

# Fasten Your Breastplate and Shoes Too

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[ 0 : 00 ] Please turn with your Bibles to Ephesians chapter 6. You're going to be reading just a couple of verses, not the whole section.

But as you know, if you've been with us, we are in the armor of God in this section. In the preceding sermons, we've looked at Satan's schemes, Satan's lies, who he is.

And we also looked at and began with God's ultimate desire for us, which is to stand firm in his strength. Last week, we looked at his command, his power, combined with our actions, enable us to stand firm.

So let's just take a look at God's truth revealed to us in verse 14. When discussing the subject of spiritual warfare, one of the inevitable questions that gets asked is, tell me about the subject of demon possession.

The amount of times this question gets asked is usually dependent upon one's church background or what denomination they come from.

[ 1 : 46 ] Some backgrounds rarely speak on the subject of demon possessions. They rarely will mention demons. Other church backgrounds talk about it a lot.

It's heard quite frequently. In case you're wondering where our church is on that spectrum, we're probably on the close to never talk about it, they never talk about it, right?

We're Baptists. We don't talk about those things. However, as we grow up, as we have experiences in life, as we meet other people who are engaged in the Christian life, we begin to meet missionaries, other people who've had experience in other countries, people who've traveled to different parts of the world, especially those areas where pagan religions are one, and they all affirm with one voice, yes, there are demon possessions.

They've seen it. They've felt it. They know it. Just even this last month, one of my buddies is over doing some training in Sierra Leone, and he said the number one question that God asked to him at this pastor's conference is, how do you deal with demon possession, right?

He's like, man, what are you talking about? I'm from Idaho, right? But it comes up. It's there. Just this week, having a discussion with Darcy, who you all know, who's at the river, and his daughter and Clayton's daughter are traveling in the Far East, and he was just sharing a story that his daughter had sent to him, as they are in Thailand, where they got up to have breakfast, and the one daughter said she just got cold and felt a dark presence, unlike she had ever felt before, that she went back to her room, locked herself in, and just prayed.

[ 3 : 52 ] Just prayed. I had given many of you a, we started this sermon series with a survey, and many of you have personally tested to feeling sometimes a dark presence.

You knew something was there. It was evil. Demon possession, is it real, right? Does it exist? Some say it doesn't.

Some say it's just a figment of imagination. Sometimes it's just people that are around you. But if there's anything that calls our attention to this subject, it's the ministry of Jesus Christ.

Throughout the pages of the Gospel and of the early church in Acts, we read that Satan was with Jesus, step by step, assaulting him and his messengers.

Often, people were so controlled, so fully by demons, they were called demon-possessed. So I've got four verses that you have above.

[ 4 : 57 ] Mark 9, 17 says, Teacher, I brought you my son, possessed with a spirit which makes him mute. Luke 4, 33 says, In the synagogue there was a man possessed by the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice.

Luke 8, 27, And when he came out onto the land, he was met by a man from the city who was possessed with demons. And then Matthew 12, 22, Then a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute was brought to Jesus.

We later read in various parts of Scripture that demons cause paralysis in Acts. Mark 9, we see the sad story of a demon who had possessed a young boy, throwing him into the fire, trying to destroy his flesh.

We also see demons in Mark testifying to who Jesus is. They knew Jesus. They knew exactly who he was in freedom.

The pages of Scripture make it very clear that there is this element of the spiritual battle.

[ 6 : 17 ] Well, demons exist. In fact, as we read here, there's words of demon possession. But ultimately, the question to us is, can a Christian be possessed by a demon?

If you have lived in an evangelical training background, Bible school, online course, Bible study on this subject, you have heard a resounding answer of no.

Believers in Christ cannot be possessed. Let's take a look at 1 Corinthians 6, 19. This is generally the fundamental verse that we focus on.

Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price.

There's two things that this verse tells us that leads us to believe that a believer cannot be possessed. One, we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Amen? Upon accepting Jesus Christ as your Lord and personal Savior, you are indwelt immediately with the Holy Spirit.

[ 7 : 35 ] That is the baptism of the Spirit. If you've ever heard it, it's not a secondary event that happens later. It happens at that moment of salvation. So you have the resident Holy Spirit in you.

So guess what? There's a Holy Spirit in you. Nothing else can come in. Number two, it says we are owned by Jesus Christ. We were bought with a price. Jesus Christ has ownership of us.

Therefore, if you are a Christian, the Holy Spirit lives within you and there's no room for demons to make their way into your body. This is comforting to know. Amen?

It is. Well, there's a history behind this teaching. It's kind of been in and out, but in the 50s, it started to get codified by a man named Merrill Unger.

For you who have ever been to college, you might know him. And he's written a lot of biblical dictionaries. He's a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary, which in the 70s was one of the largest well-known seminaries.

[ 8 : 39 ] When I say well-known, it was very influential. Lewis Sperry Chafer was there. If you don't know who he was, he was a titan of the faith of the time. Had written, and this is all before internet, right?

Took a little time for information to get out. So these guys actually wrote books, right? Encyclopedias. Remember that? Guys would go around to your house wanting to sell you a set of, yeah, 20,000 encyclopedias for like \$50,000, right?

But if you wanted knowledge, that's what you had to do. But there's these biblical sets of encyclopedias. So when you're at home, you're doing your own Bible study, you're usually pulling from something that has been referred to him, and that was the understanding of demon possession within a believer.

This had a huge impact on the church. However, the church in the 70s started to think otherwise. We had John Wimber, and he's a part of what they called the third wave Pentecostal movement.

And they were part of what's called the deliverance ministries. And what they believed was that when a person is saved, there's usually incredible signs, miracles, wonders attached to that.

[ 9 : 57 ] And often, people saw demons being cast out of them. Following that, there was a book.

It was written by the chairman of theology at Moody Bible Institute. Moody Bible Institute would be considered an evangelical, theologically conservative school in Chicago.

Again, very influential within Christian circles. And he came out with a book saying, Hey, I have seen Christians possessed by demons.

In fact, I've been a part of over 500 situations documented that people were being possessed. Merrill Unger in the 50s, when he wrote his book, started getting letters mostly from missionaries from all over the world saying, Hey, we've seen believers possessed by demons.

And we've had to do exorcisms and all sorts of things. So Merrill Unger, 20 years later, actually changes his position. But that isn't as widely known as his original position.

[ 11 : 10 ] So that has started to influence Christian thinking. And then we have what's called the modern biblical counseling movement. And there's a man named David Powelson.

David Powelson is a man who we greatly respect. He's now gone to be with the Lord. And he wrote a book called Power Encounters. As they were delving deep in counseling situations, they started to ask the question, Are we right in thinking that a Christian can still be possessed by a demon?

Do we really understand this? Because certain experiences, and we're not talking outlying experiences, but main experiences were teaching us something different.

Now this has caused people to go back into the word and look at what does that word possessed mean. I know this is a long introduction and you guys are wondering, did I come to church or do I go to theology class?

This is all going to make sense in a couple of seconds. Now the word that is translated from the Greek is called demon, I can't even say it.

[ 12 : 25 ] Demon isiomai. That's the best I'm going to do. And that's the translation from the Greek that they use to translate demon possessed. And that has been going on since the King James Version, the first mass-produced English translation of the Bible.

When we hear that word possessed in the English language, we understand it to be a legal term. It means he has ownership. He has legal rights to something, and he has the right to control these things.

So spiritually, we think of being possessed by the devil as being, can a believer be owned and totally controlled by Satan?

Can we be totally incapacitated about what's going on? And it's like our body is being hijacked to do and say different things. It's like there's a hostile intruder has taken over the victim, and there's no ability to take control.

If you remember a few months back, I preached on Mark 5, and the man who was strong, who lived in the tombs, right? That guy had supernatural strength. They couldn't bind him. He was in perpetual torment.

[ 13 : 39 ] That was a demon-possessed man. Now, we've already learned in Ephesians 1, 13, 14, we belong to Christ. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it to the praise of his glory.

What that says is we were branded. We were sealed. It's like an official old school seal of a ring that would go on the wax over a letter, okay?

You were sealed by God. That much is truth. God marks us. So the idea where a believer can be totally possessed and owned by Satan, we can totally say is an unbiblical idea.

We can say we cannot be owned by Satan. So the ultimate question is what are we seeing? Why are all these reputable men, these counselors, educators, seeing different experiences?

Well, that Greek word that we use for demon possession is actually not the primary word one would use for legal possession.

[ 14 : 59 ] All right? There are many other Greek words that they could have used. So what that means is we're having an understanding and understanding what is the original intent. In fact, in the original Latin Vulgate, which is the Latin Bible, they don't use the word possessed.

They use the word to have a demon, to be with spirit. Okay? Okay? Now let's take a look at those verses that I had earlier put up.

Now the earlier verses I put up were from the New American Standard Version. These are from the English Standard Version. This is the type you would find in the NIV.

Now notice the word possession doesn't exist. Mark 9, 17. For he has a spirit. Okay? So there's a spirit in there, like I have a cold.

Doesn't mean the cold controls me, but I have something in me, a virus that is working against me. Right? Who had the spirit of an unclean demon.

[ 16 : 06 ] Luke 8, 27. Same verses. Who had demons. And then Matthew 12, 22. They changed it from then a demon possessed man to a demon oppressed man.

This is going back. So what we're learning from, the reason we use possessed is because we saw the influence of the early translator from the King James Version.

And people just run with it. Now many of you have never read the King James Version. You have never used a New American Standard Version. So when I say the word demon possessed, you're like, yeah, okay.

I get it. It's part of our common vernacular, right? So we still have this idea of possession in our minds, but it's like I have the flu.

It's like holding in your hand. There's a grasp. But it does not indicate ownership. So what that question is now reduced to, can Christians come under a high degree of demonic influence?

[ 17 : 22 ] And this is where the sermon begins. Is it possible for Christians to yield control of their bodies, of their minds, of their spirits to a demonic spirit in the same way they yield to the power of sin?

Well, what does the Bible say? Let's take a look at Romans 6. Romans 6, 12, 7. 12 to 13 says, Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body to make you obey its passions.

You see there, there's a choice that we get to make. Paul is instructing us, do not let that sin have control of you. Right?

Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness. Let's take a look at Ephesians 4, 26, 27. We looked at this months ago.

Be angry and do not sin. Notice we talked about this. Being angry is not the sin, right? We can be righteously angry. But in that anger, do not allow sin to happen.

[ 18 : 31 ] Do not let the sun go down on your anger. And get this, and give no opportunity for Satan. So it seems quite clear, Paul.

We're going to look at a few other verses. As a believer in Christ, these letters are written to saints, members of the church, Christians.

There's a choice that they have to allow sin and Satan to have an influence in their life.

If you remember Matthew 18, one of the issues that any biblical counselor will tell you where people have blockages in their life is the issue of unforgiveness.

It's a universal. People who do not forgive struggle in life. Guaranteed. They struggle. And Matthew 18 says why.

[ 19 : 33 ] He tells us, if you don't accept my forgiveness and I've forgiven you of so much more, yet you cannot forgive your brother. Do you understand the implications of that?

God doesn't give you the forgiveness that you need. It means you do not understand what you did to Christ. And the other issue we read about in Hebrews is, do not let a root of bitterness.

We get bitter about stuff. Whether some people did something to us, hurt us, we get bitter, we want revenge. And it's like an ugly vine that can come over our whole body and hold us in.

So when we try to do the things of Christ that we know are right and true, we can't. We stumble. We fall. In fact, Hebrews 12 talks about that sin trips us up.

It stops us from running the race. Now often we are taught that all sins are the same.

[ 20 : 46 ] We deal with all this all the time with pastors. I said, I'm sorry. Okay, I want you to hear me now. All sin is the same in that it separates us from God.

You get that? Every sin. Romans is quite clear on this. All our works are like filthy rags. We cannot clean ourselves up.

All, any little sin. You don't have to commit murder or rape or thief or do any of those kind of things to be separated from God. Right?

Just a simple lie is enough. Looking lustfully at a woman or desiring a possession that is not yours is enough to separate you from God. But not every sin has the same consequence or effects.

All right? Let's take a look at Galatians 5.19 I have before you. Paul begins it with the term works of the flesh.

[ 21 : 52 ] And if you're familiar with Galatians 5 there's also he talks about the works of the spirit. Right? We all know the fruits of the spirit. We're taught this at a very young age. Joy, peace, all those things.

But before that he talks about the works of the flesh. Our evident sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these.

Paul's challenging you to look at your life. If these sins exist in you you are not in the spirit you are in the flesh. The flesh is of sin is of our first father Satan.

Right? Or not really our first father. Our first father was Adam. But when we sinned we joined Satan in his rebellion. our flesh is tainted by Adam's decision.

You see, who is in control when we give ourselves to these sins? There is a seriousness to sins we do with other people.

[ 23 : 25 ] You know that? There's sins we do on our own that are in secret. Not a big deal. But when you're making a deal with someone to enter into an illegitimate relationship there's two people.

There's more to it. It's not just like gossiping. We know gossiping is a horrible wicked sin. And if anybody thinks any differently James talks about it's like lighting a fire to everything.

Right? But when you invite someone else in or if you remember Jesus Christ saying if you hurt one of my innocent it's better for you to put a millstone around your neck and throw yourself into the deepest part of the ocean.

That's how serious God takes that sin. There's consequences. Take a look at 1 Corinthians 6, 9, 10. Look at the introduction.

Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? And he begins with do not be deceived.

[ 24 : 32 ] Who's the father of deception? Satan, right? Neither the sexually amoral nor adulterers nor adulterers nor men who practice homosexuality nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor revilers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

Or sorry, I read that way. That's right, right? to be a believer and involved with these sins disqualifies you from the kingdom of God.

Now get this. Notice he says do not be deceived. If you're looking at that list and you disagree with it, it's just as serious to disagree with it than it is to just do it, to promote it, to promote lies, error, falsehoods.

We learned last week about the belt of truth. You either accept God's truth or you don't. If you don't have a truth that locks you into place, remember the belt described wasn't like my little dress belt holding up my little dress pants, right?

It was almost like an undergarment and you would link all the other parts of the armor too, almost like a weightlifter knows a belt. It gives them stability. It had an apron. It protected this part of the battle.

[ 25 : 58 ] It was a heavy piece and it put on and allowed you to enable to put the breastplate on. So when we sit in these things and we say, well, God will have mercy with me at a different time.

He'll forgive me. Are we really understanding the consequences of those sins? To say I'm just human, I deserve someone to love, especially with the physical, fleshly sins, sins?

Now, 1 Timothy 1.10 says, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, the sexual, immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine.

when we start saying that certain sins are natural ways of life and we're passing it off as natural way of life, we are directly contradicting God's word.

No matter if it doesn't fit into that's not very nice category. Now, I'm not saying we hate these people. We're never commanded to hate. In fact, we are to deliver the good news.

[ 27 : 16 ] There are certain sins we just don't see the significance of. Pornography. You see a whole bunch of arguments. It's kind of refreshing now. People are coming out with stories, popular people, of the destructiveness of pornography.

When I was young, growing up, it wasn't a part. There was no internet. Internet came and, yeah, you know, I knew. You just don't grab those covered up books at the back, right?

But then it started becoming accessible. I remember this computer showed up on this image. Holy cow, what's that? Right? You're single, you're late 20s, 30s. It's a hook.

I'm in my Bible study. All the guys are connected to pornography. They're all working in computer sciences, living in Ottawa, the industry. For you who do not know, before I was a pastor, I was actually a special investigator with the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, tracking down terrorists.

So when you're tracking down terrorists, you're tracking down seedy people who do seedy bad things. There was a couple of rings where we were busting up where they were making pornographic videos and they literally had enslaved women here in Canada, Toronto.

[ 28 : 30 ] Girls hooked on drugs. And when you're in a situation and you're hauling those girls out of there and you're looking into their eyes all drugged out, phased out, you don't think of pornography as some titillating thing that shows up on the internet again.

You know the men are enslavers, enslaving these poor young women to drugs, abuse. When you understand the evil that is behind it, it changes your attitude quite quickly.

So we know that there's certain sins when we involve ourselves with do horrible damage to us.

And it's almost like we're inviting Satan. Come on in. Well, what about the argument about my body being a temple?

Well, if you were familiar with the Old Testament, that was one of the biggest problems Israel had. They allowed foreign gods into the temple, right?

[ 29 : 41 ] They did. In fact, 2 Kings 23 talks about how the house of God was filled, was made with vessels for Baal and Asherah.

Those were Canaanite false gods. And God used King Josiah to literally clean out the temple and kill all the priests who allowed that to happen.

Right? But God allowed it for a time. That was his mercy, his grace. Then he finally gets a point, enough. We see King Hezekiah doing the exact same thing.

So when we look at a Christian heart, when we are transformed, if we look at our center, we are renewed by the power of the Spirit. Amen? We understand that this heart of stone, which I have as an unbeliever, is taken out and replaced with a heart of flesh.

It is a new heart. The Jewish term of heart is your mind, your DNA, it's the computer CPU. All your directions and instructions come here and go everywhere.

[ 30 : 53 ] Right? When it's a stone, it just sends out bad messages. But now it's got these good messages, right? That's why 2 Corinthians 5.17 says, Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

The old has passed, behold, the new has come. Amen. But as how Jesus works, we're not all of a sudden perfect.

We're not totally clean. It was kind of interesting reading different people from different times, and I mean in history, and this analogy shows up.

It's Christ, the heart, and Christ, your home. So when you become a Christian, Jesus kind of starts out with, it's like, I've got some buddies that I've led to Christ and they show up, they'll come to Christ, they'll swear all the time, right?

People are like, oh my gosh, he's swearing. You know, and he's got to go out for a smoke break or something like that, right? He's been a Christian for two weeks for crying out loud.

[ 31 : 53 ] Like, I haven't even brought that up. This crazy story that I have, I'm in, I'm at university, some guys ask me out for wings, I go to wings, and I start this conversation with a French-Canadian guy, and it turns out I went to grade school with him.

Who knew? And in that time, we're sitting over wings, we're talking about the gospel, and do you remember the Dionne Quintuplets? You older people know the Dionne Quintuplets? One of his nephews, right?

Steep Roman Catholic background, steeped in Roman Catholic background, and he had a lot of issues with it over what happened with the Quintuplets. Anyway, he gets saved, but he's been living with a woman for four years, okay?

And it turns out we have common friends. So he calls me literally the next week, he's announcing to everybody, hey, I'm a believer, I'm a believer, amen. You know? And it's true, he really is today, he's still walking with the Lord, but at that time, all the other guys, all right, you got to kick her out, you got to leave that house, right?

He's like, what are you talking about? I love her, I've been committed to her for like four or five years, right? And I'm just like, guys, would you just relax? Like, it's a rejoicing thing.

[ 32 : 59 ] So he's let Jesus into the foyer. Jesus is going to make his way to the living room, right? We know that. Those are those areas we don't want to give up. He starts cleaning, redecorates, and he goes to the kitchen.

Sometimes he does it in a matter of months, for some he takes a couple years. With Mark, it was kind of interesting because in about a month, he calls me, and he says, is it bad for me to be sleeping with the woman I'm not married to?

I'm like, why do you think that? Well, I'm kind of reading my Bible, and I'm seeing these things, right? And he goes, and I've been actually sleeping in the other room. I just haven't been feeling comfortable with her. You know, I didn't say anything, so let's go for a talk.

And then I met with her because she wanted to know what's going on with Mark. He's changing. He's different, right? And it was a great opportunity to share the gospel with her, you know, and just being patient with them.

But sometimes in our lives, we have been, areas have been cleaned out. But there's some areas in a believer's life, there's still a stinky smell.

[ 34 : 10 ] Perhaps it's the closet where we hide certain things that we do not want. revealed. Perhaps it's our trophy room, right?

Those idols of our heart that we kind of display. You know, pride of life. I got my awards or those things that I think bring stature or count as important to God.

But then sometimes there's something that's that's really blocking God. You've tried, you've tried, and you're trying to grow for Christ.

You want to honor him, you want to love him, but you just can't go forward. It's like there's a big rock there. It's kind of interesting, my friend buys, he buys and flips houses, and then some he rents, and he's got this house.

It's a gorgeous house. It's in Southern California, and he can't rent it. Okay? It's pretty interesting, you go down, you know why? He's got a smelly garage. He's got a smelly garage.

[ 35 : 14 ] Basically, they believe the builder, when he came in, built over something dead underneath the ground, right? It looks, you don't pick up that smell at first when you go in.

But every renter who's renting all of a sudden, I don't want to live here, right? I got to get out. It looks wonderful, but it's not functional.

He can't rent it out. Nobody, it's in the right neighborhood, looks beautiful. Do you have a stinky garage?

Or maybe a closet that you keep dark? Things hidden in? Where you allow the rot to continue to grow, to pass on?



And when people come over, you just steer them away. You've tried to grow spiritually. You've prayed for holiness.

[ 36 : 18 ] You tried to do the right things, but you just keep coming up resistance after resistance after resistance. And you ask, why?

Why can't I forgive? Why can't I forget? Why can't I get off the stupid computer looking at things I shouldn't be looking at?

Are you struggling with moral purity? Do you entertain lies, wrong truths about God?

Colossians 2.8, Paul's quite clear. See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit. What that means is you can get captured by the lies of this world.

If you didn't hear my sermon last week, I would encourage you to go back and listen to it. I talk about the history of truth and how we see truth today, which is in direct contradiction to what God preached.

[ 37 : 31 ] See, if you have that closet, that garage or that boulder that stops you to going to the back of the house, guess what? Satan has space in your life.

You've made room for him in your mind. You've made room for him in your body. What do you do?

When I took the survey, I asked many of you if you have repented and asked Jesus Christ for salvation again and again and again. And many of you said yes.

Right? You repent. It's our first thing. We repent. Jesus, sometimes you're living a life that's like, man, I can't be saved. Maybe I just got to ask you back in, Jesus. And you do this, right? But then you get caught up in the sin again.

You hate it. You detest it. But you're trapped. No matter how hard you try and then you get fearful.

[ 38 : 40 ] Maybe I'm not even saved. I was invited to preach at this church one time and right from the pulpit, I had preached on what it means to worship God with our whole heart based on Isaiah 6.

And a young college graduate just shows up and he says, I can't go on anymore. I need help. I'm a porn addict.

13 years. I got to know this man. He's from the right family, the right church. He's a leader. And he says, I am a white washed tomb.

And if you remember, if you don't know what a white washed tomb is, that is the accusation that Jesus Christ made against the Pharisees. Looks good on the outside, but inside there's death. And he recognized that he will die if he keeps going on this line.

He was smart, grew up the right church, had all those things, but he completely fell to the control of Satan.

[ 39 : 46 ] Satan had a way say in his life and he hated it. So where do you begin when you feel like this guy felt, when you've had blasphemous thoughts about God, the Bible?

One of the big issues is submitting to authority. Where do you begin? Let's go looking at our key text here again, Ephesians 6, 13. Stand therefore having fastened on the belt of truth.

Remember last week, do you believe God's word? That's the ultimate question to ask. Do you trust him? If you do not trust God, you will fail in this battle. You have to know him and know his truth.

Having put on the breastplate of righteousness, righteousness, and the shoes for your feet having put on the readiness given by the gospel. First thing we do is draw near to God. We need to draw near to God.

James 4, 7, and 8, I believe I got the verse. No, I don't. Yep. Notice it starts with, submit yourselves, therefore, to God. Don't submit to your passions.

[ 40 : 55 ] Don't submit to the lies. Don't submit to the virtues you admire. God. Don't care. You submit to God, and you're willing to let him be the authority in your life.

We all want to sit in judgment over God's word. Man, that Old Testament God, he's not my God. He is. to think that we can stand above and judge God with arrogance.

Submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.

Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Submit. Note that word, submit. It's tough.

It's not only your actions, but your thinking as well. If you are not submitted to God, you will fail in this attack, and you will continue giving ground to Satan.

[ 42 : 05 ] Notice in the armor of God, when I talked about can a non-Christian or an unbeliever, when they are possessed, what do you do? This one's actually quite simple. And I've been in those situations. I've met people demon-possessed, angry, frustrated.

More often than not, it's the idea that they can't accept they're a sinner, and they fight. When I was at church in California, that was like a lightning rod for satanic possession.

People showed up multiple times trying to kill my pastor. His pulpit is actually bulletproof. I've seen people, while in the sermon, making a run, trying stab them, shoot them.

And I was there one day when a guy showed up with a bunch of guns, and sadly had to be gunned down by the security. Came to kill people, came to kill God's word. That's intense, right?

But it happens. Those are physical manifestations. See, for me, if I meet someone who is possessed, I don't drive the demon out, I don't talk to the demon, I don't ask them their name, I don't get to the core values.

[ 43 : 16 ] What I do is I preach the truth of Jesus Christ, and then he calls you to repent of your sin. I don't talk to the demon, I talk to the person. Because that's the only thing that's going to bring freedom.

I've got friends who talked about how they've driven demons out of people, and I simply ask, what is their life now? It's worse than it was. Because the person wanted the torment of the demon to end, but they didn't want Jesus.

And Jesus Christ actually talks about when a demon leaves, more come back. So the fact of the matter is, sometimes, as we learn, God is sovereign, he sometimes uses demons to do something.

So when we start trying to throw demons and take power over demons, we're submitting with what God allows. So I ask the person, do you really love God?

And here's the question. If you could go to heaven and be totally content in heaven with all your friends and Jesus wasn't there, would it still matter? Think about that.

[ 44 : 19 ] John Piper asked that question. Is heaven just a place where you think you can be totally joyful, complete? And if Jesus wasn't there, are you okay with that?

If you are, you do not know Jesus Christ. You know the value that he brings, you can have, be free of eternal torment. You can be free of all those things.

But if he is not the adoration of your heart, there's going to be problems. Number two, we resist the attack. We give attention to where we attack.

Are we intentionally or unintentionally inviting Satan and his influences in? Are we free from this? We need to determine to resist.

The third thing, and this is what gets down to the armor of God, is we put on the breastplate of righteousness. The breastplate of righteousness. And I meant to put a picture up, but you guys know what it looks like.

[ 45 : 23 ] It is a big piece. It's either metal, sometimes it's even made of hooves, leather parts that soldiers would use during that time, and it would cover here the neck and the back.

And it covered your heart, your bowels, right? And in the Jewish mindset or the Gentile mindset, your heart is your decision-making and your bowels are your emotions, right?

And you guys know what I'm talking about. Any of you guys are an athlete or you're going to take a test, you get sick to your stomach? I used to run track and field, okay? And I'll be honest with you, I puked before every race, okay?

Which wasn't a big deal and started until the indoor track season started, right? Then I loved fake plants. You know? As much as I would try not to puke, I would before the race.

I'd have to run over, blah, you know. You know what emotions I'm talking about, right? There's some things, oh, I've got a sore stomach. Like, this is that whole breastplate and that's what it is protecting.

[ 46 : 33 ] You see, when Satan attacks, he attacks our mind and our emotions. These are his biggest targets. He wants us to think wrong thoughts and feel wrong emotions. He wants to cloud our minds with false teaching.

Why wrong thoughts lead to wrong actions. Wrong thoughts lead to perpetuating of error. A breastplate is something we wrap around our entire being.

So there's three types of righteousness. What is Paul talking about? I'm going to say this briefly. One, self-righteous. Righteousness that we find in ourselves, nah, that doesn't work, right? It's not calling us to trust ourselves, our work.

There is what's called imputed righteousness, which is at the moment of salvation. I'm just boiling it down. If you're going to get nitpicky with all the theology, I'll gladly talk about it.

But basically means God, when he looks at us, he sees Jesus' righteousness. Jesus Christ lived the perfect life we could not. Right? So at the cross, we're not just forgiven.

[ 47 : 34 ] The righteousness is all moved over to our column. Right? If you're an accountant, all what Jesus did is now on me. So there's this imputed righteousness. But that's not what he's talking about.

He's actually talking about practical righteousness. This is the thing that we put on daily. This is a life lived in obedience to God's word. When you are living a life in obedience to God's word, you're chasing Jesus, you're clinging Jesus, this protects you.

How many times I meet someone who's struggling with something, they're not in God's word, they're not in prayer, they're not in community with the church, they're on their own. Colossians 3.10 says, put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave free, but Christ is in all. And this is what he tells us in verse 12, which I put up. It says, put on then as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, bearing with one another.

This is our identity. Amen? As Jesus Christ, as believers in Jesus Christ, we are to be like Christ. These things do not give us salvation, but these are the works of salvation in a believer of Jesus Christ.

[ 48 : 56 ] Amen? We are to have compassionate hearts. That's action heart. When he talked about hearts, that's a decision to do something compassionate.

Kindness, humility, meekness. These are, next slide please. So this is who you are in Christ. You are holy. You are beloved. You are compassionate.

You are kind. You are meek. You are patient. You are forgiving. That is the identity you are to have in Jesus Christ. Amen? This is what he's created you to be.

This isn't legalism. This is who you are. Satan desires to rob us of our joy and bring glory to God.

If you are trapped in sin with a stinky, smelly garage or bathroom or closet, you got to get rid of it because you are not going to be those things. If you are struggling with holiness, there's something in your life you do not want.

[ 50 : 10 ] It begins with confession of sin. It's not just repentance, but confession. When we confess, we are rightfully agreeing with God. This is evil. This is wrong.

This is hurtful. This is disgusting. This is a time in my life I was struggling with sin. I was working in the government. I was isolated.

I was on my own, traveling a lot. You're exposed to a lot of things. And I remember just simply saying, Lord, I do not fear you anymore. So what did I do?

I went and bought a book called The Joy of Fearing God by Jerry Bridges. If you don't want to fear God, don't read that book. So I'm out in a movie with a buddy of mine.

It was just a regular Joe PG movie. And I started praying, God, I need to fear you. I need to fear you. I need to fear you. Because I wasn't fearing my sin.

[ 51 : 07 ] Right there, I remember in the movie theater, Young and Eglinton, I can draw you a map to where I was sitting in the theater. I just started bawling. And it was like I was vomiting.

My buddy's freaking out. He doesn't know what's going on. And I just started naming the crap that was in my life. I'm on all fours. I just had to have it out.

I couldn't take it anymore. I was a prisoner to my own sin, my own ambition, lust, desire.

my advice is to confess your sin to someone who's going to hold you and help you. Yes, confess the sin to the other person.

There was one person I sinned against. I was so mortified by it. It happened in university. I went back, found them eight years later at work. When I was working with CESUS, I traveled all over the province, found them, went in and just simply said, I need you to forgive me.

[ 52 : 11 ] I did not act like a Christian. Don't share the sin with someone who shares the same sin. If you remember, promise keepers happen a lot of times.

Get together. Hey, we're all confessing adultery. Yeah, they don't support each other, right? It's just, it's dangerous. You need someone who's wholly living, who's doing the right things.

That's just the blind leading the blind. It's good to confess, but you need someone with you. Join a growth group. Get in a study. Start listening to sermons online. Fill your mind with God's word.

Give attention to the area that has made you susceptible to demonic influence. Maybe you're anxious, you're lying, you're bitter, you're unforgiving.

Those are always trigger points. Second, and thirdly, clean out the closet of your past. God can redeem our mistakes. You know that?

[ 53 : 12 ] One of the saddest counseling sessions is I met a woman who left her husband and 13 kids. Right? Just, she felt abused in the relationship.

She was just making babies. Her body was a disaster. She ran away. Then she came to know the Lord after. He had moved on. You know, and she had lived with this horrible guilt.

But God is still doing something in her life to this day. I said, oh, my sister, God even redeemed some of the most horrible mistakes that we think we can make. Some things we cannot go back and fix.

Sometimes it means letting someone from the past off the hook, so to speak. We have to forgive them. Let it go. Some issues may be what my friend had to do.

Guess what? He had to dig up his garage. This guy's a money miser, right? He doesn't want to dig up a garage and the thousands of dollars, but he had to do it. Had to do it and get whatever was in the bottom out so it wouldn't smell anymore.

[ 54 : 18 ] Along with this confession, renounce your wrong thoughts. Renounce your ungodly involvement. Renounce your ungodly connection to lifestyle choices and affiliations which support sin.

Get away. Get out. The one thing that is consistent through all of Scripture is you need to join the church in a meaningful way. I'm not talking about just attending.

You need people that are caring for your soul. We are never to battle alone. Do you understand that my armor just doesn't protect me?

It protects you as well. Your armor protects me. When we're having this righteousness, this holiness, we protect, we look after one another. It begins with that determination to resist, a determination to flee those circumstances, and a determination to love and follow.

Jesus, today we're going to be celebrating communion. We're called to examine ourselves. Today I'm going to ask you to examine yourselves.

[ 55 : 27 ] I'm going to ask you to be determined in your desire to love and follow Jesus. Are you willing to do that? The question you might have right now is what about the shoes?

What about the shoes? You know the Romans were so great because they had great shoes. It's true. Any athlete will tell you without the right shoes, you don't do so well.

Football cleats have big teeth coming out. I remember as a baseball player finally buying my first baseball cleats at the time had six metal spikes. All of a sudden I had lateral movement.

My acceleration increased. I was a much better athlete. Just stability. Romans had big thick leather soles and they would drive nails through. So when they were on that ground you could not push them back.

You would just slip and slide. I told you last week about that sad story about me playing football. Remember? Bad belt, pants falling down. So grade eight I was the hundred meter record holder in North Bay.

[ 56 : 35 ] I'm not sure to this day. So I got recruited to play football. Did I understand the idea of having football cleats? No, I did not. So I remember the first run I'm supposed to make an end run.

I ran 30 yards touchdown. That was great. Let's do it next week. Guess what? It rained. Boom! Straight off, right? Couldn't do it without shoes.

Romans had two types of shoes. One, because they were so thick they could move so fast that the opposing army couldn't get ready for them. Then the other one was these thick sold shoes with these nails in them allowed to dig into the dirt be stable.

So what does it say? It says, as shoes for your feet having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. What I believe that peace is some people different on that.

I believe it means you're at peace with God. When you're at peace with God you stand firm. You're ready. You can't push. You can't move me. Why? Because I know Jesus wins this battle.

[ 57 : 41 ] I am no longer an enemy of God. I'm considered his child of God. So all those promises are not rendered moot because I have sin in my life.

I can confess it. I can repent of it. I can recant it. Get it out. Get right with God. And experience the peace that brings joy. So when we have this belt of truth on it links to this breastplate of righteousness which is holy living.

And we go into this battle knowing that we are no longer enemies of God but we are at peace with God. He loves us. He keeps us. He holds us. And we have ultimate victory.

Amen? Amen? If you doubt this truth and you think holy living is for your grandmother you're going to slip and slide all over the battlefield.

My question to you is are you at peace with God? This communion table that we are going to celebrate right now is about being at peace with God.

[ 58 : 48 ] It's not only confident that he loves us knows us but that we are confidently living in his truth. He called us here just as we talked about this helps us remember Christmas this helps us remember the cross and what he did for us.

So as we have this time of communion if you're new here we welcome you to this table if you say can confidently say I'm at peace with God.

I love Jesus. If you say you love Jesus but you're not at peace with God there's some areas of your life this is the time to examine yourself and maybe you want to let it pass by this week.

Maybe there's a garage you need to go home and dig up. Maybe there's a closet you need to go home and clean out. Maybe there's some stuff you need to put in the backyard and have a burning.

Make that promise to do so. Tell a friend ask someone to come over and help you carry the dirt and garbage out. Dave in here who both serve as pastors we'd love to we have elders there's other mature believers that would love to walk with you in this time.

[ 60 : 14 ] We want to see you with clean houses. We want to see Jesus Christ glorified in every part of your life. But more importantly Jesus does too, right? So can I get a couple of ushers here a couple of ushers on this side please to come and by the way?

Uh, God thank you and the way is you are