

# Giants, Children of Angels

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 19 May 2024

Preacher: Jon Moffitt

[ 0 : 0 0 ] You're listening to the sermon podcast of Grace Reformed Church in Spring Hill, Tennessee. To learn more about us, visit our website at [gracereformed.org](http://gracereformed.org).

And now, today's sermon. Today will mark the strangest sermon I have ever preached to date, just to warn you.

It's not very often I stand up here nervous of how a passage will be received. I normally am excited to encourage people in their faith, to trust in Christ, and to see Jesus from all of Scripture.

To relieve this overly dramatic intro I've already set up for us today, we will be talking about Jesus and his comfort and his glory. But we will have to discuss parts of the Bible for our modern Christians we often ignore.

There are a number of reasons why these type of passages get ignored. I really don't want to discuss those this morning. But as we dive into these passages, you will quickly be faced with parts of Scripture that even the best scholars are uncomfortable trying to understand and explain.

[ 1 : 1 8 ] I taught an hour and a half class yesterday for the Women's Grace Academy, which will be available later this week. I had six pages of notes that went along with it that is relevant to today.

But I don't have an hour and a half. So I'm going to do my best to allow you to go listen to that on your own time. And we will preach what Peter has for us this morning.

I really aim to bring about what Peter's trying to encourage the congregation with, these churches. He wants to provide for them a stronger faith, preparing them to be able to give an answer for the hope that lies within them in the midst of their suffering.

No matter what they're going to face, whether it's physical, mental, emotionally, and more importantly, spiritual attacks, they will have the strength to continue to work for the king until he brings them home.

And he uses this particular section to do that. Now, in trying to comfort them in the midst of their suffering, he uses a really familiar story.

[ 2 : 2 3 ] It's a story that we all well know. A story that most children's books have inside of it. The story of Noah and the ark, right? We are familiar with this. But when we read it, we let certain parts of it remain supernatural.

It's okay with the flood and all of that. But then there are other parts of it we remove the supernatural nature of the text because it makes us feel uncomfortable. But Peter emphasizes the very thing we ignore.

He points out as a point of encouragement the very parts we say are awkward. See, the churches at this time in Rome were facing a really serious attack for their faith.

And it was increasing. By the second letter, it gets really bad. And in the face of this distress, one could ask, and many did. This is why Peter writes the letter.

Is Jesus really powerful enough to stop all the evil that is pressing in on us? We see the gods of Rome. We see their capacities.

[ 3 : 28 ] Our God tells us to endure the suffering and believe in the power of his words. Is this enough? Are we going to win this battle? Because it seems like more of us are dying than actually surviving.

So he finishes describing in the first three chapters all the ways in which we're going to suffer and how to suffer. How to endure. And then he points and says Jesus is suffering too.

And then he points out an interesting story. An old story in Genesis chapter 6. Now before I even remotely try and explain that story to you, as elementary as it may seem, it is very complicated.

We'll see why here in a minute. I want you to turn with me to Genesis chapter 3 for a moment. It's important that you understand the history behind why it is that Genesis 6 is so important to Peter.

And why he points it out to the suffering church. For the sake of time, I'm not going to tell you the whole story. Most of us know what happened between Adam and Eve and this lying spirit serpent, whatever you want to call it.

[ 4 : 38 ] There's a promise that is made. It's known as the first mention of the gospel, the Evangelion. Genesis 3.15. And this is what it says.

I will put, this is God speaking to the serpent. I will put enmity between you and the woman. And between your offspring and her offspring. You shall bruise your, he will bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel.

Very, very quick statement. But there's two important points that I want to point out. I want you to pay attention to because they are what drive the rest of not only the story of the Bible, but specifically why Peter finds it necessary to point out in Genesis 6.

The first thing that God does is God promises that there will be a human from the line of Eve. In the Old Testament, it's always the line or the seed of the man. The seed comes from the man. So it's the seed of Abraham, the seed of Isaac and Jacob.

Specifically here, he says from the seed of Eve. This is foreshadowing the virgin birth. But it is going to be a human that is going to come and rescue them from their destruction, their disobedience.

[ 5 : 46 ] The second part of this statement is God promises that judgment is coming upon the spirit who caused the rebellion on the earth. The serpent or seraphim, however you want to describe it.

This being that enticed Eve to rebel against God, judgment coming upon, it's important. Not only that being, but all its seed, all of those past him.

So you literally have a war between seed because it says from your seed, Eve is coming the Messiah, and that Messiah is going to crush the head of the seed of the serpent. So this is really helpful to understand.

Now, what is the results? What happens next? Well, what you have next is a story that seems pretty simple in its narrative, but we get the application and the reason for it in the New Testament.

So what we're going to do is if you turn with me to chapter 6, we'll go ahead and read this story. But what you're about to read is the seed of the serpent in its attempt to sabotage God's promise.

[ 7 : 01 ] He says from Eve will come a man, and this man will be the Messiah, and that Messiah will deliver and receive the punishment that's deserved for your disobedience, and at the same time, it's going to conquer you.

It's going to crush your head. So Peter is using this language. So here's the story in Genesis chapter 6.

Verse 1. The Nephilim on...

I'm reading the ESV for those of you that are visiting. The Nephilim were on the earth in those days. Your translation might say something a little different. And also afterward, when the sons of God came into the daughters of man, and they bore children to them, these were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown.

Now, this particular section of passages is one that I used to use for all the new youth pastors that would come to our church. Right? Try and stump them. Get the funny ones out of the way.

[ 8 : 17 ] But I do want to pause here for a moment before we continue and try to wrap our brain around something that's quite bizarre. It's a very bizarre passage. For our modern context, anyways.

Peter uses this story as a proof. Okay, just to... I have to keep reminding you of the value of what's happening here. Peter is using this story as a proof that we can trust God in the midst of our suffering.

Somehow this story is connected. And that's what we're going to unfold for us. That as we get done reading this, it's a comfort to us. Here's what's important to understand. This particular story and the outcome of the story is mentioned five to seven times in the New Testament.

Peter's just using it here as an illustration. So this isn't obscure to the New Testament to use such a powerful story. So I'm going to just kind of put the story into my words with what I think is happening here and what the Bible is teaching.

Historically, what has been taught for the first 300 years of history, in the church, this is the perspective that was held. The world's population has grown.

[ 9 : 20 ] It's no longer just Adam and Eve, but their children have had children, and now we have lots of people. The sons of God are not human beings. These are spiritual beings. The New Testament calls them angels.

They come down to earth, and they look for themselves and see that these women are attractive. And for themselves, they take wives. And in this union, they have children is what it said.

But not human children. The Bible says that what comes from them are hybrid beings. They're described as Nephilim. This is a transliteration of the actual word.

That's what's actually in Hebrew. It's the Nephilim. Some of you may have in your Bibles the translation of giants, and that's what they are. But not like Shaq or any other basketball player.

These giants are described to be anywhere from 10 to 15 feet tall with extreme amounts of power, rage, and often would eat humans.

[ 10 : 22 ] They were cannibalistic. This unholy union corrupted the world, and these hybrid giants begin to destroy God's creation and humanity to the point that God had to rescue humans and put them on a boat and destroy all the decreation that had happened to his creation and remove the hybrids, not only of humans but of animals.

Now, why would I hold such a strange position? Some of you are sitting here going, this man has lost his mind. You're probably right, but I am going to give a defense from Scripture.

Turn with me back to our passage this morning, 1 Peter chapter 3. One of the traditions in church history of making sure that we understand Scripture appropriately is to allow Scripture to interpret Scripture.

Compare your Bible with other passages. The best commentator on the Old Testament is the divinely inspired writers of the New Testament. So if they spoke about something that happened in the Old Testament, this is probably good for us to pay attention to, and to which multiple times we have men commenting on what happened.

This is our particular passage. So he says this statement, and this is 1 Peter 3.19, in which he went, Jesus, and proclaimed, this is during his death, through the spirits in prison.

[ 11 : 55 ] What are these spirits? He tells us. Because they formerly did not obey when God's patience was waited in the days of Noah while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is eight persons, were brought safely through the water.

So all of a sudden, you have Jesus. Peter is telling his church, you remember when Jesus died, and he suffered. When he went into the ground, you know what his soul was doing?

He went over to the spirits who had tried to stop his Messiahship from happening. This is what he's saying. These spirits tried to corrupt humanity so that I could not come to be the Messiah.

They were kept in prison, and I went and declared victory to them. And if I can do that, I can bring you home. That is his point. If I can conquer the greatest coup that happened when the spiritual realm rebelled and tried to corrupt humanity, if I can conquer that, I will help you in Rome.

I can help you through this suffering. Turn with me to 2 Peter 2. He uses this illustration twice as examples for the congregation.

[ 13 : 10 ] So this hopefully is becoming less and less strange for us and more and more appropriately believable. 2 Peter 2, verse 4. For if God did not spare, so 2 Peter 2, 4.

For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment, if he did not spare the ancient world but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly, if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes and condemn them to extinction, make them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly.

So now he's using that as an example of judgment. Now it's important here that in 2 Peter, he actually mentions Sodom and Gomorrah because Jude does the same thing. So we have a fall, we have a flood, he's connecting it all together.

He's talking about there's an acknowledgement of what these angels have done. If you turn with me to Jude chapter 6, it's probably the most graphic explanation and really interpretation of what happened in Genesis 6.

So you can see that the flood is a judgment for what the angels did. This is what he's saying here in 2 Peter. The flood came based upon the ungodliness of the world.

[ 14 : 35 ] This is Jude 6 and 7. By the way, Jude's just full of all kinds of interesting things. We'll save that for another day.

Jude 6 says, And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day.

Now what did they do? He tells you, just as, okay, so the angels did this, just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.

Jude said they left their position of original creation. We see this in the story of Genesis 6, the proper dwelling place in their spiritual realm.

And what did they do? He compares it to Sodom and Gomorrah. Well, if you remember the story of Sodom and Gomorrah, you have two angels who show up to the city and Lot welcomes them into the home. And what did the city want to do?

[ 15 : 45 ] They wanted to come into the angels. And so Judah saying that act is what? It's not natural. He says it's an unnatural desire. It's the same thing in reverse.

The angels did it with humanity instead of humanity doing it with the angels. From the context, it's easy to see that the unnatural parts of the human and the angels, this is weird for us, but it's in the text not only once, but multiple times.

So as we're reading Genesis, hopefully this is becoming more and more clear to us, but I want us to get behind really the comforting aspect that Peter has. Sure, this is weird. It can be interesting, but if it doesn't comfort our faith, why are we studying it?

So we have three times in Scripture where the writers used the story as an example to confirm this. First of all, it was the angels who left their proper place in creation. Number two, they cohabited with humans.

And number three, the judgment of this disobedience was that they were placed in prison in the earth in chains waiting for judgment, and the offspring were judged in the flood.

[ 16 : 56 ] That's what you have in all of these cases. Now why is this such a horrible act that these writers would write this down, and Jesus goes to prison saying, you tried to stop me, but you cannot.

I claim victory. Why is this happening? If you go back to the promises made in Genesis 3 between the woman and between Satan, this is the outcome of what they are trying to do, which is to destroy humanity.

No humanity, if it's corrupted, you cannot have a Messiah. Now, Satan hears this condemnation coming towards him.

You're about to be judged. Your head is going to be crushed. We often forget that he is not, Satan doesn't know everything. He is a created being. He must learn. He is not in all places at all times.

Only God is. So, he receives this judgment, and what does he do? He comes up with a plan to create a coup. Let me read to you if you want to write this down.

[ 17 : 58 ] This is 1 Corinthians 2. Paul makes a really interesting observation about these spiritual powers that we're facing. He says this, 1 Corinthians 2, verse 7.

But we impart a secret, a hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages of glory. None of the rulers of this age, meaning Satan and those in authority and power with him, understood this, for if they did, they would have not crucified the Lord of glory.

So, they thought they could try and sabotage it in the beginning by not allowing to come, and then once he came, they thought, ah, we'll kill him once he gets here.

And Paul says, they had no clue that that was the plan all along. But God is using this as a comfort to us, saying it looks like disaster.

It looks like chaos. It looks like we're not winning, but we are. This is not the first attempt at stopping the Messiah, the one who will bring judgment upon them.

[ 19 : 03 ] Do you guys remember when Jesus is dealing with the man who has a legion of demons in him, and they say, what are you doing here? It is not our time. I mean, the word's got out. They know judgment's coming, and they know he's the one who's crushing their head.

So what does he do? He sends them off into a herd of pigs. We'll talk about that another time. Fun story. Not so fun. Crazy story. Genesis 6 is the attempt to corrupt humans in the line of Eve and create some kind of hybrid monsters because that's what they are.

It's a corruption of the flesh. This is why, even later on, the idea of Jesus' humanity is not only attacked in Genesis 6, but it gets attacked later on. Okay, so they can't stop the pure line of humanity from coming, so we'll get the world to believe it didn't happen.

Turn with me to 1 John. This is where John is worried about what this false teachers are, really these spirits. These evil spirits are bringing a lie, so we can't stop the Messiah, so let's stop the words of those who preach the Messiah and convince them he really isn't a man.

So this is 1 John 4, one and following, it says this. 1 John 1, 4. Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world.

[ 20 : 26 ] By this you will know the spirit of God. Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God because that's the promise. He has to come in the flesh to be our representative.

And every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. So they have always been trying to stop the Messiah from coming to do two parts, to save humanity, but also, but also, keep their destruction from happening.

Now before I jump into the flood section, which is part of Peter's encouragement, I want to help with some of the messiness that's here. These are some of the objections because I'm looking at some of your faces and if you don't stop squinting soon, you're going to have a headache.

So just, you know, just take a break for a moment. I have been wrestling with this for a long time. I understand this, the weight of this. Here's some of the objections that I've heard and that I even had when I first started wrestling with this type of a passage.

The first thing is that people say, well, angels cannot marry because Jesus says they can't marry and this is Matthew 22, 30. It's really important to pay attention to how Jesus says things in the context of what he says.

[ 21 : 44 ] He's dealing with people who are trying to understand, first of all, they were trying to dupe Jesus into believing or to saying something wrong that this woman has had seven husbands because all of her husbands die. Which, by the way, if I was the next brother in line, I'd be like, I'm good, man.

My brothers all died. There's something wrong with you. And so they're like, who's she going to be married to? And Jesus says, you're not understanding the new heavens and the new earth.

And so he makes a comparison. He says, for in the resurrection, they neither are married nor are given in marriage but are like the angels in heaven. All of that is saying is that the angels are not given to marriage in the new heavens and the new earth.

It does not say they cannot because you have multiple times in scriptures indicating from both Jude and Peter and in Genesis that this happened. So either Jesus is confused or maybe we're misreading Jesus.

The other one is when we read in the sons of God, that phrase, some people have a hard time understanding that to be spiritual beings or angels.

[ 22 : 46 ] And the most popular translation of that in these days, some of your Bibles might even have where it says the sons of Seth. The problem is there's nowhere in the Hebrew Bible it says the word Seth or the sons of Seth.

It's just not in the text at all. And you also have to explain how it is that you have these massive hybrid beings, one of them being Goliath. He is a Nephilim.

He's from the line of the Nephilim. These massive giant beings that come from, because this is the theory, you have godly people, these are the line of Seth, who got married to ungodly people which is the line of Cain.

And because of that they produced Nephilim. That doesn't make any sense. Not only from the text, from Peter's standpoint, from Jude's standpoint. So we do have to understand then what is, who are the sons of God?

But the easiest way I can, this is, they're only mentioned six times in scripture. If you turn with me really quick to Job chapter 38. This is where they're mentioned quite often. And Job really creates a lot of clarity for us.

[ 23 : 46 ] This phrase that's being used, the sons of God. It's a phrase that, it's a Hebrew idiom. We don't really use it here in English, but it's to be, the statement of it is of like kind.

So when it says the sons of, it's of like kind. It's a way of translating that. Meaning that they are spiritual beings. They're of the realm of the spirits. So here's the positive of it.

This is Job 38.4. This is before they fell. So, if you've not read Job in a while, this is that section where God's kind of putting Job back in his humble spot.

Like, you're questioning me. Where were you when I created you? You know? So, this is what he says. Verse 4, 38.4. Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?

Tell me, if you have any understanding. And he starts working through the days of creation. Jump with me to verse 7. He has not, we're not, we've got to day 6 yet. He hasn't created man yet. And so he's still dealing with day 1 and day 2.

[ 24 : 45 ] And in day 1 and day 2, this is what he describes as happening. When the morning stars, these are described, stars are often referred to as angels. When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy.

Well, that can't be humans because humans haven't been created yet. And that is the concept that's being used not only in Job but also in Genesis that the sons of God, these are these spiritual beings, these angelic beings.

So humans are not the ones to be thought of here. And then the last one, sometimes people struggle with the concept of giants being real. But we have multiple occasions of this.

I mean, we have the famous story of David and Goliath. I have some notes here but I'm not going to get into it. I think we all are okay with the idea but if you look at the lineage of Goliath of Goth, you'll learn that he's from the line of Anakin which goes to the line of the Nephilim.

He is part of this rebellion. He is a hybrid being. This is why he is so massive and strong. Just to create some clarity, sometimes we want to compare these to like basketball players and there are people who are very tall.

[ 25 : 50 ] There's people who are even 10 feet tall as far as world records. But there's a difference between being tall and having the capacity and strength of a man like Goliath.

Let me tell you a little bit about what this author wrote just kind of translating the shekel weights into our pounds. It says this, notice that the coat of mail he wore weighed equivalently to 125 pounds.

Be very close to me. In addition to his helmet and his breastplate, maybe two of me, and his breastplate weighed about 125 pounds. Almost 250 pounds so far.

He had greaves, these are shin guards, of brass and a target of brass between his shoulders. The staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam which means the long staff of his spear weighed about 17 pounds.

Additionally, the scriptures specifically say that his spearhead weighed 600 shekels of iron or that is the equivalent of 16 pounds. One scholar has speculated that the weight of all of these pieces of weaponry all together, helmet, breastplate, greaves, target of brass, spears and shield may have weighed upwards of 700 pounds.

[ 27 : 02 ] You go put 700 pounds on Shaq and ask him to fight me, I guarantee you I win. You put 700 pounds on Goliath and not one warrior on Israel was willing to step on the battlefield.

Right? So, these are unnatural beings. These are not natural. This is why there's such havoc and why they're afraid. I mean, in Numbers it says when they, remember this, when the spies go into the land and they see them, they describe themselves as grasshoppers in their sight and then it says, this is verse 33, Numbers 13, 33, it says that there were, they saw the Nephilim, the sons of the Anakim and it says that they were eating the inhabitants of the land.

They were devouring them. They were eating, they're cannibalistic. So, this is not, these are not good beings. The Bible describes them as unnatural super beings, super power beings, whatever.

Alright, now I want to go back to the flood story because this is going to tie it all together because this is what Peter ends up using. So, we have total chaos. At this point, hopefully you can understand that this is a seed war.

You have Satan wanting to destroy humanity. He's trying to use this hybridization of humans to do so. This is why it says the woman's seed and the serpent's seed so you can describe and see the flow of these seeds.

[ 28 : 22 ] But listen then how he describes the floods. This is Genesis chapter 6 and verse following, chapter 6, 5 and verse following. He says, Why is it that Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord?

Moses, at this point, gives us two reasons of why Noah found favor. Verse 9. Here's the first one. These are the generations of Noah.

Noah was a righteous man. Means he had faith in God. He trusted in his God and his righteousness came from his God instead of believing in these other gods.

Secondly, the translation here says, blameless in his generation. That word that's used there, you can translate it that.

The New American Standard, or the New King James translates it this way. It says, This is the generations of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Now, there's a reason why this phrase is important because in Genesis, generations are used to describe the flow of a genealogy.

[ 29 : 54 ] So, the generations of Adam. He's talking about Enoch and Noah. Then he's talking about Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. So, he's talking about, these are the, you're talking about a person's genealogy.

And that word, to me, that's being used there is often used as perfect because it's in comparison to something that is defiled.

I'll give an example. Do you guys remember in the story of Exodus? They're about to bring the Israelites out of the land. This is used hundreds of times, by the way, in the Old Testament. 80% of it is used, this idea of perfect.

This is Exodus chapter 12, verse 5. It's describing the kind of lamb that you had to have. This is to me. It says, Your lamb shall be without blemish. It's the same thing.

Another way of saying without blemish is to say what? Perfect. A male a year old, you may take of it from the sheep or from the goats. This is the same way that Moses is describing in Exodus as he is describing Noah.



[ 30 : 53 ] He's saying, not only is Noah a man that fears the Lord, but he's a man that is not a hybrid. He's not been infiltrated. He is perfect in his generation. His genealogy consists of perfection, not righteousness, but he has not been polluted.

So what does he do with the rest of mankind? He takes Noah and his family, puts him on an ark, and destroys the rest of humanity. Now, pay attention to how he describes humanity.

This is Genesis 6-11. Now, the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. Well, that makes sense what we know about these Nephilim. And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.

So when God brings the flood, he is stopping this demonic attack. He's preventing the Messiah, he's preventing them from stopping the Messiah to come, and he takes all of those who created the coup, and it's saying, he binds them up, and he puts them in the darkest parts.

In Peter, it says Tartarus. He chains them in Tartarus for waiting for their day of judgment. So now that we know this story, this was, this was an attack on God's people.

[ 32 : 12 ] It was an attack on God's world to prevent judgment from coming. If you have that backstory, now go back and read why it's so important for Peter to comfort us with the victory of the Messiah.

This is verse, this is back to 1 Peter 3, verse 18. Having this story fleshed out in our minds, read these verses with me now. For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit.

So this is the whole story about his heel being bruised on our behalf. Adam and Eve's unrighteous acts were covered by the righteousness of Jesus in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits what?

He proclaimed his victory of resurrection and conquering death to the ones who tried to stop it in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prisons because they formerly did not obey when God's patience waited in the days of Noah while the ark was being prepared in which a few, that is eight persons, were brought safely through the water.

So we too, through Christ, Christ becomes our ark because this is how he compares it. How is it we're going to survive the suffering that we have in our flesh? Some of you are suffering immense amount of pain or have family members who are suffering.

[ 33 : 45 ] How is it we suffer not only mentally but spiritually and then eventually we're already feeling it in our country, these spiritual attacks that come our way because we hide ourselves in the midst of corruption.

We hide ourselves where? In Christ. We hide ourselves in the ark of Christ. Verse 21, baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

So he's using the rebellion and then he uses the gospel as a means to encourage and strengthen us. Well, why does this story end up really mattering going forward? How do we find any comfort from it?

Because the tactics may have changed but the outcomes have not. They're still trying to destroy creation. Just start thinking about what goes on in our world of how our world, they've convinced, some of it is demonic for sure, but they've convinced us to destroy ourselves.

Abortion, transgender, suicides, war, the holiness of marriage is gone. The marriage bed is destroyed.

[ 34 : 59 ] The distortion that most TV shows and movies do to intimacy is disgusting. And so all of this, the debauchery of Genesis 6 seen again in Sodom and Gomorrah is still present in our world.

It's just they've changed their tactics but they're still influencing us and influencing our world and the way in which Paul talks about it in Ephesians 2 it says every human being that is not freed by Christ is still a slave to the ones who are enslaving them.

This is the prince of the power of the air. So they're still trying to destroy the image bearers of God. So they can't stop the Messiah, he came.

So now how does the Messiah succeed? Now how does he go throughout the world? Through us. He just got done, Peter just got saying you are the royal temples, you are the royal priest, you proclaim victory.

Go back to chapter 3 and look at verse 8. Just as a reminder putting all of this in context. To those of us that have our eyes opened and are not under the control of the evil one, we have this as our call.

[ 36 : 21 ] 1 Peter 3.8 Finally, all of you have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary bless for to do this you were called that you may obtain a blessing.

You see, everyone in our culture, if they're not under Christ, they're under the evil one and they act by nature with evil. And if we respond with evil, guess what they don't receive?

The gift of the gospel. 1 Peter 3.14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them nor be troubled, but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.

Yet do it with gentleness and respect. Why? Because the people asking you are the people who are hurting you. As they torment you and hurt you and you don't give up your faith, your response is, well let me tell you why.

Let me tell you why. If we can't explain the supernatural strange parts of our Bibles to the world, when you open your mouth and say the power of God rests in these words, they won't believe you because you don't believe the rest of your Bible.

[ 37 : 53 ] It's too weird. Listen, God has decided that he will rescue this world. I have felt this this week, I've said this to a couple of you, a couple people on the phone too.

The greatest lie that Satan has wormed into our hearts is that the experience of our world is predominantly good. It's predominantly safe.

And your experience should be of gratification and happiness and progress. You hit your milestones, right? You go from the starter home to the big home. Then you reach retirement.

That's how we think life should go. And we look around and we see, well, some people have that. So it is possible. That's the lie. Because when you listen to the Bible, it says the world's in a curse.

Everyone dies. The world is under the, literally, Jesus says that Satan is the God of the universe. The God of this world, sorry. That he is, when it says you're not wrestling against flesh and blood, you're wrestling against powers that are far beyond your control.

[ 39 : 08 ] So how is this little church, these churches that Peter is writing to, how are they going to survive? Because they're dying from starvation and cancer. They're dying from suffering for their faith.

They're just they're underneath a lot of grief. And he says, remember, you're not fighting a physical war. You're fighting a spiritual war. The ones who have tried to attack you, Jesus has already won victory.

Remember the story of Noah? Remember what the angels did? Yeah, Jesus won and he'll win again. This is why the book of Revelation was written. He said, let me tell you the story from beginning to end.

And it's a big story about a supernatural war. Let me just end by reading this. I found it encouraging. It's a little long but I think we have some time. This, if you will turn to me to 2 Corinthians chapter 4 and we'll be done.

Amen. 2 Corinthians 4:1 it says this. Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart.

[ 40 : 14 ] But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with the words, sorry, with God's word.

But by the open statement of the truth, we will commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God. This was a healthy reminder for me as I was thinking about how to preach this passage. I cannot present a cunning explanation.

I can only give you what it says. And even if our gospel is veiled, is veiled to those who are perishing, in their case, the God of this world has blinded the minds of the unbeliever to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God.

For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ our Lord with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God who said, let light shine out of darkness, has shown in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

It is in our hearts that we know that Christ loves us. This becomes our motivation, not the gratification of our flesh or the protection of our bodies. so much so he uses an illustration, verse seven.

[ 41 : 27 ] But we have this treasure in jars of clay. Our bodies are so fragile to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. We are not the strength.

We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed. Perplexed, but not driven to despair. Persecuted, but not forsaken. Struck down, but not destroyed.

Always carrying in the body of death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

The point of our body is not to succeed in this world, but the point of our body is to house the light of Christ. And how do we do this?

It has to be done in a supernatural way. And that is why we come and gather as a church and receive the word, all of it, every word, whether we like it or not, we receive all of it to encourage us to look past our circumstances, to look past our suffering, and to look to Christ and say, as I die and as I suffer, He will not fail.

[ 42 : 42 ] He is victorious. I will continue to look to Him and I will love others and give a hope of the, give an answer of the hope that I have. Let's pray. Father, we are so weak and frail and there's so much about Your Word I don't even remotely understand, but as we continue to look verse by verse through Your book, may we always be encouraged by Your power.

It is not our strength, for we are weak vessels, but it is Your power that rests upon us. I just pray that as we as a congregation, as we hear these words this morning, we would be strengthened in Christ's name.

Amen. Thanks for listening to the sermon podcast of Grace Reformed Church in Spring Hill, Tennessee, where everyone is in equal need of grace.

To plan a visit or to learn more about us, visit our website at [gracereformed.org](http://gracereformed.org). Alejandra Weathers In Mr Billie Weathers in Spring Hill in Spring Hill as Haunted in Spring Hill in Spring Hill and the Red in Spring Hill in Spring Hill as aRS as a