P. Equals. O plus I. Begins. To change. Alternative. Reading. Of reality. Walter.

Wink. Again. He reminds us. That the disciples. Of the first century. Had no access. To the political process. No access. But. Says Wink. This seems.

[ 32 : 53 ] To have done little. To prevent the church. From impacting. The Roman Empire. With devastating force. Why? Listen. When the Roman magistrates. Ordered the Christians. To worship. The imperial spirit. They refused. Kneeling instead. And offering prayers. On the emperor's behalf. This seemingly. Innocuous act. Was far more. Exasperating. Than outright. Rebellion. Would have been. It was. Why? Now listen. This is worth. The price of admission. Listen.

Rebellion. Simply. Acknowledges. The absolute. And ultimate. Nature. Of the emperor's. Power. And attempts. To seize it. Prayer.

Denies. That ultimacy. Altogether. By acknowledging. A higher power. I'll read that again. Rebellion. [ 33 : 54 ] Simply. Acknowledges. The absolute. And ultimate. Nature. Of the emperor's. Power. And attempts. To seize it. Prayer. Denies. That ultimacy. Altogether. By acknowledging. A higher power. Rebellion.

Focuses. On the physical. Institution. And its current. Incumbents. And attempts. To displace them. By an act. Of superior. Power. Prayer. On the other hand. Challenges. The very. Spirituality. Of the empire. Itself. And calls. The emperor's. Angel. As it were. Before the judgment. Seat of God. Alternative. Reading. True.

Reading. Reality. As it is. In Jesus. Christ. When we pray. We are saying. That the way. Things are. In the world. Or in the city. Are not the way. Things were supposed to be. And not the way. Things one day. Will be. When we pray. We are going.

[ 34 : 47 ] Over the head. Of the powers. And bringing. The inner. Spirituality. Of the powers. To the one. Who is the head. Over all the powers.

Jacques. Elu. You might know. That name. When he was. The governor. Of law. Professor. Of law. And government. At the university. Of Bordeaux. Wrote this. The Christian. Who prays. Acts more effectively. And more directly. On society. Than the person. Who is politically. Involved. With all the sincerity. Of his faith. Put into that involvement. It's not a matter. Of seeing them. In opposition. To one another. But in inverting. Our instinctive. Cultural hierarchy. Of values. Another person. Said. History.

Belongs. To the intercessors. Belongs. To those who pray. Which is why. The powers. So cleverly. And constantly. Work. To keep us.

[ 35 : 42 ] Off our knees. To keep us. From praying. They deceive us. To think. That we are too busy. To pray. They fuel. This busyness.

So that we. Have no time. To pray. We just jump. Into our days. Without praying. Oh. We might offer. A brief. Help me. Jesus. That's better. Than nothing. Right. But otherwise. We move. Into all of our. Activities. In our own. Power. Lean in our own. Wisdom. And we even do this. In the church. We have committee meetings. And no one. Starts with prayer.

Alternative. Reading. Our struggle. Is not just. With flesh. And blood. Our struggle. Is not just. With human beings.

And human institutions. And human corporations. And human movements. Our struggle. Is with. Suprahuman forces. And powers. At work. In the universe. Stand firm.

[ 36 : 42 ] How. Take up. And put on. The full armor. Of God. Five defensive. Pieces. Of the armor. The belt.

Of truth. The breastplate. Of righteousness. The shoes. Of peace. The shield. Of faith. The helmet. Of salvation. And two. Offensive. Of pieces. The sword.

Of the spirit. Speak. The word of God. In the world. And praying. In the spirit. Interceding. For the world. Before the throne.

Of the king. Of the world. And watch. What happens. So let's do it. I'm now going to make.

A series of declarations. I'm going to speak. The word of God. Relative to some of the powers. At work in our city. Along the way.

[ 37 : 38 ] I'm going to ask you. If you agree with the declaration. And if you do. You can say. Yes Lord. I will then pray. I will then bring.

Some of those powers. Before. The savior. And judge. And I will ask. If you agree. And you can respond. By saying. Amen. And then I will give you.

Time as individuals. To pray about those. Issues close to your heart. Then. Together. We will pray. The Lord's prayer. And the words will be on the screen. Here's now.

What I think this text. Suggest. We do. On this. Christ the King Sunday. We declare.

That the powers. Human. And demonic. Visible. And invisible. Behind. Illegal. And destructive. Drugs. Are accountable. To Jesus Christ.

[ 38 : 35 ] We declare. That the powers. Are no match. For Jesus Christ. That he is more powerful. And that he can set. The captives free. Do you agree? So Lord.

We bring these powers. Before you. And we ask you. To break the grip. Drugs. Have on people. You love. Agree. Amen. Lord.

We ask you. To expose. Those. In our city. Who are making. These destructive. Drugs. Available. To our people. We ask. That you. Break.

The back. Of their empires. Do you agree? Lord. We ask you. To free. Men and women. Boys and girls. From this evil. And we ask you.

To free. Drug dealers. From the deeper. Evil. Of no longer. Caring. What happens. To people. When they sell. Their filth. They too. Are prisoners. Of evil. Set them free.

[ 39 : 32 ] Lord. Do you agree? On this. Christ the King Sunday. We declare. That the powers. Human and demonic.

Visible and invisible. At work. In sex trafficking. In our city. Are accountable. To Jesus Christ. We declare. That the powers. Are no match. For Jesus Christ.

That he is more powerful. And that he can set people free. Do you agree? Yes. Lord. So Lord. We bring these powers. Before you.

And ask you. To break their grip. On people. Do you agree? Amen. We ask you. To expose. Those. Who are doing this work. And that you. Break the back.

Of their empires. Do you agree? And we ask you. To come. To the rescue. Of girls. And women. Being used. As mere objects. Of the forces.

[ 40 : 25 ] Of lust. And power. Agree? Amen. And we ask you. To come. To the rescue. Of men. Who are buying. Into this evil. Hell. Has a greater.

Grip. On them. Than on the girls. And the women. Set them free. Lord. Do you agree? If the church. Had been speaking. The word. In the world. And praying. This way. In the world. Western civilization. Wouldn't be. Where it is. Do you agree?

Do you agree? Let us now take a few moments. And declare. And pray. Relative to those issues. Close to your hearts. Just as individuals. Declare that Jesus. Is seated. Far above. Any rule. Or dominion. And then bring. Those powers. To his feet.

[ 41 : 27 ] Or dominion. Or dominion. Or dominion.

Or dominion. Or dominion. Or dominion. thumb. I sense I'm supposed to do one more.

On this Christ the King Sunday, we declare that the powers visible and invisible, human and demonic, that have their control on Internet pornography must give an account to Jesus Christ.

And so, Lord Jesus, I'm going to be really bold here. So, Lord Jesus, we bring the Internet to your feet. And we ask that you break the back of the empires that are fueling this stuff and capturing people.

And we pray, Lord Jesus, that you would set every captive of pornography free. Thank you. Yeah.  
[ 43 : 00 ] Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

So let us together stand and pray the prayer Jesus taught us. The words are up here. Let us pray. And watch what happens. Our father who art in heaven. Hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come.

Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins. As we forgive those who sin against us.

And lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from the evil one. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.

[ 44 : 10 ] Amen.