

The Sword of the Spirit

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[0 : 0 0] And we're looking again this evening if we turn to Ephesians chapter 6 at this passage we've looked at for a few weeks. Ephesians chapter 6 and the second part of verse 17 this evening.

We can read at verse 16, in all circumstances take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit which is the word of God.

Now this is the final piece in the armor that Paul is setting out in this illustrative way for us to face the temptations, the wiles, the schemes of the devil.

And we've seen very briefly something of the other pieces of armor. And you recall that there were three types, three parts of the armor in the first instance.

And then the second group of three where they were things which could be taken up quickly in order to go out and face the enemy.

[1 : 1 1] The way he speaks here of the shield and the helmet of salvation. And now we're seeing the sword of the spirit. And he actually tells us this time what he indicates as what he would actually have us understand as meant by the sword.

The sword which is the word of God. The sword of the spirit. And by that he meant the scriptures. He meant the word that was written having been given by God.

Having been relied upon by the people of God down through the ages. Having had God committed to writing. And we'll see something of that tonight in our study.

But it is that especially that Paul had in mind when he said here to the Ephesians. That they should take the sword of the spirit which is the word of God. Now there is a relation of course to the first part we looked at.

Which is the belt of truth or the girdle of truth. Which we saw was as the first item in verse 14. Like the soldier gathered up the garments that would otherwise be loose and could hinder him.

[2 : 2 6] So the skirt of truth or the girdle of truth. The belt of truth. We noticed that the truth of God in that instance was particularly the core doctrines or teachings of salvation.

The core things of our salvation. The truth of God as it's revealed in Jesus especially. Things like his incarnation. His death on the cross. His resurrection.

The work of the spirit. The regeneration of us that the spirit brings about. Justification by faith. The need for faith in Christ. And repentance.

These are the great core issues of our salvation. In the way it was purchased. And in the way we come to receive it. And it's the truth in that sense that we saw was meant as the belt of truth.

And it relates to this sword of the spirit. Because the sword is the written word. What we know of now as the Bible. The complete Bible.

[3 : 32] And of course the relationship between the two is very close. Because as far as we're concerned in our coming to understand what the truth is. It's from the Bible as the written word that we get the information that brings us the truth.

As it is in these great doctrines of the faith. The truth of God is not known in some way or other apart from the word of God.

And even when the spirit of God begins working for example in someone that's not even attending church services. And perhaps isn't even reading a Bible.

You hear this from time to time. It is nevertheless the written word of God that the spirit comes to bring to that person's mind. People have often said that they were thinking of words that were going around and around in their heads.

And they knew it was something to do with the Bible. They hadn't a clue where it was in the Bible. And eventually they discovered where it was. And from then they began to follow the Lord. And to become one of his followers.

[4 : 37] And serve him. That's because the spirit of God. As we'll see. Takes the word of God. And conveys the truth of God.

Through that. So. What is it about this sword that is important for us. As we look at it as the final piece of the armor.

Well there are two things about the sword. That we can just mention. And they're really very simple. But they're still profoundly true and important spiritually. First of all. The sword is a weapon.

And you might say well that's obvious. We could have said that ourselves. We don't need people to tell us that. The sword is a weapon. Yes. But you notice. It's the only weapon.

Out of all the pieces of armor. This is the only one that you can say. Is actually a weapon. The Roman soldier. Could use the shield.

[5 : 34] It had a large metal boss. Or circle. Or lump of metal in the middle of it. He could actually use that. To hit opponents. But as we've seen there.

The shield was largely to do with defense. It was so that the arrows. Would not get through. And attach themselves. In his body. And therefore.

That is a part of the defensive armor as well. So is the helmet. In the soldier's case as well. The breastplate. Obviously is as well.

The shoes. They're not weapons. The belt of truth. Not weapons. This is the only weapon. The weapon. For not just defending ourselves.

But for attacking. Or fighting back. And you see. That's why. It's so important. That it is the word of God. The written word of God. That's mentioned as the sword.

[6 : 29] Of the spirit. That the sword is. As it's an attacking weapon. Or was. An attacking weapon. When it was used. As one of the main weapons. As it was then. In the days of Paul.

So it is. With regard to our Bible. Yes we can use. The Bible. For defending ourselves. But it is largely. In the apostles view of it here. A weapon for attack.

A weapon for fighting back. A weapon for pushing. The devil back. A weapon for actually. Facing the temptations. That he comes with. And the. Things that he brings.

To us. In order to try. And get us away. From following Christ. And serving him properly. We have to fight back. And the Lord has given us. This special weapon.

By which we fight back. Now we'll see. In a minute. That we need to know. How to use it. It's all very well. A soldier. Having perhaps. The best. And most up to date.

[7 : 27] Sword. As Roman soldiers. I'm sure had. In those days. They didn't use long swords. They were fairly short swords. But they were absolutely. Up to date. They were the latest. The latest.

Type. And if you. Translate that. Into a spiritual sense. We can have the Bible. We can know. Much of the contents. Of the Bible. That doesn't mean.

We know. How to use it properly. And a soldier. Going out. Without having. Really practiced. How to use. A sword properly. Was not going to be. Very effective. In fighting.

An enemy. Especially. An enemy. That knew. How to use. A sword. Better than him. So. The truth. The. The gospel. The word of God.

The written word. It is. Important. Not just to. Have it. And to know. Something of its content. All its content. Indeed. But. We'll see. We also need to know.

[8 : 23] How to wield it. How to use it. How to guide it. Against. Specific. Temptations. And. You remember. James. In chapter 4.

Verse 7. Of his letter. Says that. We are to resist. The devil. He put it in the form of. Of a command. Or an imperative. Resist the devil. And he will flee from you.

Now you might think. In the first instance. That's just. A kind of. Passive thing. You just. Put up your resistance. You just. Bear. Bear.

The. The. The. The. The. The. Temptation. Or. The. Assault. And then. Eventually. He goes away. But actually. If you look at this. And bring it into line. With what James is saying.

Resisting the devil. Is not just. Passively. Putting up. With his assault. Until he chooses. To go away. Resisting the devil. Is a positive. Fighting of him. It's a positive.

[9 : 18] Fighting back at him. It's a positive. Using of the word of God. Because you see. What James was saying. Is. If we resist the devil. He will flee from us. And you don't. Put the devil.

To flight. By just. Being passive. And putting up. With things. Until he chooses. To go away. You need to fight back. You need to use. The written word.

Of God. In order to put him. To flight. We'll see. Near the end of our study. That that's exactly. What Jesus did. And that that is. How. How Jesus.

Not only. Defended himself. But fought back. Against Satan. When he was tempted. In the wilderness. So that's the first thing. To notice there. That the sword. Is a weapon.

With which to fight. And with which to fight back. It's an offensive weapon. In that sense of it. Rather than a defensive weapon. And although it can be used.

[10 : 11] For defense. It is much more. Associated with attack. With fighting back. With pushing. The enemy back. And that's how we think of. The word of God.

As well. The second thing. And in more detail. Not only is the sword. A weapon. But it's described here as. The sword. Of the spirit. That's.

Very important. It's not just telling us. That the word of God. Is like a sword. It tells us. Whose sword. It is. Where did the sword. Come from.

And. Who is it. That helps us. And enables us. To use it properly. It is. The sword. Of the spirit. And with the capital letter.

There as it should be. That is. The spirit of God. The Holy Spirit. Of God. It was very important. When swords. Were common. Weapons.

[11 : 07] Or used as. As one of the chief weapons. Very important. That your sword. Was fashioned. Properly. That it was made. By somebody. Who actually knew.

How to fashion. A sword. Out of whatever metal. It was made of. So that it wouldn't actually. Splintered. When you went to fight. An enemy with it. And the process. By which your sword.

Was actually made. Was a very important. Process. The person making the sword. Had to really know. What he was doing. How to process that metal. What sort of.

What sort of. Things were to be followed. In that process. If the end product. Was going to be a really. Effective. Tough. Sword.

That wouldn't break. That was important. This sword. Has been fashioned. By the Holy Spirit. Himself. Just as the breastplate.

[12 : 06] Of righteousness. Was fashioned. By Christ. In his obedience. Ends. So the sword. Of the spirit. Is rightly called. Because it is the spirit.

That fashioned it. This bible. That you and I have. That we are so frequently. Using. And so used to. Is in fact. The product. Of the spirit. Of God.

It's not a human book. Although human beings. Were involved. In its production. One of the best places. To see it. In the way. That it's. The product.

Of the spirit. Is in. Second. Peter. Second. Peter. Chapter one. Where. The apostle. Peter. There. Is. Setting out.

How we need. To. Maintain. Our steadfastness. As Christians. And. He then. Goes on. To speak about. How they. Were with Jesus.

[13 : 00] In the. Mount of Transfiguration. The word. That they heard. And so on. But he says. We have this. Prophetic word. Knowing this. First of all. This is how he concludes.

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. By the Holy Spirit. Now he's thinking of. Those who wrote. The scriptures. Those times.

At that time. The scriptures. Were of course. The old testament. Scriptures. Mostly. But what he's saying. Is that. These scriptures. Did not come about.

Through human thinking. Only. They did not originate. With human thought. They were not. Actually. A product. Of people. In the church. Like Abraham. Isaac.

[13 : 55] Jacob. Or Moses. People who knew God. As Moses did. Or Moses especially. Just think of the remarkable man. That Moses was. To whom. Is attributed.

These first five books. Of the Bible. But it wasn't. Actually. Because he knew God. Face to face. That they. He then went home. And wrote these five books. What it's saying here.

Is that they were moved. They were carried along. By the Holy Spirit. They spoke. From God. The Spirit. Of God.

Took them. They weren't mechanical. Just in the same way. As you use a pen. It's you that's writing. Even though it's the pen. That's actually going across the page.

These people. Who wrote. These books of the Bible. Were not. Inanimate pens. They had their own thoughts. Paul had the. Circumstances. Of the churches. In mind. He took account.

[14 : 49] Of all of that. In his thinking. But he was still. Led. Under the direction. Of the Holy Spirit. To wrote. What he wrote. That is why. You can call the Bible.

The word of God. That is why. There's nothing less than. The word of God. Because it is God. Who breathed it out. Second Timothy. Chapter three.

And verse sixteen. All scripture. Is. God breathed. And then he tells us. What it's profitable for. But. For our. Purposes.

Now. That's the important thing. It is. Breathed out. By God. It's the product. Of God's. Divine. Mind. Or breath. As Paul is literally.

Putting it there. On a cold day. When you breathe out. Against a. A cold. Piece of glass. Your warm breath. Actually condenses. On the glass.

[15 : 42] And you can actually say that. In that sense of it. You see your breath. It is something. That's come out of you. That's been. Condensed. Onto the glass. Well God.

Is. Is telling us. That. This written word. Has been breathed. Out. By him. Men were carried along. By the Holy Spirit. And he is.

Ultimately. The author. Of this word. So that's why. It's this. The. The first point. Point in. In knowing it as the sword. Of the spirit.

Now. That means. That. The wiles. Of the devil. Will very often. Target. This. Matter. Itself. This particular.

Point. Because. As we saw. In our first study. It's of great importance. To the devil. That he would undermine. Your confidence. In the bible. In the truth. Of God. Or in. We look at it there.

[16 : 36] As the great truths. Of salvation. As we mentioned. A minute ago. That he would undermine. Your understanding. Of justification. And how completely. Your sins. Are forgiven.

By God. In his forgiveness. In your justification. But it's. Equally. The case. If not more. That he's going to be out. To undermine. Your conviction.

As to what your bible is. And where your bible came from. And how do you actually. When the thought. Comes to you. Eh. When.

Certain teachings. Will say to you. You know. Parts of the bible. Really. You can't possibly. Believe them. To be the word of God. Now. They were fashioned. They were put together.

In days. When people had a different. Understanding of things. Like Noah's Ark. For example. Eh. Or even things like. The resurrection of Jesus. From the dead. People don't think like that.

[17 : 31] Now. They did then. That's why they wrote it. But then you see. They didn't just write it. Themselves. God. Led them. By. His spirit. And God. Doesn't tell untruths.

And God. Doesn't need. His. Opinion. On his. Verdict. On his. Word. His. Description. Of something. To be adjusted. Just because human beings.

Move on. In their thinking. The devil's going to come at you. And he's constantly going to. Attack you on this point. That you cannot trust. The whole.

Of the bible. Because if he gets you on that. You're dropping your sword. You're not going to be wielding it properly.

You're not going to be on the attack against him. So what do you do? Well. You use the sword of the spirit. Because. The word of God. It doesn't just tell us about you and I.

[18 : 31] And about God. And about a relationship with God. And about the creation. It tells you about itself. It tells you. What it claims to be.

That it is in fact the word of God. All scripture. Is given. By inspiration of God. It's God breathed. That's God's word.

As authored by God. Telling us. What the word. It's itself. Actually is. So you say to the devil. Whenever you have thoughts.

From whatever source. Whether it's bad theology. Or just sheer worldliness. Or scientific analysis. Or opinions of that kind. You say. In return.

You respond. By taking. The sword of the spirit. This word of God. And you say. No. God. Has authored this word. That's what he tells me. And because he.

[19 : 28] Has said so. And because that's what this word is. It is fully trustworthy. I can take it. With me. Throughout every circumstance.

Of life. And it will take me. Safety to eternity. Under. The guidance of. The spirit of God. You fight back.

With the sword. When the word itself. Is under attack. That's important for the. Young ones as well. That. Whatever times. They come across.

People. Who will. Suggest. That the whole Bible. Isn't true. Or that parts of it. Are no longer relevant. To the age. We live in. You have to actually. Come back to this.

And say. No. God tells me. That this Bible. All of this Bible. Is his word. And that because. It's his word. I can trust it. Completely. I can put my trust.

[20 : 24] In everything. That's said there. That I know it. To be true. And therefore. I can use it. As the sword. That it is. Against those. Who tell me.

That it is something else. Secondly. Not only is it. The sword of the spirit. Because it was fashioned. By the spirit. But because. Our use of it. Involves.

And must involve. The spirit. As well. That's one of the great things. About being a Christian. God hasn't just. Given us the Bible.

For us to use. As a spiritual weapon. He has actually. Given us. His Holy Spirit. Along with that. He has given us. His Holy Spirit. To live.

In our hearts. To actually. Guide us. And to be. Always. Within us. As we come to use. This. Word of God. Well.

[21 : 19] What do we mean. By the fact that. As we use. The word of God. We do so. Depending on the spirit. Of God. First of all. Our understanding. Of the word.

Our understanding. Of what it means. Our understanding. Of the passages. Of it. Whether it's. Old or New Testament. Our understanding. Of its purpose.

Our understanding. Of the passages. That present themselves. As history. Historical fact. Events. Which really happened. Our understanding.

And our persuasion. Of the truth. Of these things. It comes from. The Holy Spirit. Here's one of the places. Where. The passage we read. Is important.

In 1 Corinthians. Chapter 2. Where the apostle. Is dealing with. The gospel. And the word of God. In relation to the gospel. Now he's dealing with that.

[22 : 15] Against. The. World in which he was living. Or in the world. He was living in. A lot of emphasis. And importance. Was attached to. Greek. Philosophy. And Roman philosophy too.

But. Particularly. Greek philosophy. And. The great. Learned people. Down through. The ages. Of. Greek. Influence. Had come to.

Really see that. To. To be convinced that. You could only understand. The world. And human beings. By following out. The discoveries. Or teachings.

Of Greek philosophy. A whole lot of different ways. And things taught. In that. But you see. Against that. Paul is actually saying. When I came to you brothers. I did not come.

Proclaiming to you. The testimony of God. With lofty speech. Or wisdom. See that was. Part of what. The Greeks. Actually prided themselves in. When.

[23 : 12] Paul describes. His visit to Athens. In Acts chapter 17. Or Luke. The author. There. Describes it. One of the things. The Athenians. Gave themselves to.

Every day of life. Was listening. To great speeches. And trying to compare. Great orators. Who brought. These great. Philosophical teachings. To them.

And these. Philosophical teachings. Were given. Such an emphasis. That somebody. Coming. With just. A simple. Message. And especially. A message.

Like. A man who died. On a cross. Is the savior. Of the world. And he rose. From the dead. Three days. After being crucified. Well of course.

You know yourselves. That. To the Greeks. That was just. Foolishness. But against. That.

[24 : 06] Wisdom. Of the Greeks. Paul. Puts. The wisdom. And the power. Of God. In the preaching. Of Christ. Crucified.

By him. And his companions. That's why. He says here. The natural person. Does not receive. The things. Of the spirit. Of God.

They are foolishness. To him. He's not able. To understand them. Why? Because they are. Spiritually. Discerned. What does that mean? It means. They are discerned.

Through. The spirit. Of God. At work. In people's lives. These things. That God has revealed. To us. He says. The things.

That God. Has previously. Decreed. Which none. Of the rulers. Of this age. Understood. For if they had. They would not. Have crucified. The Lord of glory. And he takes this. Quotation.

[24 : 57] From the Old Testament. No eye has seen. Nor ear heard. Nor the heart of man. Imagined. What God has prepared. For those who love him. Sometimes we hear that.

Verse taken up. In prayer. For example. As if. That was all there was. To it. As if that's still the case. What Paul is saying.

Is that. Was largely the case. In the Old Testament. When things were much more dark. Much darker. And less well understood. Than in the New Testament age.

Which is now the age of the spirit. Since Pentecost. That's why Paul is saying. These things. God has revealed. To us. Through. The spirit.

We've come to know that. He says. God has made it clear to us. He's enabled us. To understand. The scriptures. Through the spirit. By the spirit's.

[25 : 51] Enlightening. Teaching. Power. And ability. And that's why. For example. In our confession of faith.

In chapter one. Which is a chapter. On scripture. As you know. This is what it says. We may be moved. And induced. By the testimony. Of the church. To a high.

And reverent. Esteem. Of the holy scripture. And the heavenliness. Of the matter. The efficacy. Of the doctrine. The majesty. Of the style. The consent.

Of all its parts. The scope. Of the whole. Which is to give glory. To God. The full discovery. It makes. Of the only way. Of man's salvation. The many other.

Incomparable excellencies. And the entire. Perfection thereof. Are arguments. All of that. He's saying. Are arguments.

[26 : 47] By which. It does abundantly. Evidence itself. To be the word of God. Nevertheless. Our full.

Persuasion. And assurance. Of the infallible. Truth. And divine. Authority. Of it. Is from the. Inward work. Of the holy spirit. Bearing witness.

By. And with. The word. In our hearts. So much of that. Is important. It's not. The holy spirit. Bearing witness. In our hearts. So as we come.

To understand. And appreciate. The authority. And the divine. Infallible. Truth. Of the word. It's the spirit. Working along. With the word. In our hearts.

And then. He goes on. The confession. In the next paragraph. Says. We acknowledge. The inward. Illumination. Of the spirit. Of God. To be necessary.

[27 : 44] For the saving. Understanding. Of such things. As are revealed. In the word. How have you come. To understand. Your bible. Why do you. Believe tonight.

That this is the word. Of God. Why do you believe. It's a rule. The only rule. Of faith. And lifestyle. Why is it. That you're convinced.

That all of this bible. From cover to cover. Is crucially important. For you. As a Christian. How have you come. To that conviction. How is it. That you've come.

To understand. Where Jesus. Fits into. What the teaching. Of the bible is. From the beginning. In Genesis. To Revelation. All of that. Is from the spirit. Of God.

The spirit. Has taught you. The spirit. Has opened your mind. The spirit. Has given you. Understanding. The spirit. Has led you. Into the truth. Of God. Through the word. Of God.

[28 : 38] So that by. The spirit. And the word. Acting together. You have come. To appreciate. What this book. Is. And what it's for. And why it's important.

So in the use of the word. You. And we use it. By the spirit. In our understanding. But then we need to know. How to use.

That sword. As we said. It's not enough. Just to have the bible. And have an understanding of it. Now. This is where you need. The balance. Between.

The work of the holy spirit. And. Your own understanding. Your own use rather. Of the word. As the written word. Because.

To go to either extreme. Is dangerous. You still find people. In the church. And find people. In. In these days. That.

[29 : 34] Actually go to both. One or other. Of these extremes. For example. You can make. As some people do. The. Word. Much less.

Important. Than the spirit. And that's usually. The kind of. Person. Or the kind of people. That emphasize. The spirit. So much. That they get.

Caught into. Things like. Speaking in tongues. Or. Will say of themselves. Well I've been given. A special revelation. By God. Even though. I don't find it. Exactly.

In the bible. I know it was the spirit. That spoke to me. I know it was the spirit. That actually revealed this to me. So. I'm going to follow this out. Because I'm persuaded. It came from God. God. See the bible.

The written word. Is therefore. Devalued. In a sense. It's put aside. It's made. Very much secondary. Or it's minimized. Compared to that sort of.

[30 : 29] Inward compulsion. Which is thought to be. By the spirit. Edward Irvin. For example. Who's regarded by. Many people. As. The father of.

Pentecostalism. Or even. Of the charismatic movement. In this country. Edward Irvin. Was a church of Scotland minister. Before the disruption. In 1843. And he was actually. For a while.

The assistant. To the great. Thomas Chalmers. And Chalmers. Had him. As his assistant. In St. John's. Glasgow.

Irvin. Moved to England. To London. And came under the influence. There. Although he had some tendencies. Himself. Like that. But. He came under the. Influences. Of people. Such as the poet.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Who had some fancy ideas. Presented these to Irvin. And was very influential. With other people as well. In Irvin's thinking. And Irvin's thinking.

[31 : 25] Developed to such a. In such a way. That the written word. Became less and less important. And the spirit. And the compulsion. Of the spirit. And speaking in tongues. And actually performing miracles.

These took over. And it was of course. Disastrous. He had a massive following. He kept Thomas Chalmers.

Sitting for an hour and a half. On one occasion. That he invited him. To be the special preacher. In his church in London. Kept him seated. For an hour and a half.

While he. Waxed eloquently. About his own. Ideas. And his own. His own. Views. And it was a great offense. To Chalmers.

Though he didn't. Say all that much. About it afterwards. You see. He had been carried away. With. The spirit. The inner spirit. The inner light. That he thought.

[32 : 19] Was from the spirit of God. But he had lost the balance. Between the spirit. And the word. If he had just kept the word. At the same level. As the spirit. He would have realized.

That when the spirit. Or the things that are thought. To be of the spirit. That really contradict the word. Or are not in keeping. With the word. With the teaching of the word. Then you're in trouble.

Now you can go to the other. Extreme as well. What is the other extreme? Well the other extreme. Is where you. Are convinced about the word. That it is God's word.

That it's inspired. That everything we believe. About the word. Is indeed the case. But that. That's about all there is to it. You don't really.

Have a great deal of emphasis. On the need. Of the spirit. The word itself. Is enough. You have the word. You know the word. You really memorize the word. You have the word. In your use.

[33 : 14] In private life. In home life. In public life. And the spirit. Gets then minimized. But of course. The word itself.

Tells us. That we've seen. That we need the spirit. To lead us. To teach us. To give us an understanding. Because what you've left. What you're left with. If you just put the spirit aside.

And minimize the need of the spirit. You might have orthodoxy. But it'll be a dead orthodoxy. There'll be no life in it. No life.

In the written word. In itself. Exclusively of the spirit. It's the spirit. That brings. Life.

Life. So there's the balance. That we need. This is the sword. Of the spirit. But when we're using it. We need to appeal. To the spirit. And pray. To the spirit.

[34 : 10] And indeed. That's the next part. In the passage. Praying at all times. In the spirit. With all prayer. And supplication. You have the word.

And the spirit. Together. Together. And. We mentioned that. Christ. Is our great example. In regard to. This. As to. Many other things.

One of the remarkable things. And we've seen this. In Luke's gospel. In chapter four. One of the remarkable things. In the life of Jesus. In this world. Is how he.

Depended. Upon. The spirit. Of God. And on the. Word of God. Throughout his ministry. On earth. We could.

Put it this way. He did not. When he was facing. Temptation. And the trials. In his life. That he needed. To. To overcome. He did not. Borrow.

[35 : 07] Divine. Power. From his deity. He did not. Take. From his being. The son of God. And therefore. God. The power.

That would. Abhold him. As a human being. Against these temptations. Against these sufferings. As a human being. He depended. Upon the spirit.

Of God. Which he had. In full measure. And on the word. Of God. Which he frequently. Mentioned. Throughout his ministry.

For example. When. The lawyer. Came to him. And. Asked him. What must I do. To inherit eternal life. Jesus immediately.

Said. What do you read. In the scriptures. What do you find there. What is commanded. But the best place. Really of all. Is in.

[36 : 00] Luke's. Gospel. In chapter 4. And the equivalent. Also in Matthew. Chapter 4. But you recall. In Luke's gospel. There. How we saw. Jesus. Going into the wilderness.

To be tempted. There. By the devil. God. And. It's. It's. It's. It's such an interesting passage. That we. Come back to it. Again and again. Having read. In the synagogue.

Uh. Having. Read in the. We read in the synagogue. Uh. But prior to that. Um. This passage. He read in the synagogue. Was about the spirit of the Lord. Being upon him.

But prior to that. He had been led. By the spirit of God. And. Gone out to the wilderness. To face the devil. Now this is what it says. Jesus.

Full. Of the Holy Spirit. Returned. From the Jordan. That was where he was baptized. And was led. By the spirit. In the wilderness.

[36 : 55] For forty days. Being tempted. By the devil. And you know. The account yourselves. You don't need to go through it. But. When the devil. Came to him. And his first temptation.

Was. If you are the son of God. Command these stones. To be made bread. Dead. We noticed that. That was. Not just casting doubt. On. His being the son of God. But. Casting doubt on.

Whether. As the son of God. It was right for him. To be in that state. Of deprivation. He was hungry. He was starving. You shouldn't be. In that situation. As the son of God. Command these stones.

That they may be made bread. And of course. The devil was trying. To get him. To. Step out of the path. Of dependence on God. And obedience to God. The father. Father. That's what he was aiming at.

Now. This was the son of God. Being tempted. By the devil. This is not just human nature. This is the son of God. In our nature. Full of the Holy Spirit.

[37 : 53] The son of God. Could have. In one sense. Spoken. To the devil. Without any reference. To previously written scripture. That's not what he did.

He went to the book of Deuteronomy. And he said to the devil. It is written. Man shall not live. By bread alone.

But by every word. That proceeds from the mouth of God. And in these temptations. That are recorded for us there. All the way through. The devil then. Showed him the kingdoms of the world. Lord. All this will I give you.

And their authority and glory. If you will fall down. And worship me. And Jesus said to him again. It is written. They took him to Jerusalem.

Set him on the pinnacle of the temple. If you're the son of God. Throw yourself down from here. For it is written. Said the devil. You see. He's trying to use. The sword of the spirit. Against the son of God.

[38 : 54] He will command his angels. Concerning you. And guard you. And so on. And Jesus answered him. It is said again. You shall not put the Lord your God.

To the test. In other words. Jesus was saying to him. Yes you're using scripture. But you're misusing it. And against the misuse of it. By the devil. He replied again.

It is written. Now isn't that remarkable. That the son of God. In our nature. In that path of obedience. Christians. Came to use. This written word.

A word. That he himself. As the son of God. Had been involved. As well as the Holy Spirit. It is. God is not three gods. He was the author. Of it.

Though it's specially. Spoken of. As the role. Of the spirit. It is written. But that's what he used. The written. Word. Of God. It is written.

[39 : 53] And. The other. Aspect of the passage. That's important. Is. That he was. Full of the spirit. Led by the spirit. He came back.

From that temptation. When the devil. Had ended. Every temptation. He departed from him. Until an opportune time. And Jesus returned. In the power. Of the spirit.

To Galilee. Then he came. To the synagogue. Found this. The scroll of Isaiah. Was given to him. And he found the place. Where it was written. The spirit. Of the Lord. Is upon me.

A really. Remarkable passage. All the way through. But what it tells us. Is this. There is the son of God. In our nature. As an obedient.

Servant of the father. Who sent him. Into the world. How does he live in it. How does he meet. The difficulties. Not in his own.

[40 : 48] Native powers. God. He meets it. With dependence. On the spirit. Of God. And in using.

The written. Word of God. Now. What was good enough. For Jesus. Is surely good enough. For us. If that was true. As it was.

Of the son of God. Surely. That's what. The apostle is saying. Here. To take the sword. Of the spirit. Which is the word. Of God. And to take it.

As God's. Offensive weapon. The weapon. He's given us. To attack. To fight back. Against. The wiles. And the temptations. Of the devil.

It was fashioned. By him. He helps us. In our use of it. Our understanding of it. Our wielding of it. Against himself. And every other. Thought.

[41 : 45] That. Is designed. To get us away. From obedience. To Christ. And we keep in balance. The spirit. And the word. Together. Not the one. Without the other.

But both. Together. And we come. To Jesus. As our great example. Who used. The sword.

Of the spirit. As he was full. Of the spirit. As the servant. Of the father. He put the devil. To flight. Just as you.

And I have to. In following. His example. Take. The sword. Of the spirit. Which is. The word. Of God.

Let's pray. Our gracious God. We give thanks. That we are brought up. In familiarity. With your word.

[42 : 42] That we are given. That familiarity. With your word. As we are taught. From our youth. And we bless you. For that. For your word. Bears testimony.

To itself. To being your word. And it conveys to us. The great truths. Of your salvation. We thank you too. Lord. For the ministry. Of your spirit.

That you have not left us. To our own devices. And that even though. Your word. Is indeed. Infallible. And the very truth. Yet Lord. We give thanks. That you have given us.

An interpreter. That you have given us. Your spirit. To lead us. Into the truth. To guide us. In our understanding. To apply the truth. To ourselves. And to enable us.

To see the needs. Of our day. Oh Lord. Our God. We pray. That you would teach us. To use the sword. Day by day. Help us. To realize.

[43 : 37] That. It is not given to us. To merely practice with. That it is indeed. A very effective weapon. Against the wiles.

Of the devil. And that you have given it. To us. So that we will indeed. Wield it against him. We pray for your blessing. To be with us. As we know. Apart from one another.

And from this time of worship. Hear the prayers of your people. Granted. We pray. Wherever they are gathered this night. And all this we ask. In Jesus name.

Amen. Amen.