

# The Best Defense is a Good Offense

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- [ 0 : 00 ] Please have a seat and turn with me to Ephesians 6. There is this here on the pulpit. It's not mine. I haven't been asked to join the worship team.
- Yeah, exactly. A couple things that I want to say before we get into it.
- First, my thanks for bearing with me through this sermon series on spiritual warfare. My prayer from the very beginning, it would be as beneficial and God-glorifying to you as it has been to me to learn, to study, and to grow in my understanding of God and His Word.
- Part of this sermon series is actually the culmination of over four years of study for me for my doctorate.
- So, at the beginning of the sermon series, I sent out a survey, and there was over 50 of you who were very kind enough to fill that out.
- [ 1 : 12 ] And I need to ask you another favor. I need you to fill out the second part of the survey, which will be going out today, this afternoon. So, the reality is, the quicker you get in that, the quicker I can actually pull the results together and begin writing my dissertation.
- So, my big ask of you is that if you could get that done as soon as you can, that would be really great.
- My dissertation is to be handed in on January 15th. So, I've got a month to put together 200 pages of evaluating data and a whole bunch of other biblical exegesis.
- And I use these sermons as part of the chapters. So, it has been a good time. So, I really appreciate that if you could do so. Adding to my challenge is December 30th, I'm having surgery.
- So, I'm getting my ankle repaired. Many of you guys have seen me trip and fall. They're doing a ligament replacement surgery on my ankle. So, I don't know how it is to write a dissertation on painkillers, but I'm going to find out, right?
- [ 2 : 27 ] So, there might be new tracks of learning going into that paper. Thankfully, I've got a couple of advisors over me who reread everything that I write.
- So, if you, when you see me not around, it's either because I'm writing, crying at home because of the pain in my ankle, or crying at home because I'm not getting it all done on time.
- So, your prayers and thoughts would be appreciated. So, before we get into this last piece of God's armor, I want to do a quick review of what we've learned about God's armor, right?
- The armor began with the command, Be strong in the Lord. Be strong in the Lord. That is He whom we gather our strength from.
- And we see this as a consistent command throughout Scripture. It's His power combined with our actions. We're not passive. We're not sitting back doing nothing.
- [ 3 : 28 ] There's almost a relationship there, but we do things in the strength of God. And He provided for us these wonderful pieces. First, we started with the belt of truth, which is more like a girdle or an apron.

It protects the bottom part here, and it sets a place for the rest of the armor to be linked. So, it's about trusting God, believing God.

If He is not your source of truth, you're going to lose this spiritual battle right from the start. The second part was the breastplate of righteousness, of not God's righteousness, but as we walk in a manner worthy of the calling, which we've learned from Ephesians, that provides protection.

That is our way of living in purity and holiness. Obedience to the Lord protects us from the schemes of the evil one. Then we learned about the shoes of the gospel of peace, which means we are no longer enemies of God.

We are His, and we have this stability because we know we are of the Lord's. He holds us, and we're anchored by that truth.

[ 4 : 41 ] And we learned that these three pieces are always on. They provide a passive protection. And if you were here last week, you would have learned that there is a shift in Paul's wording as he gets to the next three parts of the armor.

Remember, he uses the word to take hold of, of to grab onto. So those times of life when we are under particularly pressing attack, these things are not fall far off, but we can reach, we grab them in that moment of need.

And we learned about the shield of faith, right? That we are to look to Jesus, the author and perfecter of our salvation. The passage that I read today in Philippians, it talks about how he emptied himself.

He gave up that part of God that sits on high in glory of heaven and humbled himself to live this life in earth.

As a child, as a preteen, as a teen, to a young adult. For 30 years, he enjoyed life as we enjoyed. He went through the same temptations we did, except exponentially more.

[ 6 : 09 ] But he lived a life that we could not live, but there isn't, he has the ability to relate to us. He knows who we are. He knows our life and our challenges.

And then we have this helmet of salvation, which is the assurance of salvation. Often the biggest area where Satan attacks us is this, our salvation.

And if we fear, if we're not saved, we are going to lean towards works. We're going to lean towards righteousness. We're going to lean towards a trying to prove we are saved, rather than resting on the promises of God.

But we persevere in that faith, and that helmet protects that understanding. So today, we are getting into what is the final piece, which is the sword of the Spirit.

So please read along with me in your text. We're in Ephesians 6. We're going to begin in verse 14, and we're just going to close this part off.

[ 7 : 19 ] Paul writes, Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and 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 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, praying at all times in the Spirit with all prayer and supplication.

This morning, I want to talk about really two essential truths that we need to understand about the sword of the Spirit. The first thing we need to understand is the nature of the sword, and secondly, the significance of its power.

So let's take a look at our vote. And the sword of the Spirit. So we're just going to make some general observations here. It's a sword.

What is a sword? Well, essentially, there's three types of swords. I actually did some research, and someone was arguing it was 27, and it was 35. But there's essentially three types of swords.

[ 8 : 36 ] The first one is the big, broad sword. It is a big, long sword that you need two hands to hold. It is a heavy weapon that is meant to bash through the enemy's defenses.

Then you have what's a long sword. Long sword, if you're familiar with the King Arthur's knights, or if you've been watching Lord of the Rings, or any of those type of things, they're longer swords.

You need a little bit of expertise in using them. Then there's a short sword. Paul is actually describing the short sword here.

It is a weapon that can be anywhere from 6 to 18 inches, or 45 centimeters in length. It is the sword that the Roman soldier was to have on him at all times.

And other people would carry them for defense defense when you traveled on the roads of Israel to fight off robbers and enemies that would come against you.

[ 9 : 43 ] In fact, it is the same type of weapon, if you remember, in the Garden of Gethsemane, when they came against Jesus, and Peter pulled his sword and cut off the servant's ear. It was a short sword.

It was double-edged. It was sharp. A trained person with this sword could do a lot of damage. Now, this sword differs from the armor in three very significant and meaningful ways for us.

The first one is the sword provides protection for the whole body. Okay? By using it, you can guard against your legs, to your chest, to your head.

You can move it around, and you can guard yourself. It provides a form of defense. And it's also offensive. And what's significant about offensive is that you can force the enemy to move or disengage.

Right? The shield, you're just getting hit on your head or the helmet of salvation. You can't really push the enemy back. The sword, by wielding it, can puncture the enemy's weaknesses, wounding him, forcing him back away from you.

[ 11 : 03 ] And which brings up the third significant difference. It's a weapon. It's offensive. No other part of the armor functions like this.

Now, imagine you're going to war, and you don't have a sword. But you've got this great armor on. You've got the best helmet.

You've got the greatest shield. You've got the best shoes. The best breastplate. The only thing you can do is go and get beat on.

You can't win that way. Right? It's just a matter of time before you start to feel frightened, terrorized, which eventually leads to discouragement, fear, and hopelessness.

Think about this spiritually. You start asking the question, is this ever going to end? Some in the midst of great trials are ready to say, Lord, take me now.

[ 12 : 19 ] That's what happens when you don't have a sword. You see, we must be confident that we have an ability to resist the enemy.

We're not here to outlast the enemy. We're here to resist the enemy. We must have assurance that yes, we've learned about the schemes and who Satan is, that he is great, he's powerful, he's wise.

But if we didn't feel or know or understand that there is a way to counter him, this spiritual battle would be pretty hopeless. But scripture tells us in many places it is possible for the Christian to resist the devil and cause him to flee.

The most obvious passage is James 4, 7, which simply states, submit yourself to God, resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

That doesn't mean we chase Satan, we hunt him down, or become foolishly overconfident. We are to know him, but we are not to be fearful of him.

[ 13 : 36 ] Now let's talk about the nature of the sword. It is the sword of the spirit. It tells us it is of divine origin.

It is not human. It is a spiritual weapon. It is to be used against spiritual enemies. Like the shield and helmet is to be at hand, ready to use.

And we need to learn to use this weapon in such a manner that we can cause Satan to flee from us because it has that power. Right?

Now the question is, what is exactly the sword of the spirit? There's three essential arguments that have been offered as definitions.

Two of them are right and one of them, or two of them are wrong and one of them is right. Notice it says, it is the word of God. Right?

[ 14 : 37 ] That's what it is. It's scripture. I'm going to blow that up a bit. There's two errors that we make in understanding this. Some people believe it's the words that come from God.

And by those words, meaning words that we can use as incantations when Satan comes against us, there's special words or prayers that I can use.

And if I recite these perfectly, Satan has to run. Okay? That is not the definition of what Paul is talking about. That's actually a view of mysticism.

That would be a power that a unbeliever could use. Right? If he just knows the right enchantment spell, you know, we're all familiar with the Grimm's fairy tales. Right? It's always who knows the exact name to make the bad person flee from Rumpelstiltskin to whoever.

Right? If you can say the right line, they dispel, they break off the attack. That's not what Paul is talking about here. Some people would argue that the Holy Spirit is the word of the Lord.

[ 15 : 51 ] And what I mean by that is they believe that it's the oppressions that are brought on by the Holy Spirit are the authoritative words that I use against Satan.

All right? There's a fine line there that I'm trying to convey here. It's not that. It's not the Spirit is the word because Scripture nowhere in any place says the Holy Spirit is the word.

But it says the word is only used in relation to the Lord Jesus Christ himself. So it is a sword of the Spirit is the word of God itself.

Now I'm using this word, word. In the Greek there's actually two words we see in the Bible used to define what that word word means. We're familiar with the word logos.

But there's another word called remma and that's what it's used here. And what it's talking about is it's talking about the biblical teaching, the biblical truths that Scripture tells us.

[ 16 : 57 ] It's not just uttering any type of oh Satan's come against me. Let me think of a Bible verse. Jesus wept. There's no power in that. There's power in Jesus wept in understanding the heart of God and how he feels towards God's people.

But in that moment that we are being attacked that's not where the power lies. So what I'm going to do is we're going to look at a master swordsman and how he wields this sword.

Turn with me to Matthew 4 in your Bibles. Matthew 4 in your Bibles. the context of this is Jesus Christ has just been baptized by John.

He is now beginning his public ministry. All right? These are the last, the beginning of his final three years on earth.

It is the slow walk to the cross. We read in Matthew 4 verse 1. Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

[ 18 : 05 ] And after fasting 40 days and 40 nights he was hungry. What does that tell us? Not only has had this intense time with the father but he's weak.

My wife very much knows that I am grumpy if I don't have my mid-afternoon snack, right? Just think after 40 days of not having that nourishment Satan is coming against him at an extremely vulnerable time.

Verse 3. And the tempter came and said to him if you are the son of God command these stones to become loaves of bread.

And we've learned about this before. Satan cannot make us sin. He can't take over us and make us do these things. He's got to get us to buy into the agenda that he has.

He has to make something bad look good, right? Because the reality is we never want to choose sin, right? We love Jesus Christ. We don't want to choose sin.

[ 19 : 17 ] We don't want to choose evil. Satan usually prays on us during those most desperate times. And we're going to look at how he tempts Satan here. He pulls no punches.

So he's saying to Jesus, hey, you got some stones, turn them into these loaves of bread. Now Jesus gives a response here. And it comes from Deuteronomy 8.3.

And Jesus replies, it is written, man shall not live by bread alone. But by every word that comes from the mouth of God.

He's appealing to what he understands that what God wants, that God has written. So then Satan tries this second temptation beginning in verse 5. Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, if you are the son of God, see notice he's kind of playing on his pride, right?

If you're God, and notice these are the same arguments that Satan used with Eve in the garden, right? He didn't say if you are God, but if did God really say that?

[ 20 : 34 ] If you have that fruit from the tree of knowledge, will you surely die? Will you truly know what's right and wrong? So he's trying to plant something here.

if you are the son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written. So notice Satan is now quoting scripture. He's actually quoting Psalm 91. He will command his angels concerning you, and on their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.

Jesus said to him again, it is written, you shall not put the Lord your God to the test. What we see here he's reading, he's from Deuteronomy 6.16, verse 8, again the devil took him to the very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, and he said to him, and these I will give you if you will fall down and worship me.

Before we go any further, the first temptation was Jesus had a legitimate need for nourishment, right? Legitimate need.

And Satan was saying, you know, go about it in an illegitimate way. He's trying to justify it. Isn't that the way Satan works, right? You need that. You can't do without that.

[ 22 : 00 ] Now, the second temptation that he uses, that he wants him to use his supernatural power to rebel against God, even while seeming to demonstrate great faith, right?

I'm going to do this because I know God will save me. It will prove God's power and love for me if he redeems me from my sin that I'm about to commit.

Right? It's that little whisper that he puts in, God is merciful. He loves you. He always forgives you. This sin will have no consequence.

And notice this third temptation. A lot of people use this argument to say that Satan is actually the king of this world. But what he's really telling Jesus is I will give the kingdoms that are rightfully yours by not going to the cross.

I can give you everything that you came to earth for, but guess what? You don't have to die on the cross for it. You don't have to go through the mocking, the shaming, the betrayal.

[ 23 : 09 ] You don't have to see anybody else hurt over this. Jesus, as we read in verse 10, be gone for it is written, you shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.

love. That's Deuteronomy 6.13. I'm going to read this whole section out of Deuteronomy that Jesus is referring to. I believe we have it up here for you.

Just read along with me, starting verse 10. And when the Lord your God brings you into the land that he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you with great good cities that you did not build and houses full of all good things that you did not fill and cisterns that you did not dig and vineyards and olive trees that you did not plant.

And when you eat and are full, take, then take care lest you forget the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt when you were nothing, you were slaves and out of the house of slavery.

It is the Lord God you shall fear. Him you shall serve and by his name you shall swear. You shall not go after other gods, the gods of the peoples who are around you.

[ 24 : 37 ] For the Lord your God in your midst is a jealous God. Lest the anger of the Lord your God be kindled against you and he destroy you from the face of the earth.

That's pretty serious stuff. what do we read in verse 11? Then the devil left him and behold angels came and were ministering to him.

The reality is we are not all going to have that kind of encounter. We're not. But we are going to become against with discouragement. When we feel like we need to give up, there are verses that we can apply, truths that we know.

For example, Philippians 1 6 says, for I am sure of this that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion in the day of Jesus Christ. That Jesus Christ save you, he's going to grow you into the person he means you to be.

That's a promise that we take, we hold true during those times of suffering. When Satan hurls doubts at us, we can appeal to a verse such as Hebrews 7 25.

[ 25 : 52 ] The writer writes, consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him. That is Jesus Christ.

Our response when we sin is usually to run away from him, right? But look at that word, draw near to him.

Yeah, he's not seeing my brokenness. He's not seeing my rebellion. There's this mediator named Jesus Christ who came and died for me and lived the perfect life and that's how God the Father sees me, which enables me to come into his bosom to confess, Father, forgive me.

With every dart that Satan throws at us, there is a sure defense of the word. Amen? Amen? Well, the Bible is the best defense of itself.

I'm just going to bring you a couple of verses of attention. 2 Timothy 3.16, Dave and I have mentioned this many, many times. This is actually the first verse when you get to seminary. You have to memorize week one, actually it's day one.

[ 27 : 06 ] But it's 2 Timothy 3.16, all scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness.

Why? That the man or woman of God may be complete, equipped for every good work as we seek to please God. This is what leads us to that understanding.

Sometimes we need to be reproved, we need to be reworked, we need to be trained. And then we have this other verse, 2 Peter 1, 19 to 21 says, and we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, 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 by the Holy Spirit. that's Peter explaining to us how we got our Bible.

Written over 4,000 years, different men, different nations, different people, different languages wrote these words with one message. Now I want to have a pastoral moment if I may with you.

[ 28 : 37 ] It was interesting, I was looking at one of my classmates video, he was speaking at a, well, former classmate, he was speaking at a Christian university, and they were actually in the news quite a bit with some issues, and he said, you know, when he began preaching, this is how people saw the Bible, right?

It was really, really high. And he says over the last 20 years, we've become to see the Bible kind of lower, right?

Well, there's truth in our culture, right? One of the arguments that we really see the Bible being accosted is on its sexual ethics. You know, well, the reason they talk about premarital sex and why it's bad is because, you know, they didn't have drugs for STDs, or they didn't have abilities for abortion.

So they started saying, you know, we've got medical new understandings and now that we understand, so what has happened in the last 20 years, the Bible is kind of down here and our worship of our own thoughts, of our own science, of our own opinions has become over the Bible.

It's a culture-dominated thought process. we will look to theologians who will mince the words to say exactly what we want them to say.

[ 30 : 14 ] We see this, there's people trying to reevaluate the Old Testament. They're trying to reevaluate of whether Jesus Christ really needed to die on the cross. What a cruel God that would have his son die.

And that's what they say. And the reality of what they're saying is, you know what, your sin really isn't that bad. No one really needed to die for you. There's plenty of really good works and things that you can do.

It's the old bait and switch. It's been happening forever. Now, a few weeks ago, I mentioned a few books that were written by authors, and I want to give a little bit more time.

Sometimes I'm sharing a thought or an understanding that I have, and I'm short on time, so I kind of say some words, and I want to explain myself a little bit better.

I quoted Rob Bell, who wrote Velvet Elvis, Bruxy Cavey, he wrote a book called The End of Religion, Don Miller wrote a book like Blue Like Jazz, and Brian McLaren wrote a book called Generous Orthodoxy.

[ 31 : 17 ] And for some of these people, these are very powerful books. They speak to them, and I'm going to explain to you why they're powerful. It's because they ask really good questions.

they ask questions about God, they ask questions about church, that most people who grow up and live in church, who know people, know the issues that we're dealing with, right?

We struggle with certain things. One is legalism. If you come from a legalistic background, you tend to say, hey man, these books are setting me free.

Oh, it's so true, that legalism means nothing. Like Bruxy Cavey does say some really good and interesting things in his understanding. That legalism will hurt you, and we grew up with it, and we saw that it wasn't loving, it wasn't just, it wasn't merciful.

So we hate it, right? So when someone who comes from a Christian background starts talking about it, we get it. Now, the problem is they're criticizing an extreme wrong teaching of the Bible, and what they do is they flip it on over to the other side.

[ 32 : 32 ] Do you know what I'm saying? So if we were a legalist, let's go liberal. Like somehow that's going to balance the books. Now there's a couple of problems with that.

One tends to be man-centered rather than God-centered. All right, I'm going to use an illustration. I hope I offend no one with this, but this is by far the best illustration I've ever read in a long time in regards to the Christian life.

And I believe it was Luther who said this. And he said, living the Christian life is like trying to ride a horse while you're drunk. Right?

There's a tendency to fall off to the left, or there's a tendency to fall off to the right. I'm going to be really truthful. Oh, but you're not showing any grace, right?

There's all these tensions that exist within the Christian life. And some of these books have really brought out that tension. We know, some of us who grew up in the church, we look back, I'll be honest with you, I grew up in a church where I saw no joy.

[ 33 : 41 ] And I made a decision quite early in my walk, 18, I never wanted to bring any of my friends to this church. Everybody's looking around like there's a sour, dull look on their face. Why would I say this is good?

Yeah, I'm saved by Jesus. Right? And that's pilgrim's progress, right? You know, you just put this weight on your back and absolutely no joy.

There's certain games you can't play. You know, I still get those. Can my son play Pokemon? Oh man, if that's the biggest issue we've got going on, right? But we do, we get caught up and some of them are legitimate concerns that they have for their children.

This is where they go wrong, okay? They don't take an honest look at what God actually has to say on it. What they say is, hey, let's look at our own wisdom and try to humbly come to it.

Let's re-examine it. And they do so under the pretext that they're looking at God's word, but they're not. Some of them mock God's way of thinking. They don't look with the idea of, will this help me glorify God?

[ 34 : 54 ] And sadly, many of these books leave people, like they're leaving something really bad, like legalism, but they don't have anything good on this side either. And they get lost.

They leave the church. They quit intersecting with Christians. And this is why. Why? Freedom from legalism, or freedom from licentiousness, or freedom from any extreme that we have, does not mean that we have freedom in Christ.

When we have freedom in Christ, we are free from legalism, we are free from liberalism. You get that? freedom in freedom in Jesus Christ.

Freedom in our biblical understanding as who Jesus Christ presented himself to be in God's word. I always ask this question.

Do books that are teaching me lead me to a greater understanding of God's glory? do these books make me want to worship and obey God in a new and meaningful way?

[ 36 : 11 ] Sometimes they make this assessment that somehow being lost is a good thing. One word that I heard, and if you use this word, I do not mean to hurt your feelings or anything like that.



And it does have different meanings, but it's when people say, I'm on a journey. I believe the journey leads to Jesus Christ. And once you know Jesus Christ, you're now on a mission.

Because he's answered everything for you. You get that? And it's now that we see this life in light of Jesus Christ, we know what we're supposed to do. There's no more guesswork.

He's called us to make disciples of men. He's called us to do works that glorify him. There's no mystery where it's going to end up. It's to his glory. It's to his worship. That's where he's calling us to.

But to act like, I'm still trying to figure things out, that usually means I'm still looking at things in my own wisdom rather than God's word. How do I know this? Let's take a look at Paul's word in 1 Corinthians 2.

[ 37 : 16 ] 1 Corinthians 2, this is on verse 14 to 16. And this is the second aspect of this sword.

It is, notice it says the word spirit here. Paul is telling us that this sword is not only spiritual in nature, but it's powered by God's spirit.

All right? this is where the power is. The only reason you and I can understand the truths of God is through the spirit.

All right? 1 Corinthians 2, 11 to 13, it says, now we have received not the spirit of the word, but the spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.

See, not only did the spirit give us this word, but the spirit indwells us, empowers us, and enables us to understand what God has for us. And we impart this in words, not taught by human wisdom, but taught by the spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

[ 38 : 47 ] That's us. We're spiritual. We're being taught spiritual truths by the spirit. He continues in verse 14. The natural person does not accept the things of the spirit of God.

For they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one.

For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him? that song we just sang, Behold our God.

That lays out the truth that God was teaching Job at the end of his trials. Were you with me when I created this earth, when I created the mountains, when I went into the depths of the sea and I held her and divided into the world?

Were you with me when I walked through hell? hell? Yet, you were putting forth an argument? Well, we got science and culture knows truth somehow more than God.

[ 40 : 06 ] chapter 1 of 1 Corinthians tells us quite clearly the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are saved is the power of God.

It destroys the wisdom of the wise, it is stumbling block to Jews and the law, and it's foolishness to Greeks and their wisdom. You see, to not only understand the gospel, but God's word, we need the power of the spirit.

Remember that balance? Some people become so word-centered, they're over here. Then we get these other people that are too spirit-centered, they're over here.

But there's a balance where they come together. the reason I understand this word is because of the working of the spirit. Without that working of the spirit indwelling me, opening and enlightening my eyes, I cannot comprehend it.

There's this tragic story of this Old Testament scholar I did a research paper on. He's written several commentaries. He was partnered up. He is an expert in Hebrew and Middle Eastern studies.

[ 41 : 31 ] He had a son that actually followed in his footsteps. In fact, his son exceeded his understanding of the Hebrew language and surpassed his scholarship and understanding of the Middle Eastern culture, especially Persian culture.

But all that knowledge, all the understanding that he not only inherited from his father, that he learned beyond himself, he still rejects Jesus Christ. Christ. You ask why, how?

As Ezekiel said, until the Spirit of God transforms his heart of stone into a heart of flesh, he'll never really understand it.

He's devoted his whole life to this, but it's just a book, like any other book that sits on his shelf. It's not alive to him, because the Spirit isn't alive in him.

And I know you guys have experienced the Spirit with this, right? Have you ever been in that situation, someone's asking you a question, and you're confronted with something, and all of a sudden you're able to recall God's words, truth, like, aha, this is the situation where this applies to?

[ 42 : 53 ] That's the Spirit working in you. That's God's promise. The Spirit will bring these things, these truths, to mind. If you're like me, I have a hard time memorizing. I've got friends that memorize all the time, and they're able to spit out, and I'm envious of that ability.

I'm like, give me five minutes, and I can find the underline of my Bible. Right? But there's these moments, I get it, I get that truth, and not only do I get that verse, I get the meaning, what he's talking to.

I know what to say. That's the power of the Holy Spirit. And that same Holy Spirit helps us apply his truth to our lives.

Now, there's some good news and some bad news. Did you know that owning a sword does not make you a sword fighter?

just like owning a Bible does not mean you know how to use it.

[ 43 : 57 ] I've got a friend, Phil, his girlfriend at the time was on the Canadian Olympic fencing team, sword fighting and stuff like that.

So, three of us, well, there was actually four of us, and he's got these mock swords. And the other two guys in the army, this was a day when I was actually quite coordinated and athletic, we were trying to hit him.

We couldn't do it. Just, we thought, you know, in a sword fight, we see him on TV all the time, whether it be Lord of the Rings or Zorro or something, just takes one lucky blow. Can't he do something, or whether it's the Princess Bride, right?

You know, remember the Princess Bride and the guy says, hey, I've got higher ground, you lose already. There's a real truth, just by being a couple inches above your opponent, you can outlast him if you're equally skilled.

We couldn't hit him. He's not on the Olympic team, he's just the guy who's dating the girl on the Olympic team, right? But he trains at the fencing team, no matter what we tried, tricks, couldn't touch him.

[ 45 : 05 ] He's we can know God's word that well and we can parry every single one of Satan's attacks.

You know that? That's what the Bible promises. Application of biblical truths is not learning the stories of the Bible that we learned in Sunday school.

What the kids are learning are stories that we're trying to draw them into a deeper understanding of the gospel and their greater need for Jesus Christ. And by that subsequently the spirit they need Jesus Christ to open up their hearts to understand the reality of what's really going on.

We need the spirit's power to understand God's word. We need the power of the spirit to understand our hearts and our minds. Now I thought about this as like a really good way in my pastoral preacher's handbook how to motivate you and try to get you to read more of your Bible.

I'm not going to give you any tips but I'm going to tell you a few stories. I want to tell you a few stories about how we got this book.

[ 46 : 27 ] The whole fact that we have this Bible in our language is actually an incredible story. Very early on in the church history a guy by the name of Jerome translated the Hebrew and Greek into Latin.

Latin was the language of the day. He produced what is called the Vulgate. That was the official church Latin Bible.

You had to be extremely wealthy or be a part of a religious order to understand this. Plus you had to be educated in the Latin language.

This man named John Wycliffe came around in the 1300s and he said wouldn't it be really great if I could translate this Latin language into an English language so my people could read it.

He wanted to translate the Vulgate into English so that the common person me and you could read the Bible. That was his whole goal in life. He was horribly impressed.

[ 47 : 35 ] In fact they looked for him all over the place. In fact the government passed a bill making it illegal to actually translate the Bible. Right?

So anyway they ended up catching him and they killed him and buried his bones. But guess what?

His influence started to grow. More people wanted to do translating. So the Pope in 1412 I think it was Pope Martin actually went back exhumed his bones and burnt his bones and threw the ashes in the river.

That's how much they hated what he was trying to do. All right? Then there was this guy named Johann Gutenberg.

You guys are familiar with the Gutenberg press. he was a Christian man and he was an inventor of the printing press. Before him we could learn we needed to learn Latin and we had to physically copy the scriptures which took approximately 10 months to do.

[ 48 : 45 ] So when you guys are challenged to read your Bible in a year back then you had your copy you were writing it out in 10 months. This would also assume that you had a copy in which to copy from.

So he invented this printing press for the sole purpose of making the Bible available to as many people as possible. He did not do it for money.

He died with no money or fame but his goal of making the Bible available to all has happened. You and I can walk out this door grab one or go on Amazon with a quick click and get a number of versions and Bibles that you want.

But not only was this going on in England there was John Huss he was a Czech priest wanted to translate the Bible authorities got him slaughtered him burned him at the stake and war ravaged on for years because of what he started.

There's another guy named Ulrich Zwingli he was working with the Germans and the Swiss and wanted to German. He was so hated that when he died in war they found out where his body was they cut it up into pieces burned it and mixed with dung.

[ 50 : 06 ] All so we could begin a morning with open up your Bibles. Then we bring to Jonathan Wycliffe which are Tyndale which I spoke to you a bit about earlier.

Turned out there was black marked copies of Wycliffe's Bible. If you got caught with him it was death. In fact if you were associated with Wycliffe whether you were a lawyer for him or just a friend or just someone who worshipped with him the authorities were so afraid of his influence they would kill you too.

So in the late 1400s to the early 1500s we have the first man who translate the word of God into English and he did so from the Hebrew and Greek. Tyndale had to translate it on the run as he was being chased by bounty hunters.

He then moves over to Germany where he thinks he can print it on his own. English authorities put pressure on the Germans. His print shop was raided but he got away and he kept writing and he finally finished his version as he was riding through the countryside with all his manuscripts and scrolls translating the Bible.

When asked why he would risk his life for the cause he has been quoted as saying I defy the Pope and his laws and if God spares my life I will cause the boy that drives the plow in England to know more of the scriptures than the Pope himself.

[ 51 : 39 ] When they did finally capture him they strangled him before they burned him for fear that he would still preach while he was burning. If that doesn't tell you about the importance of what's in this book that people would die for us to have it there's really nothing that I could ever say to motivate you to read this.

Let me pray.