



COVENANT CHURCH

Ready to Stand

Pastor Ricky Texada

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Main Idea – The circumstances we experience in the physical world are an indicator of the vast, unseen battles taking place in the spiritual world. Stand strong in the physical world – know that God has provided you the support of an unseen army of angels – by praying, declaring God’s Word, and surrounding yourself with a network of fellow believers.

You have all the resources you need

- In times of crisis, we have seen the effects of fear by the hoarding of material provisions.
- In the United States there is an abundance of basic material necessities; well beyond what we all need to survive.
- Yet, many panic because they allow fear to guide their actions, rather than the peace of knowing God is already fighting the fight for us in the unseen spiritual world.

If you are going to stand strong, recognize your fight begins in the spirit

- The Apostle Paul’s congregation in Ephesus was apparently suffering from divisions caused by spiritual attacks against unity and moral purity. Paul knew the Ephesians were experiencing a battle in the physical world that needed to be fought in the spiritual world. **Ephesians 6:10-18 - Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints (NKJV)**

- In the Old Testament, the prophet Elisha was blessed by being able to see a vision of the unseen army of God that was ready to fight for, and protect, him. **2 Kings 6: 15-18 - When the servant of the man of God got up early the next morning and went outside, there were troops, horses, and chariots everywhere. “Oh, sir, what will we do now?” the young man cried to Elisha. “Don’t be afraid!” Elisha told him. “For there are more on our side than on theirs!” Then Elisha prayed, “O Lord, open his eyes and let him see!” The Lord opened the young man’s eyes, and when he looked up, he saw that the hillside around Elisha was filled with horses and chariots of fire. As the Aramean army advanced toward him, Elisha prayed, “O Lord, please make them blind.” So the Lord struck them with blindness as Elisha had asked. (NLT)**
- Today, our natural world is also struck with blindness. Many (perhaps most?) people respond only to what they can observe. They do not understand the influence of the spiritual realm on what happens in the physical. **2 Corinthians 4:3-6 - If the Good News we preach is hidden behind a veil, it is hidden only from people who are perishing. Satan, who is the god of this world, has blinded the minds of those who don’t believe. They are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News. They don’t understand this message about the glory of Christ, who is the exact likeness of God. You see, we don’t go around preaching about ourselves. We preach that Jesus Christ is Lord, and we ourselves are your servants for Jesus’ sake. For God, who said, “Let there be light in the darkness,” has made this light shine in our hearts so we could know the glory of God that is seen in the face of Jesus Christ. (NLT)**
- When you see something happening in the physical world, cry out to the spiritual world for help. The Gospel writer Mark told the story of a blind man who cried out to Jesus for help. Bartimaeus knew his physical situation could only be fixed spiritually because he addressed Jesus as the ‘Son of David’. **Mark 10: 46-47 – Now they came to Jericho. As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the road begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” (NKJV)**
- Bartimaeus took a stand in the physical because he knew his fight was against unseen events in the spiritual. The enemy we can’t see is influencing the enemy we do see.
- The battle always begins in the spirit.

The fight is God’s, not ours

- One of the Old Testament Israelite kings, Jehoshaphat, relied on God’s resources and guidance to defeat his enemies in the physical world. **2 Chronicles 20:14-15 - Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah,**

a Levite of the sons of Asaph, in the midst of the assembly. And he said, “Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and you, King Jehoshaphat! Thus says the Lord to you: ‘Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God’s. (NKJV)

- Those same resources of God are available to you today. But, you must know of those resources, have faith in them, and call on them. The Holy Spirit will direct and guide you as you walk forward toward the victory that has already been declared.
- In his fight against Goliath, David knew he would be victorious because Goliath only had resources of the physical world. David knew he himself was a tool God was about to use in His own fight. **1 Samuel 17:45-47 - Then David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. Then all this assembly shall know that the Lord does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord’s, and He will give you into our hands.” (NKJV)**
- Today, you are also in a fight against bullies; fear is a bully, guilt is a bully, hatred is a bully.
- Let God take His place in front of you in whatever fight you are in. **Deuteronomy 20:1-4 - When you go to war against your enemy and see horses and chariots and soldiers far outnumbering you, do not recoil in fear of them; God, your God, who brought you up out of Egypt is with you. When the battle is about to begin, let the priest come forward and speak to the troops. He’ll say, “Attention, Israel. In a few minutes you’re going to do battle with your enemies. Don’t waver in resolve. Don’t fear. Don’t hesitate. Don’t panic. God, your God, is right there with you, fighting with you against your enemies, fighting to win.” (Message)**
- Like David, declare your victory out loud ahead of time. Don’t waver in your resolve. You are going to win!
- As you go through your day, look for opportunities to minister to others who may be suffering under fear. Ask people how they are doing, declare God’s Word over them, help them as you are able and directed by Him.

The armor is God’s, not ours

- The Ephesians Armor of God verses (above) lists our weapons as:
 - Truth – Truth is exclusive. Truth is from God, it is not open for your personal interpretation.

- Righteousness – Righteousness is right-standing with God. He is on your side. In **Matthew 5**, Jesus mentioned righteousness in several places, and indicated how God’s declaration of righteousness on individual believers puts them in right-standing with Him.
- Peace – The peace of God will keep you anchored.
- Faith – Proclaim your faith. Then, approach God with that faith and He will enable you to see things you otherwise would not have.
- Salvation – Knowing you are saved, and declaring your salvation, will protect your mind and thoughts.
- Word – Use God’s Word as a weapon against the physical manifestations of the fallen world.

Prayer is the battlefield

- Prayer is the place where you can use God’s weapons in spiritual warfare.
- Your state of constant prayerfulness will bring you together with other Christians who are with you in the spiritual fight.
- Prayer will keep you sharp; alert; aware.
- Prayer will create opportunities for victory. Individuals in need, whom you will be able to bless, will be brought into your life.
- Prayer will enable you to sense and know things that are taking place in the unseen spiritual world.

Reflective Questions for Ready to Stand

1. Pastor Ricky taught that our world’s challenges can easily be overcome by using the weapons God provides in spiritual warfare. Does that make sense to you? Why did you answer as you did?
2. How might you explain spiritual warfare to someone who is under fear, and has relied solely on physical observation for understanding the world?
3. Do you have specific Bible passages at your disposal as your sword (or weapon)? Can you find a few to share right now with others in this Bible study?
4. Why is it necessary to combine together prayer and the use of God’s Word as you fight?