

The Weapon of War

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- [0 : 0 0] I continue this transformation by targeting this transformation by targeting this All right, faith family, we've got more armor to put on.
- So you've got your Bible, go to Ephesians 6, continuing in our series in the armor of God. And this is the last piece of armor, not the last sermon from the series. I want to do at least one more week in this series on the armor of God.
- But this is the last piece of armor tonight. The feedback has been amazing. In fact, I asked last week what your favorite piece of armor has been thus far. Now, of course, all of them are important, amen?
- You've got to have them all on. But certain ones will hit you in different ways. And actually, last week, the helmet of salvation is probably leading the way with this poll that I'm taking, with maybe the shield and shoes a close second.
- But it's just been interesting, the feedback that people have had about how this series has been encouraging you in your faith and the daily battles of life. And in fact, some have even said this is the best series we've ever had at Faith Family, which just means all the other ones were that bad, right?
- [1 : 4 9] So, hopefully not, hopefully not, hopefully not. Anyways, quick review, here we go. This is kind of what we've been doing through this series. If you're new with us or it's summertime, you may have missed a week, you can go online to our YouTube channel and get all of these.
- We spent a whole first week just on talking about spiritual warfare, what Paul means by these powers and principalities and evil spiritual forces. And so if you missed that week, you've got to go back, because this is more than just the devil made me do it, or it's just about Satan.
- It's a much, much bigger warfare than that. Then we talked about the belt of truth, which I argue is specifically the gospel of Jesus. It is not the Word of God.
- You're going to see that tonight. The belt of truth is specifically the gospel of Jesus. And then the breastplate, which is the righteousness we have in Christ.
- Then our shoes, that is our confidence, our security, that we have peace with God no matter what happens in life. And then the shield of faith, which allows us to endure all the fiery arrows of the evil ones.
- [2 : 5 4] And then last week we talked about the helmet of salvation, but specifically it's a future salvation. We are looking to that final day and the salvation that will be ours when Christ returns.
- So that's where we are, but we've got one more piece of armor we're going to see here in verse 17. And so if you're able to stand, I'm going to invite you to please do so. As we begin verse 10, read down through verse 17 in this final piece of armor that Paul speaks about here.
- He says, It says,
- Let's pray together.

We pray this in Jesus' name and God's people said, Amen. Amen. You can be seated. Meet Stefan Thomas. Stefan is a software developer who used to live in Germany, but for the last about 10 years or so has lived in San Francisco.

[5 : 13] Stefan was an early adapter to the Bitcoin revolution. Some of you may have heard of this. Back in 2011, he was actually approached by a Bitcoin enthusiast from Switzerland who wanted him to make a video and post it on YouTube explaining what Bitcoin was all about.

And so Stefan put together a one minute animated video entitled, What is Bitcoin? Bitcoin? By the way, faith family, a question I still can't answer, right?

But that's just me. And so as a favor for doing this, he was gifted 7,002 Bitcoins. He received this in a hard drive through the mail, and it was password protected.

Now listen, at the time, you know, Bitcoin was just getting started. And so this 7,002 Bitcoins really wasn't worth all that much. But you may or may not know that since 2011, Bitcoin has had like an annual growth of like 102%.

It's up like 19,000% since inception. It's ridiculous. In fact, that 7,002 Bitcoins that Stefan was gifted is now worth about \$350 million.

[6 : 44] Two of you are blown away by that. Okay, clearly, you're not impressed at all. Listen, he got all of that for making a one minute video. But he's facing a giant problem.

He can't remember the password. The piece of paper that the password was written on, he's lost. And to make matters worse, it's on an Iron Key USB drive.

And if you don't know what that means, Iron Key only gives you 10 password guesses before it permanently deletes everything on the drive.

Oh, now I got your attention. The \$350 million didn't matter, but the password does. Anyways, he has tried eight of his 10 password attempts, meaning he only has two left before all of that Bitcoin will be erased.

Can you imagine? Can you imagine that? Can you imagine having that kind of wealth at your fingertips and you can't even access it?

[7 : 54] You know, listen, that kind of experience on a much, much smaller scale for us is something that we've all experienced. But here's the difference. Listen in. It's not that we can't access something great.

It's that we don't access something great. Are you with me? Well, we've got computers with these amazing capabilities, and yet most of us use them to check email and surf the internet.

Maybe you're in a relationship. It's got amazing potential, and you just settle for surface level. Some of you have automobiles that can drive so fast, and yet you only go the speed limit, right?

Yeah, which is what you should do, right? Anyways, or you've been blessed financially in a way that you're able to actually help people, and yet you keep that to yourself.

Listen, oftentimes we're like one of the servants in the parable of the talents. Do you remember that story that Jesus tells? We're the one that was given a great opportunity, and yet used it for so little.

[9 : 07] That's the danger. That's the fear I have with most Christians as it relates to this final piece of armor.

Look at it in verse 17. Verse 17 says, Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit.

Now, we've done this every single week in talking about what the significance is of this particular piece of armor, particularly as it relates to the Roman soldier.

Again, this is clearly the illustration that Paul has in mind here. And so, for this particular piece of armor, it was a very common word that Paul uses here.

The Greek word's a very common word for a small sword known as the gladius. It's known as the gladius. It's the small sword. The reason why we know that this is the sword that Paul is referring to is there's actually a different Greek word that's used to describe the longer sword that you've got to have two hands to wield.

[10 : 09] That's not the sword Paul's talking about. He's talking about the smaller sword. Now, the reason why it's important to narrow that down and know specifically which one he means is because it helps us understand what this sword was used for.

If you're with me, say yes. So here's the practical things for a Roman soldier. First is that it was carried with them at all times. That big, heavy sword was just something you couldn't wag around everywhere.

But that smaller sword was lighter and you were able to have it with you wherever you would go. In fact, think of it almost like the pistol in an illustration of like guns.

It's like the pistol of the guns. You can have it on you. You can carry it with you wherever you are. Here's the second thing. Not only that is this sword was meant more for action than it was protection.

Oh, no, that's not to say that you couldn't defend yourself with it. It was just more for the purpose of attacking. And that's important because, listen, of all the other pieces of the armor that are used for protection, right?

[11 : 20] I mean, the breastplate's protecting what? The heart. The helmet is protecting the head or the mind. The shoes are protecting the feet.

It's like we're back in kindergarten, right? Yeah, they're protecting the feet. So all of these other pieces protect a part of the body. You're with me, right? Except this one.

This one is not... The sword is not meant really to protect anything. It's meant for offense. It's meant for attack. A third thing is that the sword was a threat to the enemy.

I mean, think of it. If all you are is dressed in protective armor, you're not really going to be that much of a threat to the enemy. You may be well protected, but you're no threat.

Does that make sense? But when you pull out your sword, that strikes fear into the enemy. You can actually inflict pain with the sword.

[12 : 22] You can even think about it this way. Oh man, this might even preach. I might get fired up. Here we go. All the other armor protects from being wounded, but only the sword enables you to win.

Oh man, y'all are with me, aren't you? Come on. All the other pieces of armor, they will protect you from getting wounded. They'll protect your heart. They'll protect your head. They'll protect your feet. But only the sword allows you to triumph, allows you to win in this war.

Now, what's the spiritual significance of the sword? Since clearly, Paul is using this armor in a spiritual way. Well, unlike many of the other pieces of armor where you kind of have to do a little biblical work, you kind of have to kind of research it out because one of the things that I've said each week is we're not going to guess.

We're not going to, well, this is what I think it is. No, we're going to say based on everything we can understand biblically, what is that piece of armor? I'll give you one example. Last week, the helmet of salvation, if you just read it casually and assume, you're going to think that's, okay, when I'm attacked, I remind myself that I am a Christian.

I am saved. Well, that's a great thing to do, but that's not what that armor is about. We actually did the biblical work to show that it's about a future salvation.

[13 : 47] Everybody's with me. Well, on this one, we don't have to guess. We don't have to do a whole lot of searching. Paul just comes out and tells us the spiritual significance of the sword, and here it is.

Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, talk to me, which is the Word of God. So we don't have to guess which one this is.

It's the Word of God. There's really no debate in much of the literature or research regarding what this is. It is the Word of God.

Think of it this way. The Word is our weapon of war. The Word is our weapon of war.

And of course, this is a very common metaphor in the Bible that is to talk about the Word in the context of a sword. You think, for example, Hebrews 4:12, for the what?

[14 : 45] The Word of God is living and active. It's sharper than any two-edged sword. In the book of Revelation, Revelation 19, when Jesus speaks, when Jesus speaks a word that is symbolized as a sword coming out of His mouth in Revelation 19.

And so it's very common to see the Word as a sword. Now, this really helps us with all the practical reasons that a sword meant for a Roman soldier.

Think of it like this. Here we go. We are to carry God's Word with us all the time, right? I mean, the Bible's always saying things like you need to hide God's Word in your heart.

You need to meditate on it day and night. You need to... Listen, you don't know when attack is coming, so you better carry your sword with you everywhere all the time.

I guess I'm fired up for you, all right? So, yeah. And listen, I know we could actually carry a Bible with us everywhere we go. That's a great thing to do. It may not always be practical to do that.

[16 : 03] You've got it on your app. Maybe it's on your phone. But you know what this is a great point to emphasize is Scripture memorization. Scripture memorization.

You won't always have the app with you. You won't always have the actual book with you. And so that's why you're to write it on your heart and memorize it in your mind.

Because if you've always got it here, you've always got it with you. Well, but I'm just not much of a memorizer. This is war! This is war!

Don't give me, I'm not much of a reader and I'm not good at memorizing. Stop it! The battle for your heart and mind is on the line.

Are you going to be lazy about that? No! Take up your sword and carry it with you all the time. Next, is it's meant for action, not just protection.

[17 : 03] Of course it's not to say that the Word of God can't protect you, but that's what all those other truths we've talked about does. The Word of God is meant to attack, to take action.

There's no greater example, is there, in all the Bible, than Jesus in the wilderness when He's tempted by Satan? What does Jesus use as His source of attack against the evil one?

Scripture. For it is written. For it is written. For it is written, Jesus says, over and over. Notice thirdly, is that it actually is.

This is why you've got to have it with you all the time, because it's actually a threat to the enemy. Like, how many times does the Bible talk about resist the devil and he will flee?

Like, you've got something that threatens him. You have something that is actually, that can actually inflict pain upon the lies of the evil spiritual powers.

[18 : 07] Once again, in the example with Jesus in the encounter with Satan in Matthew chapter 4, look at it here on the screen. It says, Jesus said to him, Be gone, Satan, for it is written.

And then he quotes the Word of God. You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve. And what did the devil do? The devil left him.

Why? Because the Word of God is a threat to the enemies of God. So carry it with you. It is meant for action, and it is actually a threat.

Notice this here on the screen, faith family. The ultimate threat to the lies of our enemies is the truth of God. The truth of God slices right through their lives.

Every Christian ought to carry. Every Christian has to carry the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

[19 : 19] Now, I think this has some very important implications and applications for us. The first is this, and it's obvious, I know, but it needs to be stated. You're going to be unprepared for war if you're ignorant of the Word.

I mean, what good does it have a Bible if you don't ever read it? What good does it have a sword if you don't ever use it? I'm trying to be sensitive, and in another sense, I'm not trying to be sensitive because this is probably an area that all of us need to wake up.

Well, you know, I just don't really have a lot of time. I'm just, you know, I'm really busy. I've got so much going on, you know. I mean, maybe I can give the Word of God a few minutes a day.

Like, you don't get it. You don't get how serious this is. You are not prepared for the war if you're not equipped in the Word, if you're ignorant of what God has given you.

I'm going to say this. Don't whine about getting wounded if you never pick up your weapon. And sometimes we're so shocked about why I'm struggling with this and why I can't get over that.

[20 : 32] Use your weapon. You have been equipped with God's Word. Secondly, is that time in study produces growth in skill.

See, this is another thing that fits so well with this illustration of the Word of God being a sword, is because you know with any weapon, right, the more you use it, the more skilled you become with it, right?

In fact, the longer you practice and the more you know about it, the better you get. Again, another illustration the Bible uses a lot. In fact, look at this rebuke that the writer of Hebrews gives to his readers.

He says, now listen, by this time you ought to be teachers, but yet you still need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food.

For everyone who lives on milk is what? Say it, unskilled. Unskilled in the what? In the Word of righteousness, since he is a child.

[21 : 39] But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment, trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

Everybody gets the point, right? We all know that this is a really, really bad idea, right? The last thing you want is a child using some type of powerful weapon.

They don't know how to use it. They're ignorant of it. That's a very dangerous scenario. But as equally concerning is being an adult using a butter knife.

Like, you ought to be teachers. Why do you still have to have somebody teach you the basic elementary principles of the oracles of God? Why are you so...

Why are you 10 years in and you're this unskilled? Is everybody tracking with me? This is a common rebuke the Bible, the biblical authors give us is that, listen, it's going to take time, but with time and study, you will develop skill.

[22 : 45] And the more skill you have, the better trained you'll be to slice and dice the enemies when they come.

So listen, don't be ignorant of the Word or you're not prepared for the war. And this is... You're going to have to give up some things of this world to fully be equipped in the Word.

Preach, preacher. You're going to have to give up things in this world to have the time to make sure you are equipped in the Word.

And your spiritual victory on a daily basis depends on it. Amen? Alright. Well, what about this sword of the Spirit? What does that mean?

Go back to our verse here. The helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit. Now, what does this mean? What does it mean that the Word of God is a sword, but it's a sword of the Spirit?

[23 : 51] Well, as you can imagine, there are lots of crazy interpretations about this. Once again, people use it out of context or they guess and they'll talk about things about being slain in the Spirit, which is complete nonsense in terms of what Paul is talking about here.

What Paul means here is actually very simple, right? The literal phrase here, *toi pneumatas*, *toi pneumatas*, is the of the Spirit.

That can actually be taken in an adjective way or a genitive way. If you take it as an adjective, then Spirit is describing the sword.

That is, it's a spiritual sword. Everybody with me? It's a spiritual sword. Or, you could take it in the genitive way that it is a sword given to you by the Spirit.

Everybody with me? Say yes. So, is it a spiritual sword or is it a sword given to us by the Spirit? And the answer is, yes. Either one is biblical.

[24 : 57] Either one is actually right and I'll prove it to you biblically. Notice here in 2 Peter 1. Knowing this, first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation.

For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man. But men spoke from God as they were carried along, what? By the, say it, Holy Spirit.

So, how did we get the Scripture? From the Spirit. Spirit. It is a word that was given to us by the very Spirit of God.

Paul is writing this letter to the Ephesians inspired by the Holy Spirit. Right? At the same time, not only is it a sword given to us by the Spirit, but notice what Paul says here in 2 Corinthians 10.

This is a really, look how much I highlighted on this verse for you to soak in. Though we walk in the flesh. Now here Paul is not talking about flesh in a negative sense.

[26 : 01] He's talking about in a human sense. We walk as humans, but we're not waging war according to the flesh. What does he say in Ephesians 6?

This war is not against flesh and blood. Right? It's against powers and principalities. So we're waging a war not according to the flesh. The weapons of our warfare are what?

Say this. Not of the flesh. They're spiritual. These aren't physical weapons. They're spiritual weapons. In fact, they have divine power to destroy strongholds.

We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the truth, the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ.

In other words, the Word of God is given to you by the Spirit and it is a spiritual sword. It is not a physical weapon. It is a spiritual weapon that we wield against, that we use against evil spiritual powers.

[27 : 10] Now I want us to stop and really reflect on the power and significance of this. I'm going to use this illustration. Any of you are comic book fans, you may remember probably the most famous edition of Stan Lee's Spider-Man is an edition known as Spider-Man No More.

And you'll even see this kind of get portrayed in the movies as well, where Peter is struggling with the powers that he's been given. He's very upset that the public is ungrateful when he helps.

He's lost his personal life. There's all constant threats against people that he loves. And then there's that famous moment where he throws away his costume.

It's as though he's giving up on being Spider-Man. He's tired of it and he's quitting. And then one day, Peter sees a guard that is being attacked and it reminds him of the famous words that Uncle Ben once told him.

Remember, with great power comes great responsibility. Now what's the point behind that? Uncle Ben's advice is what? You've been given something powerful.

[28 : 26] Use it for good. Do you understand what's been given to you? Do you realize the power that is at your disposal?

Like, you have this power not to waste it. You have this power to use it for good. Amen? Now here's the thought I want you to get.

Here it is. You may not have superhero strength, but you've been given a supernatural sword.

Do you have any idea the power you have when you take up the Word of God given to you by the Spirit of God?

Are you with me tonight? Like, I can't tell if I'm talking to the wall here. You have been given something mighty, something powerful.

[29 : 35] Use it to walk in victory. Use it for good. For God has given you His Word.

Listen, He has given you the infallible, all-sufficient, inerrant, perfect Word of God through the Spirit of God. And it contains the power of God to make spiritual forces flee.

Use it. Put on, therefore, the belt of truth. Know the Gospel of Jesus. Realize what He has done when He died on the cross for your sins and rose from the grave and is seated at the right hand of the Father interceding for you so that your breastplate will be secure and you'll know who you are, that you are the righteousness of Jesus Christ by faith in Him.

That way, your feet can be secure through the peace you have with God that you know that there is nothing in this life that could ever separate you from the love of God.

You are forever secure. So when the arrows of life come, and they will, all the sufferings and the trials of life that will come at you, you will be able to raise your shield of faith and you'll be able to move forward and endure no matter what happens to you while the helmet of salvation is firmly fixed on your head because your mind is set on a future glory, a future salvation that is yours in Jesus Christ, knowing that the one that endures to the end will be saved.

[31 : 04] And now, with all of that protecting you and all of that defending you against spiritual attack, take out your spiritual sword given to you by the Spirit and fight, fight, fight, fight, fight!

Destroy strongholds. Slice through false teaching. Take every lie that comes into your mind captive. You, dear church, are soldiers for Christ.

And the gates of hell will not prevail against you. Amen. That's a way to end a letter.

Amen? That's how Paul is finishing this letter. Come on, church. Do you know who you are? Do you know what you have? Then why do you live so defeated?

Put it on. Use it. You've been given the Word of God, the sword of the Spirit, to attack, to take every thought captive in Jesus Christ.

[32 : 16] Oh man, what a vision of the armor of God and how it all fits together for the soldier of God to face daily, daily battles and walk in victory.

So, what do you think evil spiritual powers come after? They come after your sword. They come after your sword. And one of the things that I've done each and every week with each piece of armor is I've tried to expose one of the schemes of the devil, one of the schemes of these evil spiritual powers as they relate to each piece of armor.

So, you'll remember with the breastplate, I talked about one of the schemes is convincing you that what you do is who you are. But what you do is not who you are.

Who you are is defined by what Jesus did, not what you do. Amen? Or, the helmet. That is, it's easy to get focused on temporary things and all the things of this life that we lose sight of future glory.

Or, the shoes. They want to convince you that God is mad at you, He's upset with you, He'll never forgive you for what you did, and you need to be like, no, I'm protected against that, I'm secure, because I forever have peace with God through Jesus Christ.

[33 : 41] So, each piece of armor, I've exposed a scheme that the devil likes to use to cause us to live defeated. Well, what about this one as it relates to the sword?

And we've kept all of these in the context of Ephesians, which again, is my biggest criticism when most people teach on this, is it's not, it's not taken into consideration the rest of the book.

So, is there anything in Ephesians that helps us understand how, oh man, just, can you go ahead and just give me a preach preacher? Because, because this needs to be preached.

How the spiritual evil forces might try to impact our use of the sword. Ephesians chapter 4, verse 11. He gave the apostles, prophets, evangelists, and shepherds, and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry for the building up of the body of Christ.

Until we all attain the unity of faith and the knowledge of the Son of God to mature manhood, to mature stature in the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

[34 : 59] So there's our connection. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head into Christ.

Now think about it. If the sword of the Spirit is the Word of God, then how would evil spiritual powers keep you from using your sword?

Here it is. Notice it on the screen. Evil spiritual powers achieve defeat by keeping you easily deceived. Let me say it a different way.

They do everything they can to keep you a baby. A child in the Word. And why would it be such a successful strategy to keep you in baby, childish form as it relates to your understanding of the Word of God?

It's simple. You know this. Children don't know enough to know better. Children don't know enough to know better. Right? That's why Paul is so concerned.

[36 : 10] In fact, he calls this concern about being childlike in faith or childlike in your knowledge of God is that you're tossed to and fro by the waves.

Have you ever seen parents, or maybe you've done this, you ever taken your children to the beach? Talking about the little children. What does almost every parent do when their kid gets real close to the water?

They grab them. Why? Because they know if they get out there in the waves, they're in serious danger. It could overpower them. Faith family, spiritual children are one well-written book away from heresy.

They are one life tragedy away from forsaking the faith. Why? Because they're unstable. And then Paul says they're easily carried away. That is, they're easily deceived.

You know how easy it is to trick a kid? He doesn't remember all of this story and he did give me permission albeit I asked for it late. That when I took Caleb one time to Bass Pro when he was a younger kid and I made this stupid mistake as a parent by saying the thing you never really should say, you can pick out anything you want.

[37 : 26] Learn my lesson because what did my son go do? He went and picked out a four-wheeler. And he doesn't remember this but I got in his face and I was like, this is really awesome what you picked out.

But you know, you could have something even better. There's a gun that shoots marshmallows. And it worked! It worked!

We got the marshmallow gun and I got out of spending hundreds of dollars on a four-wheeler, right? Why? Because children are easily deceived, right? They're easy to trick along.

Do you remember the story of the Pied Piper? I mean, it is quite a disturbing story actually. I really do not know why this would be a children's bedtime story. But it's a story about a village with a rat infestation and they're desperate for help.

In comes this man in pied clothing who makes a deal with the mayor that he will play his music and all the rats will be led out of the city and into the river.

[38 : 27] And in exchange for doing this he'll be paid. Well, after he does this the mayor refuses to pay him and he's angry. So while the adults are all at church do you remember what happens?

The Pied Piper plays his music and he lures all the town's children from their homes into a cave where they're never seen again.

Now aside from the fact that that is a very disturbing story to tell children. That aside what's the point? Children are the easiest to lead astray.

Because children don't know enough to know better. Listen faith family that is why we must must must be a church that teaches the word of God so that people are equipped in the word of God.

Amen? Like I just I got it I'm not going to share you know who or whatever but I got an email this week of some people visiting for the very first time last weekend and they literally just wrote this such gracious email and they're like like we this faith family is a breath of fresh air because we feel like we finally found a place that makes the preaching of the word the central thing.

[39 : 56] And that's no comment on me that's a common conviction we all share amen we must preach the word or we will not be equipped for war.

And that's why Paul addresses pastors and teachers and I have a very I'm telling you I'm not picking on anybody and I'm not going to name names I have a very serious concern with the preaching that preaching that's taking place in American pulpits where it is becoming far more about talks and entertainment and making sure everybody feels good and you know just giving them a fortune cookie for the day rather than actually teaching and understanding thus saith the Lord amen and you got to hold me accountable to this faith family notice it here on the screen too many pastors and churches are more concerned with an experience than they are equipping I'm not here for you to have an experience I mean I do hope you have an experience I hope that experience is with the word of God and so Paul is like listen he's given you church pastors and teachers do your job what is your job to equip the saints because this is war this is war and not only is this for pastors and teachers but it's for one another in that passage

I read it talked about speaking truth in love here's what Dietrich Bonhoeffer writes in his classic book Life Together quote God has willed that we should seek and find his living word in the witness of a brother or sister therefore the Christian needs another Christian to speak God's word to him he needs him again and again when he becomes uncertain and discouraged for by himself he cannot help himself he needs his brother as a bearer as a proclaimer of the divine word of salvation he needs his brother solely because of Jesus Christ the Christ in his own heart is weaker than the Christ in the word of his brother his own heart is uncertain his brother's is sure we have to understand that if we're going to defeat the evil spiritual powers when they come at us and say you're too busy you got too many things going on you cannot afford to spend time in the word that you are a part of a church that preaches it and you are a part of community that stirs it up in you so that we are all equipped for the battles we must face amen and what is the aim of this maturity that we would not be childlike in our knowledge of the truth the aim is this we're almost done here rather speaking truth and love we're to grow up in every way grow up how into say it him who is the head that is into

Christ in other words notice this on the screen Christian maturity this is very important is not merely biblical literacy it's Christ likeness the growth is not I can pass the systematic theology exam although you need to know biblical truth but it's ultimately to know truth to become like Christ because after all is he not the armor is he not what I've shown you each week that Jesus is the very armor of God that when we're putting on the armor we're growing in the likeness of Jesus after all the belt is the gospel of Christ the breastplate is the very righteousness of Christ the shoes are the confidence we have through the peace we have in Christ the shield is our faith in Christ the helmet is looking to that day when we will see Christ and then what about the sword what about the sword well the sword is ultimately

Christ as well you say how so notice it on the screen because the word of God is not just pages in a book it's the person of Jesus Christ in the beginning was the word and the word became flesh and dwelt among us and what does that word have on him look at Isaiah 11 which we looked at a few weeks ago there shall come forth from the shoot from the stump of Jesse that is from David's line a branch from his roots he shall bear fruit and the what the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him with righteousness he shall judge the poor and decide with equity for the meek of the earth he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked righteousness shall be the belt of his waist and faithfulness the belt of his loins in other words listen listen who is

[45 : 26] Jesus Jesus is the spirit filled word he is the spirit filled word adorned in the armor of God victorious in war that's the vision of Isaiah 11 in other words faith family as I close you have been given the word of God which reveals the word of God namely Jesus and that's the only weapon you need in this war the word of God that reveals and conforms us to the word of God namely Jesus that is how we triumph in this war listen my heart goes out for Stefan it really does I can't imagine the frustration of not having access to such great wealth but you know what's even more frightening is actually having access to great wealth and never using it because watch how Proverbs speaks of the word blessed is the one who finds wisdom and the one who gets understanding for the gain from her is better than gain from silver her profit better than gold or bitcoin because she is more precious than jewels and nothing you desire compares with her you have been given access to a wealth of wisdom and faith family it is not on a hard drive password protected it is written on a page given to you freely by the spirit of almighty god and it will teach you everything you need to know about the one who has already defeated hell and all god's people said amen would you pray with me father we thank you for your word to us tonight many of us need to be woken up from our lazy approach to the word and to realize what we've been given to realize how powerful this is we want to walk in victory well you have given us a sword something not only just to protect but you've given us something to attack where we can actually resist the devil and he will flee and we can destroy strongholds and we can take lies captive so lord we need to be skilled we need to grow in the word and be conformed to the word and I pray father

I pray that this evening that you would challenge each and every one of us and convict us to take it with us every day to write it on our minds to write it on our hearts to have it in written form to have it in electronic form but to have it in mental form so that we are always ready we come now to a time of remembrance and pray lord that this will be a time of beautiful worship as we think about your death on the cross what you accomplished for us and the power the power we have because we have the word of a risen king and I pray it in his name amen to to be to be to to to to to to