

Confidence for Combat

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[0 : 00] A How are we, faith family?

We good tonight? We good? All right, good, good, good, good, good. If you've got a Bible, go to Ephesians 6. For the last time, hopefully not the last time ever in your Christian journey, but the last time in the series.

Tonight we are finishing up our summer series on the armor of God. It has been such a joy to teach this. Your feedback, the testimonies from the series has been absolutely amazing.

It really, like, you kind of have expectations about a series when you're coming into it. This has far exceeded any expectations I had. This, like, God in his providence had this word for us at this particular time, and I'm so thankful for that.

I do hope that it has been a great encouragement to you to work through the armor of God. So I got another one left in me. I hope you do too. But here's a quick review of what we've looked at through this series.

[1 : 48] And, of course, if you've missed any of this, you can go to our YouTube channel and catch up on any message that you may have missed. But we started with an overview of spiritual warfare that was kind of laying that foundation of what the Bible says about evil spiritual powers and things of that nature.

And then we just took each week and looked at one specific piece of the armor, the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes that's our security and confidence in Christ, the shield of faith that gets us through the trials of life, the helmet of salvation, which is looking to the salvation that is in the future, that's ours in Christ, the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

And then the last time, two weeks ago, even though it's not a piece of armor, Paul kind of closes out this section with prayer, how we're to pray at all times and in all ways with supplication.

That is that prayer really is the action. Remember, it's the I-N-G. We put on this, we put on that, praying all the time. So the action step of putting on this armor is through prayer.

Now, what I want to do tonight is I want to come back to this passage, and we're going to read through it again, is I just want to kind of give you some words, things that we maybe didn't have time to get to, and the intent really is to give you confidence in combat.

[3 : 17] My aim tonight is that you would just take a moment and breathe and rest in the Lord in the midst of your battles, in the midst of this warfare, that you would be a confident Christian in Jesus.

Okay, so that's my aim, and I trust the Lord will do that tonight as we work through this passage again. Ephesians 6, we'll start at verse 10 and read down through verse 18, and I'll invite you to please stand, if you're able to do so, for the honor of reading God's Word.

Paul says, Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against rulers and authorities and cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand, therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.

In all circumstances, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish the flaming darts of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication to that end.

[4 : 50] Keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints. You should have that memorized by now, right? So let's pray. Let's ask God to come and teach us tonight.

Father, thank you for this time to be together. We ask once again that you would come through your Word and talk to us, teach us, encourage us, strengthen us in you tonight.

That is my prayer, and I pray it in Jesus' name. And God's people said, amen. Amen. You can be seated. My father was a doctor who would come home late at night with a soul so bruised and bleeding from his unending, fateful fight.

To keep a hold of kindness in a world that isn't kind. To hold out hope of healing to a hurting mankind. And he'd flee back to his study, to his bookish, quiet place, with notes and books and journals to his special place.

And then he'd lock the door from things that can't be locked out. And his youngest son would starve for what he'd always do without.

[6 : 12] Those are actually lyrics by a musician by the name of Michael Card from a song entitled Underneath the Door. The song is actually about Michael's dad.

Michael's dad was a physician or a doctor in Nashville, Tennessee. And all of his life, Michael's dad wanted to be a doctor from age seven years old.

That's all he ever wanted to do. And he would practice being a doctor for 53 years until he was forced to retire at age 83 because of health reasons.

And in an interview, Michael was talking about the relationship that he had with his dad and the burden and the heaviness that his father would carry because of being a physician.

And this is what Michael said, quote, My dad would work all day dealing with patients in crisis, solving health issues, helping everyone. He was the hardest working man I knew.

[7 : 12] But when he came home, he wanted to be alone. So he'd go to his study, he'd put on his headphones, and he'd lock the door.

And it was Michael's responsibility every night to let his dad know that it was time to eat. But since he could never get his father's attention, what he had to do was slide notes underneath the door to let his father know that it was time to come eat.

Michael once again said in this interview, he said, My dad was a good man. I loved him. The problem was he thought he was his gift.

It's why six months after he retired from being a doctor, he died. Listen to this. He said, The problem was my dad never learned that his identity was not his ability.

Listen to me tonight, faith family. You and I live in a world that is obsessed with abilities and giftedness.

[8 : 28] We praise, we exalt people with great gifts and abilities. I mean, we will literally go spend big bucks to watch an athlete make this incredible sports play.

We will spend hours listening to a musician that's just mesmerizing with the way they play an instrument. To behold a painter that's got such an amazing touch.

A surgeon that's able to cut with such great skill. A carpenter that can do amazing things with their hands. I mean, our culture is obsessed with ability.

Amen? We are obsessed with giftedness. So much so, we even have TV shows that their whole goal is to display just how much America's got talent.

Because we want everybody to know how gifted people are. What their abilities are. And don't misunderstand me at all. We praise God for those gifts. We recognize that those gifts are a gift of God's grace.

[9 : 28] However, we must make sure we understand we are not our gifts. We are not our gifts.

As Michael said of his dad, that our identity is not found in our ability. And the reason why I want that in your mind this evening is because it would be very easy to end a series on spiritual warfare. And all this talk about putting on the armor of God. And end up relying on your ability to fight. To think that somehow this has something to do with your performance.

As though your power to live in triumph. Your power to live in victory is based on you. Listen, I bring us back as we close this series to this key verse that begins the whole section.

And you cannot forget this verse when you're in the midst of the war. Finally, be strong. Say it. In the Lord. Where is our strength found?

[10 : 42] It's found in the Lord. And in the strength of His might. Isn't that good news? Isn't that such a relief? That this is not based on my performance.

It's based on His power. My ability to stand comes from His strength. Notice this on the screen. That our power is not found, thank you Lord, in our giftedness.

Our power in this war is found in His greatness. Like we can't forget that. We must remember that victory is not found in armor.

It's found in the Almighty. So what I want us to do tonight, I want you to just take a deep breath. I want you to breathe. I want you to rest in Jesus.

Even in the midst of the battles that you're going through. Listen to me. Your identity is not your ability. Your identity is not your ability.

[11 : 45] And I want to give you at least four things that will give us confidence and encouragement as we continue to engage in the spiritual battles. Here's the first thing. Is I want you to realize this, faith family.

That this war is God's war, not our war. This war is God's war, not our war. It's important for us to remember this because, listen, while we are in a war, right?

I mean, if we've learned anything, we are in a battle. We are in a war. But this war is not, listen, it's not against us and evil spiritual powers. That's not where the ultimate battle is.

The ultimate battle is between evil spiritual powers and Almighty God. Are you tracking with me? In fact, one of the passages that we've referred to a lot in this series is Revelation chapter 12.

Now, granted, it's apocalyptic genre. It's full of all kinds of imagery and things of that nature. But this imagery is describing important truth.

[12 : 50] Let's look at it again in Revelation chapter 12, beginning of verse 7. Now, what broke out? War arose where? In heaven. In heaven. Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon.

The dragon and his angels fighting back. But he was, what? Defeated. And there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down.

That ancient serpent who's called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world. He was thrown down to the earth. And his angels, so all these evil spiritual powers, were thrown down with him.

So there was a war in heaven, do you see? Against God and this dragon or Satan or the devil. And that's where the ultimate war is at.

Now, once he was thrown down, watch what happens. Verse 13. When the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to earth, he pursued the woman who gave birth to the male child.

[13 : 49] That male child is Christ. Verse 17. Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those that keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.

Listen, this is really important. You've got to get this. It's kind of like in, any of y'all like me, like mafia movies, if you've never seen The Godfather, repent. Okay? And watch it. Okay? It's great.

It's an awesome. But if you like mafia movies, and of course, I'm talking real life here. I'm using this as an example. But in these kind of movies, what will happen is when one boss wants to go after another one, but they know they can't win.

They know they're not powerful enough. They know the other one is stronger. Rather than going after them, what they do is attack their children.

They go after someone who's important to them. In other words, in the same way, faith family, listen, evil spiritual powers come after us only because we belong to Him.

[14 : 54] Are you tracking with me? So this war is ultimately God's war. It's not our war. Now here's why that's actually good news. Because notice the command that's given all throughout Ephesians 6.

It shows up several times. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand. Look at verse 13. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, having done all to stand firm.

And then verse 14. Stand therefore. Now here's why it's so important that you understand this is God's war, not our war. It means, notice this on the screen, that God doesn't command us to win.

God only commands us to stand. That's a good place for an amen. Whew! You don't have to win this war because it's not your war. All you have to do is stand, be strong in the Lord.

Because it's ultimately His war. He's the one who is ultimately going to fight. Listen, no passage in the Bible, certainly not here in Ephesians 6, commands us to win this spiritual war because this war is not ours to win.

[16 : 12] It is God's. So my identity is not my ability. I can rest in the fact that, yes, I am in a war, but I'm in a war that ultimately God is going to be victorious in.

Many of you know one of my favorite hymns. We actually did this, I think it was a couple weeks ago, A Mighty Fortress Is Our God. We do that from time to time here at Faith Family, written by Martin Luther.

Many of you may know the song, but I don't know if you know the context of which the song comes from. Most people believe, most historians think that Luther wrote this hymn somewhere between August of 1527 and May of 1528.

Because in this period of a few months, Luther went through what he would call the darkest season of his life. During a period of those months, one of his students was killed for his faith.

A plague broke out in Wittenberg. Luther was dealing with a particular temptation. We don't know what it is, but he described it this way, I'm physically well, but outwardly the whole world, and inwardly the devil and all his angels make me suffer.

[17:35] On top of all that, his little girl who had been sick for about six months, passed away. It was one thing after another.

Luther described it as the darkest season. And that's saying a lot, because Luther went through a lot of trials, amen, if you know his life story. And he called that one of the darkest seasons of his life, and yet it was from that dark season of all those battles, and all those trials, and everything that he was dealing with on a daily basis, that he wrote these great words.

A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing. Our helper he amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing. For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe.

His craft and power are great, and armed with cruel hate. On earth is not his equal. Did we in our own strength confide?

Our striving would be losing. We're not the right man on our side. The man of God's own choosing. Who is that? Who asks?

[18:44] Is that? I can't read. You ask who that may be. Christ Jesus, it is he. Lord Saba of his name. From age to age the same.

For he must win the battle. Luther understood. Luther understood in all of these trials, this is not ultimately my war.

This is God's war. All I must do is be strong in the Lord and stand. This is not mine to win. This is just mine to stand.

Here's a second encouraging truth I want us to get our minds around tonight. Go back to verse 14. Verse 14 through 17. This is where we see all the different pieces of armor.

Stand therefore having fastened on the belt of truth, and the breastplate of righteousness, shoes for your feet, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit.

[19:49] Now here's the second thing I want us to get from that, and that is that our armor is a person, not a performance. Our armor is a person, not a performance.

Listen, I'm going to ingrain this in your mind. In terms of every time you think about the armor of God, I want you to realize it is not a Christian to-do list. I said this from the very first week, that the armor of God is not a what-to-do-as-a-Christian.

I've got to read my Bible more. I've got to be a better person. I need to tell more people about Jesus. All of those things are things that you should do. That's not what the armor is.

The armor of God is not your behavior. The armor of God is not your performance. The armor of God is a person. Notice it here on the screen. The armor of God is God.

The armor of God is God. Because where does all of this armor show up? It doesn't show up in Ephesians 6 for the first time.

[20:54] It is all over the book of Isaiah. Every single piece of armor that Paul mentions in Ephesians 6 shows up in Isaiah somewhere. In Isaiah chapter 11, The afflicted find their strength in the Spirit-filled Messiah who is dressed like this.

Righteousness shall be the belt of His waist. Faithfulness the belt of His loins. Who is it that ultimately wears the belt of truth? The Messiah.

In Isaiah 52, God's people erupt with singing when they hear this promise. My people shall know my name. Therefore in that day they shall know that it is I who speak.

Here I am. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him who bring the good news. Who publishes what? Peace. Who brings the good news of happiness.

Who publishes what? Salvation. In other words, where did they find their joy? They found their joy in the Savior whose feet brought peace.

[22 : 00] That's Ephesians 6. Isaiah chapter 59. The coming Messiah enters into this dark and evil world. And what is He wearing? Isaiah 59 verse 17.

Righteousness as a breastplate. And a helmet of salvation on His head. That is, it's the Messiah who wears the breastplate of righteousness.

He is the only one that is righteous. Amen? And it's the Messiah who is wearing this helmet of salvation. And then Isaiah 49.

The servant of the Lord is described as the one who has a mouth like a sharp sword. That is, the very servant of Yahweh has the sword of the Spirit because he speaks the very word of God.

And this is why David in Psalm 18 describes God this way. That this God, His way is perfect. He is a shield for all those who take refuge in Him.

[23 : 05] That is, who is the ultimate shield of faith? God is. Listen, I would fail you. I would fail you as a pastor.

If I taught you that the armor of God is something you put on to go fight evil spiritual powers alone, rather than putting on the armor of God is taking refuge in God.

In fact, if you hear people teaching that the armor of God is, you go out and be righteous. And you go out and do this more.

And you go out and you just take it to those evil spiritual powers. Run from that teaching. Because that is not what the armor of God is about. The armor of God is God.

And you will never be free until you realize the armor of God is a person, not your performance. If you think this war depends on your ability, you are dead meat.

[24 : 15] It depends on the power of God as we take refuge in God. For God is our armor.

I mean, no greater image of this in Scripture is seen than that of Revelation chapter 1. You should read it sometime. Revelation 1, John sees again this apocalyptic vision, this vision of Jesus.

And in this vision, he sees Jesus in this long robe demonstrating His authority. He's got white hair demonstrating His deity. He's got eyes of fire and feet of bronze demonstrating His power.

When He speaks, it's like the sound of a roaring water demonstrating His authority. His face is shining like the sun demonstrating His glory.

And what is He holding? He's holding the keys of death and Hades demonstrating His victory. And so John sees this glorious Christ, this victorious Christ, this mighty Christ.

[25 : 26] And what is Christ doing? Revelation 1 verse 13 says this, He is in the midst of the lampstands.

And who are the lampstands? The churches of Jesus. In other words, what this vision is, is a visual image of what Paul tells us in Romans 8 verse 31.

That what then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? Like, get that vision in your mind.

Jesus stands with His church. This is not our performance. This is about a person.

This is not about our war. It's about His war. And what that means is that we can breathe. We can rest in Him knowing the battle does not depend on us.

[26 : 31] Here's another encouragement I hope that you'll take from this passage. Verse 12. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against rulers, authorities, cosmic powers, over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

Here's the third confidence we have in combat. And that is that we don't fight for victory. We fight from victory. We don't fight for victory. Yeah, absolutely.

We don't fight for victory. We're already fighting from a place of victory. Now, hang with me. If you've zoned out, what do you do? Zone back in. Okay, I'm going to take a teaching moment.

I'm going to throw a lot of Scripture at you, but you don't have a problem with that, do you? Right? Because I want you to see something. When we read that verse, rulers, authorities, and powers, and all of these different language that Paul uses here in verse 12, our default position.

We naturally think that this is about our struggle with evil spiritual forces, which of course is true. No one here is denying that at all.

[27 : 38] What I'm suggesting is that if you take that language of Ephesians 6 verse 12, and you run it through the redemptive story, you're going to realize something that's far more evident than I think we tend to think about.

Namely, when we think about the mission of Jesus, when we think about the work of Jesus, we almost always think of it in terms of what Jesus is doing for human beings, right?

We say Jesus came to earth for us. Jesus died on the cross for our sins. Jesus rose on the third day to give us new life.

Is all of that true? Of course it's true. I preach it all the time. It's the essence of the gospel. We'll continue to say that. My argument is not that that's not true.

It's just there's more to the redemptive story. Now zone in here. Notice how what I want to show you is every single aspect of what Jesus came to do.

[28 : 44] Every single one of them includes evil spiritual powers, rulers, authorities, and things of that nature. Let me show you. Let's begin here first.

Okay? Let's begin here first with the incarnation. Why did Jesus come in the first place? Yes, it was to save us. Yes, it was to redeem us. But according to the apostle John, the reason the son of God appeared, that is he came to earth, was to do what?

Destroy the works of the devil. The writer of Hebrews says something very similar to that in Hebrews 2.14. Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise predicteth the same thing.

That is, he became a human just like us. Why did he become a human like us? Why did God become a man? That through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death.

That is, say it, the devil. In other words, the scripture is very clear that one of the reasons why Jesus came had to do with evil spiritual powers.

[29 : 52] Does everybody see that? Say yes. What about the ministry of Jesus? The ministry of Jesus. I could give you 30 of these. I'm just going to give you one. Matthew 12, Jesus makes it very clear.

But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out what? Demons. Evil spiritual powers. If that happens, then what's going on?

The kingdom of God has come upon you. You know the kingdom of God is here. Why? Because the kingdom of darkness is frightened. The kingdom of darkness is overthrown.

Or how can someone enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods unless he first binds the strong man? In other words, Jesus demonstrates in his ministry his binding of evil spiritual powers.

That is why on multiple occasions he casts out demons and demonstrates his authority over the evil spiritual powers. You with me?

[30 : 55] So you see it in the incarnation. You see it in the ministry of Jesus. Look thirdly here at the crucifixion. Paul talks about this in Colossians 2.

Pat preached through this. And you who were dead in your trespasses, the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands.

This he set aside. Talk to me. Nailing it to the cross. Now, you don't need a degree in theology to know what event are we talking about. What is?

The crucifixion, right? Yeah. This is not the birth of Jesus. This is not the life of Jesus. This is the crucifixion of Jesus. Everybody with me? What happened?

Starting to get excited. What happened as a result of the crucifixion? He disarmed the what? Rulers.

[31 : 57] And that's the same language that Paul uses in Ephesians 6. Through the cross, he disarmed the rulers and authorities. He put them to open shame.

And he triumphed over them. In other words, at the cross, Jesus disarmed evil spiritual powers. He put them to shame.

And he triumphed over them by defeating sin. Everybody with me? It's in the incarnation. It's in the ministry of Jesus. It's in the crucifixion of Jesus.

What about the resurrection and the ascension? I'm including both of these together because Paul does in Ephesians 1. Oh boy. Then he worked in Christ when he raised him.

So what event are we talking about? Thank you. Okay, you got that one right. Right out of the gate. This is not a rocket science here, okay? Yeah, it's the resurrection from the dead and seated him at the right hand of God.

[32 : 59] So what event is that? That's the ascension. So we're talking about the resurrection and the ascension in heavenly places. And what happened as a result of the resurrection and the ascension? Jesus is far above all.

There it is again. Rule and authority and power and dominion and above every name that's named, not only at this age, but the one that is to come.

In other words, Jesus disarmed the evil spiritual powers at the cross. And he now has dominion over them because of the resurrection and his ascension to the right hand of God.

Isn't this awesome? I'm not done. What about the second coming? What about the second coming?

In this famous passage of 1 Corinthians 15 where Paul's talking about the resurrection of Jesus, let's look at what he says, for as in Adam all die and also in Christ shall all be made alive, but each in his own order, Christ the first fruits, then at his coming, what event are we talking about?

You're catching on. Great job. At his second coming, those who belong to Christ, then comes the end. So now we're talking about the final fulfillment of all things.

[34 : 18] What's he going to do? Deliver the kingdom to God, the Father, after destroying every same language, rule and every authority and power for he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.

Listen to me. Every single aspect of the gospel is not just about what Jesus is doing for us, but what he's doing to evil spiritual powers.

In summary, notice this here. At the cross, Jesus disarmed them. Through the empty tomb, he defeated them. And at the second coming, he will destroy them.

Yeah, you can get a little excited about that. That's good. So his birth, his ministry, his life, his death, his resurrection, his ascension, his second coming, they all speak about his triumph over the powers and principalities.

So when Paul thinks about the gospel, of course he thinks about our salvation. Yes. Amen. But he also thinks about the delegitimizing, the de-almost throning, if you will, on the world's landscape of powers and principalities.

[35 : 45] Listen, that's why I'm telling you this. All that was to say this. You don't fight for victory. You fight from victory. Jesus, through his birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and second coming, will be the one who takes care of forever the evil spiritual powers.

So we can breathe. Yes. I hope some of you are beginning to feel this. Just breathe. It doesn't mean it's not hard. It doesn't mean it's not difficult. Oh, it is absolutely that.

This is a very difficult war that we're in, but it is God's war, not our war. It's about our armor as a person, not our performance.

And we're not fighting for victory. We're fighting from it. And this is to give us confidence in combat. Confidence as believers as we engage in these battles.

And then lastly, I'll give you one more and we're done. Look at how Paul closes this section. I wanted to say more about this. And so I felt like this last message would be an appropriate place.

[36 : 53] In verse 17, you know, he ends with all of the pieces of armor. He talks about the helmet of salvation, the sword of the spirit. And then he ends with praying at all times in the spirit.

We talked about that to keep alert with perseverance, to make supplication. But then notice, notice this highlighted part. Notice what he says in verse 19. And by the way, and I mentioned this when we did the message on prayer.

While you're praying, would you pray for me? Pray that the words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to do what? To proclaim the mystery of the gospel.

Here's the fourth thing I want to leave you with. And it's that spiritual submission occurs through the Great Commission. Spiritual submission occurs through gospel mission or the Great Commission. Paul ends this section on spiritual warfare by asking that they would pray for him to continue to share the gospel. Why? Lean in because that's how we push evil forces back.

[38 : 02] We say that again. The reason why it is so significant that we proclaim the gospel, that we share the gospel, is because that's how we push evil forces back. We have been far too influenced by sensationalism and, notice, extreme charismatics.

Okay? Not a problem with charismatics. They're brothers and sisters in Christ. But there are extreme charismatics that have taken this kind of stuff way too sensational. Listen, spiritual warfare is not shouting at demons.

It is not performing exorcism. It is not lighting fireworks to chase the evil spirits away. It's not calling in ghostbusters to take care of any evil spirits in the room.

We push evil forces back by preaching the gospel and making disciples. Okay, three of you were fired up about that.

That's okay. Come on. I'll get you. I'll get you. Why does Jesus, listen, why does Jesus tell us to go to all nations? Why in the Great Commission is He commissioning us, go to all nations and make disciples?

[39 : 17] Is that just Jesus wants to be inclusive for all nations? Or is there something more to that? I told you in the very first sermon what happened at the Tower of Babel.

Let me remind you. This is Deuteronomy chapter 32, 8 and 9. Remember the days of the Lord. Remember the days of old. Consider the years of all generations. Ask your Father and He will inform you.

Your elders and they will tell you. When the Most High, Yahweh, allotted the nations, that's at Babel, and He set the divisions of the sons of humanity.

And He fixed the territories of peoples, that is all the nations, according to the number of the what? sons of God, the Elohim, these evil spiritual beings that we talked about.

So, what happened as a result of Babel? Well, what happened as a result of Babel was that these rebellious spiritual beings were divided among the nations.

[40 : 24] We've said before, this is why nations rage. It's why there's a history of war. There's corruption in every civilization. There's evil everywhere. Because evil spiritual powers were given territories in all the nations.

So, how do we triumph? What is the ultimate goal of the gospel? To take the nations back. To take the gospel everywhere and make disciples so that we bring the nations back to God.

This is foretold in Psalm 82, verses 6-8. You'll notice it here on the screen. I said, you are gods. Speaking to these created spiritual beings.

Sons of the Most High. All of you. Nevertheless, like men, you shall die. And fall like any prince.

Arise. That same word in the Septuagint is the same word for resurrection.

Arise. Resurrection. Oh God. And judge the earth. For you shall inherit what? All the nations.

[41 : 44] That's why Jesus says what? All authority has been given to me. In heaven and on earth.

So go make disciples of all nations. Faith family, the ultimate threat.

Listen. The ultimate threat to evil spiritual powers is not wearing a cross around your neck, but taking up your cross daily. This is not some movie where you just hold out a cross and they're like, oh no.

It's a wooden cross. I can't. It's not how it works. You push them back by taking up your cross.

Every day, following Jesus and being the salt and light of the earth.

Declaring the good news of Jesus everywhere. It is why after finishing all the instruction on the armor, what does Paul ask for?

[43 : 01] Prayer that he would keep preaching the gospel. Because that's what they fear. I'll give you one example of this and I'm done. One example of this and I'm done. Look at Acts 16. Acts 16.

In verse 16, it says, As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination. So here you have this demon-possessed girl whose fortune-telling.

She brought her owners much gain because of this fortune-telling. So she followed Paul and us crying out, These men are servants of the Most High God.

That's the same language of Psalm 82. Who proclaim to you the what? The way of salvation. And this kept going on for many days.

And Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, this evil spirit, I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And it came out of her that very hour.

[44 : 08] Listen to me. Listen to me. What was that evil spirit bothered by? Was it bothered by the fact that Paul was a good moral man? That he was honest at work?

That he was a family man? No, none of those things were a threat to that evil spirit. That evil spirit was threatened because Paul was preaching the gospel.

He was declaring the way of salvation. Why? Because Jesus will return when all of his sheep are brought back to the fold.

And what happens then? Evil spiritual powers will face their final judgment. You are no threat to evil spiritual powers by having good morals.

You are a threat when you're on mission. That's how we take the nations back. So here it is. Here it is. If you want to be a threat to demons, make disciples.

[45 : 12] You want to be a threat to demons? Make disciples. And then the end will come and he will put every enemy under his feet.

Faith family, you are not your gift. You are not your gift. Your identity is not your ability. Let's be very clear this evening. In this spiritual war, there's only one king. It's his war. It's his armor. It's his victory. And it's his mission. Therefore, just be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.

And all God's people said, amen. Let's pray. Let's pray. Lord, wow, that helps us breathe. Boy, does that help us breathe.

[46 : 28] To have confidence in combat. To know that this war is your war. It's not our war. That our armor is the person of Jesus.

It's not our performance. We fight from victory, not for it, because in every aspect of everything Jesus has done, he has shown that he's the one that's victorious.

And the way in which we advance forward is to keep preaching the gospel, keep making disciples, strong in you and in the strength of your might.

And when we do that, we will discover that greater is he that's in us than he that's in the world. Lord, help us here at Faith Family be an armed community.

with our refuge in Jesus and our mouths unashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ. You have given us everything that we need.

[47 : 35] May we rest in you. And Lord, help us tonight as we enter into a time of remembrance and reflection on what Christ did for us at Calvary.

and that it was not only a saving us from our sins, it was also a disarming of our very enemies.

And I pray that in this moment we would meet with you and rest in you and that you would be our shield. in Jesus' name, Amen.

Amen. Thank you.