

The Armour of God (The Sword of the Spirit)

Ephesians 6:17

Pastor Jeremy Cagle, June 20, 2021

Well, if you're new to us this morning, I just want to kind of give you a heads up. The barn next door has revival every morning about this hour because the cows get fed. So if you hear a lot of noise and commotion over there, they are not are getting spiritual, they are just hungry. We have noticed about 8:30 is when they are fed. So just give you a heads up with that. Also, if you are new to us, I just want to let you know, this is not the only time that we meet together as a church. It's not the only time that we come together, because we do it and other times as well. Since the Bible is so rich to us, as since it's so deep, we really can't ever get enough of it can't get to it all in just one hour. And so we meet throughout the week as well. For example, our men come together every Saturday morning, at 7:30, right here in the tent, to go through the Bible, book by book. We studied the book of Philemon yesterday and we are going to do Hebrews next week, and then James the week after that. So that's what the men are doing here in the church. And then at the same time, our ladies are going through a book called God's Priorities for Today's Women, which is a wonderful book on biblical womanhood. And that study is going to be held throughout the summer at different times and places, but all that's to say, if you are new, or you are not a part of one of those things, I would encourage you to do that. It's just a wonderful way to get to know people. And it's also a good reminder that you can't get to all the Bible in one Sunday, it's just too rich and too deep. So we do all these other times, as well. So please join us for that if you can.

And with that said, speaking of the Bible, I want to invite you to open your Bibles to a book that I think is one of the richest ones in Scripture. It's one of the deepest ones, if we could say it that way. And that is the book of Ephesians, so turn there with me.

And while you're doing that, this is one of our favorite things to do as a church. It's one of our favorite ministries. We love to preach the Bible here. We love to open up the Word of God in order to see what it says. And as we have done that, we have come to this part of it. We have come to the last chapter in the book of Ephesians, which I would like to read to you, if you would look in Ephesians six, verse 10, Paul writes, and he says these words,

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one, and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

We will end the reading there. If you have been with us for a while, you will know that as we have taught through the Bible here at Grace fellowship, and gone through week by week, we have come to a part that has really forced us to slow down a little bit. It has forced us to kind of put on the brakes and take our time. Some passages are understood best if you speed through them. Sometimes they are understood very well if you go at a quick pace, but other ones, you really need to slow it down. And this is one of those because this is a subject that's found

nowhere else in the Bible, the subject of the armour of God. As I have told you before, all these terms in here, such as the breastplate of righteousness and the shield of faith, they are found nowhere else in Scripture. This is the only place where you see them. The Lord put them in here for this reason, to remind you that when He saved you, He really saved you. That is what the armour of God says. When God redeemed you and forgave you, He meant it because He gave you all this. All these terms in here are just another way of referring to your salvation to what happened to you the moment you were saved, because at that point, God covered you from end to end in armour. Nothing can touch you now, nothing can harm you in any way.

There are some people who don't believe that today. Some people believe God hasn't done this because they think you can lose your salvation. They teach that you can sin to the point that God will abandon you, He will walk away from you. But I want you to notice that it is not what you read in here. That's not what this says, because this passage says that God will never do that; He will never walk away from you because He has given you all this. This is another way of describing your eternal security and your eternal protection. It would be one thing if salvation were up to you. And be one thing if it were up to your own strength and power and your own weapons and your own sword and shield and those kinds of things. But it is not. Salvation is not about that. It is about God's weapons and He provides all this for you.

And as Paul goes on to describe this, he comes to the final piece of armour in the list, which is found if you look down in verse 17. He says, "And the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

I'm going to walk you through this passage in a moment, but the last piece of armour here is probably the most well-known one in the list, that is the sword of the Spirit. The Greek word for sword here is *machaira* referred to a small double-edged sword that was used by the Romans in hand-to-hand combat when the enemy was up close. They also had another sword that was used when further away called the *spasa*, from which we get the word Spartan, because it was a weapon that they used. But that's not what this is referring to. This was a little one stretch for about 18 inches, kind of what we would almost call a big dagger. It was light because it allowed a soldier to travel fast. The point of this sword was that it allowed him to move quickly on the battlefield, because it didn't get in his way. You can imagine if you had a long sword with you, and you were trying to move quickly on a battlefield, it would drag the ground knock against your feet, and trip you, so what the Romans did is they developed a sword that wouldn't do that. To be clear, they also carried a spear, but the problem was that it was often yanked out of your hands. So the problem with the spear is that he was often pulled away in battle. But that wouldn't happen with this, you couldn't pull the sword away, which made it the most important weapon they had on the battlefield, it was the most significant one.

And in a similar way, Paul says at the end of this list, this is our main weapon as well, it's the most significant one that we have, we have a sword of the Spirit. If you look through the list of armor here, this is the only aggressive weapon you see in the list. It's the only weapon actually given to you to attack the enemy, all the other ones are to defend and guard. This one is to go on the attack. You don't really guard yourself with the sword, you kill the enemy. That's why it's placed in here.

The phrase *sword of the Spirit* is another way of saying a sword that comes from the Spirit or a sword that's given to us by His hands because it wasn't given to us by men. This is not a man-made weapon. It's not a human thing. It came to us from the Holy Spirit of God. It's explained further as well in verse 17, when it says, "which is the word

of God,” and that's a reference to the Bible. The sword of the Spirit is another reference to the Scriptures, because that's what God has given to you. That's the weapon He has placed in your hands to fight the battle.

He hasn't given you a song or a hymn or a poem to recite. He hasn't given you a dream or a vision or an audible voice from God; that's not what you have. He has given you the words of this book. He has given you a copy of Scripture. I've had people ask me, “Why doesn't God speak to me today?” And my response has been, “Just open up the Bible and read it.” That's all you need to know to fight the battle of sin. One author said, “The pages of the Bible were written by kings, emperors, princes, poets, sages, philosophers, fishermen statesmen. By learning man and the wisdom of Egypt, educated in the schools of Babylon, trained at the feet of the rabbi's in Jerusalem. It was written by exiled men, in the desert men, and shepherds in tents beside still waters. Among its authors, we find a tax gatherer, a herdsman, and a gatherer of Sycamore fruit. We find poor men, rich men, statesmen, preachers, captains, legislators, judges and exiles and behind every word is the Divine Word of God himself. Behind every word in the Bible is the Sovereign Lord of all creation, who has told us everything that we need to know.” He is right. Everything you need to know is found in the pages of this book. The Bible is sufficient. It is a perfect book.

I mentioned this because some folks struggle with this today as well, they don't quite understand this. Because when sin comes in, problems come, and they go other places for help. They turn to other things like modern psychology, modern philosophy, some of them turned to possessions, some of them turn to drugs and alcohol, which is why they struggle with sin so much. It is why it is such a problem. Because those things don't fix that. When you come back from the alcohol and come back from the drugs and come back from the philosophy and the psychology, the sin is still there. All that did is hide it for a moment because it doesn't have the power to deal with that. The only thing that has the power to destroy sin is this. It's the Bible; it is the gospel that's found in this book. Nothing else can even come close. Because the Bible is not just another book on the shelf, it's a sword. It is the deadliest weapon you have because it was given to you to cut the sin out of your heart. That's why you have it. It was given to you to reach down in there and pull it out and put it to death. So we need to remember that today and treat it that way. You hold a dangerous book in your hands when you come to church. You hold a deadly book in your hands. We don't often think of it that way. But that book in your hands was given to you to kill sin.

That's what we are going to talk about this morning. Hebrews four, verse 12, says, “For the Word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, joints and marrow, able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.” What the author is saying there is that the word of God is alive. Unlike the words of modern psychology and modern philosophy, it is not dead. It is living an active because it has the power to do something about your heart. And it's sharper than any sword because it can go places where a normal sword can't. It can dive into parts of your heart that a normal dagger can reach. And it can judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart, which means it can show you things about yourself you didn't know the Bible can tell you things about your heart, you didn't even know were there.

So you need to take it seriously today.

A buddy of mine once told me years ago that you shouldn't fight the devil with a toothpick when you have a sword to use. You shouldn't fight him with a butter knife. When you have something greater than that. You need to use the Bible. And that's what we're going to talk about this morning. So if you're taking notes this morning, in Ephesians, six, we're going to look at three ways to wield the sword of the Spirit. And we're going to do that because I think we all understand the Bible was not given to us just for head knowledge.

It wasn't given to us just to puff us up and make us look smarter. It was given to us for something else. It was given to us to change our lives. It's not just a normal book. It's a book of all books.

In fact, some of you told me that you were saved just by reading the Bible. Some of you were born again, just because you found it in a hotel room where you found it on a table. And you began reading it. And that's it. That's all you did. It changed your whole life. Others of you have told me you were convicted that way. You were brought to your knees over sin just because you read the Bible, you went through a passage and you said, I can't live like this anymore. I can't go on this way I've got to change. That's why the Lord has given it to us. You can read other books and they won't do that. You can read other books and they will not have that sort of impact on your life. You can you can read the dictionary, the encyclopedia, you can look at the sports page in the newspaper, none of that will have that sort of impact on you. The Bible is truly one of a kind and we are going to talk about that today by looking at three ways to wield the sword of the Spirit.

The first way to wield the sword of the Spirit is to remember that anyone can use it. This means that you don't have to be a super Christian to do this. You don't have to be super spiritual, that sort of thing. This is something anyone can do no matter who you are. And I won't go into all this for the sake of time, I won't go back through the passage. But as you do this, you can tell there are several pieces of armor in here. There are quite a few in the list that we have looked at in previous weeks. There are six to be exact. So if you are keeping count, there are six pieces of armor. And they all interrelate, they all kind of intertwine because they go back to this one, they go back to the Bible, because when Paul tells you to put on the sandals of peace, he means to put on the sandals of peace that are found in the Bible, put on the sandals that are described in this book. And then when he says, to take up the breastplate of righteousness, he means the same thing. Take out the righteousness, it is found in the Bible. For the shield of faith, all these things, it is the same idea, because the idea is that this is the greatest weapon in your arsenal. This is what it all builds up to.

You have a sword of the Spirit. And just to give you some more historical background on this, I found it fascinating to study swords this week, I guess the kid in me came out, but swords are very interesting to study. Historians tell us that the first swords that we know of were invented in the Bronze Age around 3000 BC. They were invented about 5000 years ago. And they were pretty crude at the time. They were pretty barbaric. Because they weren't that long. They were pretty short, but they were very clumsy. They were heavy. And they would splinter when you hit him against other swords. So as time went on, craftsmen began making them into iron. They even began making iron swords, which were stronger and more durable and they wouldn't shatter like the bronze ones. And that's what this is referring to. When we read about a sword in verse 17, this is an iron blade that was used by the Roman army, they would take it with them in battle.

Just to be clear, other people use this sword as well, like the gladiators, many of us know of the gladiators, this is the kind of sword they would take with them into the Colosseum. In fact, one of the Greek words for sword meant Gladiator, so it was kind of symbolic of that role. It was also used by assassins as well. This is the kind of sword that robbers and thieves would use because they would hide it under the robes, they would put it in their cloak and pull it out to hurt someone. But it was also used by the army, by the legionnaires in open warfare because they were experts at this; they were they were masters at this kind of warfare, because what they would do is they would lure their enemy into the middle of a battlefield, put them into the center, and surround them on all sides creating a killing field in the middle. They would kind of encircle their enemy and create a creative field of death. They would come in with their shields be guarded, and they would attack with this weapon. And Paul says in a

similar way, you have to do the same thing with this. As a Christian, you have to do the same thing with your sin, you need to cut the sin out of your life. You need to surround it with the sword and hack it into pieces with the Word of God.

The word for *word* here it's very helpful. It's very telling because it's not the typical word that we see for this. It's not the typical word *logos* that we're all familiar with. If you're done some studying of this, the word *logos* is often used for word in the Bible. But *logos* means a general word or universal word. But this word is another one. It's the word *rhema*, which means a specific word or a particular one. And the significance is that Paul says that this is how you attack your sin. This is how you defeat it: with a specific word from God. You do it with a specific verse from the Bible. You have a specific sin or a specific temptation, you give a specific word from God to deal with it.

So for example, if you are tempted to be discouraged and lose heart, you can quote a verse like Romans 8:28, which says, "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose." You can quote that verse in that time and the temptation to despair will go away. It'll help you take away the discouragement. Or if you are tempted to be upset about something; if you are tempted to be anxious and afraid, you can quote Psalm 23 verse four, which says, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for God is with me; His rod and staff, they comfort me." But the idea is that you can use the Word of God to stop your sin now. You can use passages like that to help you defeat it.

I've counseled a lot of people. It is just one of the things that we do here at Grace fellowship. And it is very common when someone is in sin to say these words, "I don't know what to do." I have no idea what to do with this thing. Well, this is what you can do. You find passages in Scripture to talk about it, and then apply them to your lives. That's what they are there for and why God has given them to you.

And the real neat part about this is that anyone can do this, no matter who you are. Anyone can quote, the Bible doesn't matter if you're old or young, rich or poor. It doesn't matter if you are smart or not smart. You don't have to have a PhD in theology to do this. You don't have to have a degree from Bible College. That's not the idea here. That's not what Paul is saying. He's saying, you just need to quote the things you know. You need to recite the things that you have already learned in the Bible to yourself in a time like this, and it will help you. It will help get the sin out of your heart.

As I was studying for this passage this week, it really struck me that one of the reasons why Christians struggle with sin so much is because we don't do this. One of the reasons that sin gets such a grip on our hearts is because we don't take the time to read the Bible like we should; we just kind of ignore it, or we put it on the shelf, pick it up on Sunday morning. And that's about it.

So that when sin comes, we are caught off guard by it. When temptation comes, we don't know what to do, because we don't have it locked in here. We don't have it fresh on our mind. Paul says that's a foolish thing to do. That's silly, because God has given you something to help you with that; He has given you something to deal with it. You just need to use it now. It has been said that a sword can't help you unless it's sharp. It can't help you unless it's polished and ready for battle. And it's the same way with this, you need to keep your sword sharp, you need to keep it polished.

I am going to say a few more words about that here in just a moment. But it brings us to another thing to talk about this morning, another way to wield the sword of the Spirit. The first one is to remember that anyone can use it. You don't have to be a super Christian or a super saint or anything. This is for anybody. That's the whole reason God gave you a Bible, so everybody can read from the same book. That was the intention.

And this brings us to another way to wield the sword of the Spirit, and that is this, you need to remember that you can use it at any time. Which means you don't have to be in a special place to do this. You don't have to be in a church or a cathedral or monastery. You can use it wherever you go. In the ancient churches in the Middle Ages, because Bibles were so expensive, they used to chain them to the pulpit. So nobody would steal it. A lot of Christians think the Bible is chained to the pulpit still. They walk out of here as if it's still tied to this podium. And it's not you can open it up anywhere. If you read in the passage again in verses 13 through 17, just to get it fresh in our minds, Paul says, "Therefore take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day. And having done everything to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace," and then further down, "and taking up the sword of the Spirit." I read over that again with you just to let you see this, that there are several words that are repeated in this passage, several terms that show up over and over again. One of them is the word "having." If you look in verse 14, it is the first time you see it there. But because each of these pieces of armor are preceded by this term, and the idea is that you can defeat your sin, you can stand firm against the devil knowing that you have all of this already. You're not trying to get this armor, you're not trying to look for it somewhere in a store or something like that. It's yours. When you were saved it was placed into your hands in your possession.

And the importance of this is that at this point in history, real weapons weren't like that. They were hard to come by, because they were made by hand. We've all seen pictures of farmers defending themselves with their Pitchfork and their spade and that sort of thing. They had to do that because real weapons were expensive. They were made by a craftsman or a slave, and so normal people didn't have them. Aside from a few exceptions, most people didn't have a sword or a breastplate or a helmet.

But in contrast to this, Paul says, this armor is very different from that. This armor is completely different. Because this is available to anyone. In fact, right above this in Ephesians six, if you look in verse five, he had just finished talking to slaves. That's very unusual. Slaves would have been a group of people they could not have afforded any armor. They don't have any money at all. You wouldn't find one slave in the Roman Empire with any of this. Paul says, On the contrary, as a Christian, any slave can have this, this is for any of us. You can use it at any time. Paul calls this a sword of the Spirit, which means it's just as available as the Spirit is, it's just as free as Him. The Spirit goes anywhere. The Holy Spirit can go to any place on the planet anytime He chooses and it's the same way with the sword of the Spirit, same way with the Bible.

And let me tell you why this is important. Because like we said before, you never know when sin is going to attack you, you never know when it's going to strike. So you need to be ready at all times. You need to have the Bible with you, fresh on your mind. Because the devil is a sneaky devil, he's a tricky one. And he's going to tempt you at the worst possible moment. He's going to come at you at the worst possible time.

I remember the time a professor in seminary told me that he often feels the worst when he's doing the greatest things for God, like out in the street evangelizing or sharing the gospel with his neighbour, because of the devil because the devil does everything he can to stop him.

I can't tell you guys how many times I get up here to preach and I feel like a wretch. All my sins are in my mind that sort of things for the same reason. And in moments like that, you need to have your Bible with you. In moments like that, you need to have it fresh on your mind. So if you're struggling with evangelism, you can remember a passage like Matthew five, which says you are the light of the world, a city set on a hill cannot be hidden. You need to remember that and keep going. God puts you on this earth to be a light. He puts you on this earth to shine. Or you can remember a passage like Romans one, verse 16, which says that I am not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God for salvation for everyone who believes. You can talk to that a hard hearted cynic, you can talk to that hard hearted agnostic, knowing it is the power of God to save him, the greatest power the world has ever known. But the point is that all of this is available to you now, it's in your hands to use wherever you go.

If you think about, you know, you can't say this in some parts of the world today. In some parts of the world, you can't say that the Bible is available anytime you need, because they don't have it. In some parts of the world it hasn't been translated yet. But you don't have that problem here because all of you have a Bible in your lap right now or you have it on your phone. From what I could find, the Bible is more available now than ever, because there's something like 700 translations available right now.

The New Testament alone has been translated into 1500 languages. If you can believe that, more than any other book in the world, nothing else even comes close. Our church is so diverse. You can say it this way. If you don't like it in English, you can find it in another language. But the point is, it's available. It's very, very available. You just need to take the time to read it.

And the scenarios for this are endless. The places you could use your Bible are infinite really. We could talk about this all day long, but you can use it in your evangelism. You can use the Scripture when you're sharing the gospel of someone on the street or someone in your neighborhood. And you can use it in your parenting as well. You can use the Bible when you're raising kids and evangelizing them and bringing them up in the fear and admonition of the Lord. I mean, a few times in my parenting, I've told my child hold on for a moment, I got to go get my Bible to figure this out. You can use it in your marriage. You can use it at work. You can use it when you're suffering. In fact, I can say that this is one of the greatest places you can use scripture: when you are in a trial. I have visited several sick people throughout the years who were in the hospital. And I can say I've never read the encyclopedia to them one time. I've never read the dictionary to them. I have never read philosophy to them. What's that going to do?

You read the Bible. You can take it anywhere. You take it to the funeral home, you can bury people with it. Because it's that kind of book. It's that supernatural.

Which brings us to one more point to consider today, just one more way to wield the sword of the Spirit. The first one is to remember that anyone can use it. And then secondly, you need to remember that you can use it at any time, which means you don't have to be in a special place. You don't have to be a church to read the Bible.

You can take it home with you, you can take it into the hospital. It's a transcendent book, it transcends all boundaries, all limitations because it is a sword of the Spirit. This brings us to one more thing to talk about, just one more way to wield the sword of the Spirit, and that is to remember, and this is the most practical one, remember that this is a book. And it has to be treated as such.

Remember, a third way to wield the sword of the Spirit is to remember that the Bible is a book and it has to be treated as such, which means that you have to study it like you would any other book. You have to learn it like you would any other document. When you read the letters of Paul, one thing you notice is that there is always a note of confidence in them; there is always a note of hope, which is what you see here in the book of Ephesians. Because even though he writes us from a jail cell, even though he writes it from one of the worst places imaginable, he is very positive as he does is, you almost forget when you are reading the book of Ephesians, where he actually is. Because everything in this passage just breeds confidence. It just spills over with hope because he has this, because he has the Bible, because he has a sword of the Spirit. And nothing can take that away from him now.

In fact, to elaborate on that, we don't know if Paul had an actual copy of the Bible with him when he wrote this. We don't know if he had an actual copy of the scriptures in the prison cell, probably not. The Bible would have been very heavy at that time, because it was written on a scroll and carried on pieces of parchment. But as a former pharisee, he would have had to memorize; he would have had the Bible locked into his brain because that's what they did. They memorized the Old Testament by heart. And Paul says, "I can draw on that for encouragement in a time like this, I can draw on it for hope. They can take me to prison, but they can't take this away from me there." But the point is that Paul could not have done that if he didn't take the time. He could not have learned the Bible, if he didn't put in the work. It takes work to learn the Bible. It takes effort and energy.

One commentator said it this way: "There is no secret formula to learning this book. There is no magic spell. You just have to take the time to study it. You have to sit down in your chair and not get up until you know what it says. That is how you learn the Bible. It is not learned by osmosis; I wish it was. It is not learned by putting it on your pillow at night and sleeping on it. I mean, that would be really nice, wouldn't it? It's not learned by putting it on T shirts. Nothing wrong with that. And that's fine if you want to do that. But that's not how you learn it.

You have to study, you have to put in the effort. And in saying that, I understand that for some of you that may sound intimidating to you may sound kind of hard because you don't like to study and I get that I understand. But just to encourage you they've done research on this and found that even if you have an average speed of reading, you can read the Bible in about 70 hours from start to finish. That means three days. So if you just get you a big Tim Hortons coffee and sit down in a chair for three days, you can read it, but that's the amount of time but to break that down a little bit. If you read three chapters a day you can finish it in a year. And if you read 10 chapters a day, you can finish it in three months. In other words, it is doable. It is achievable to read the Bible, especially when you consider how much TV most of us watch. Consider how much time we spend on our iPhones. I think one study I read said that the average Canadian picks up his iPhone physically 50 times a day. But the point is, you are going to have to make a sacrifice in order to learn this book, something's got to come out of the schedule, something's got to come off the table. The time is there, you just have to find it.

And to help you with that, and just to make this point really practical, I came up with a list of several things you can do to get started learning the Bible, if this is a new concept for you, this is kind of a foreign idea we give you

so I came up with several things you can do to get started, these are all very simple. But the first one is to develop a Bible reading plan. One way to learn the Bible is just to develop a daily plan to help you go through it regularly and consistently. Because it is such a big book, because it's so large, you're not going to get through it all in one take, you're going to have to do it consistently, regularly every day. The famous pastor Robert Murray McShane developed one that's very helpful, it takes you back and forth through the Bible, read a little bit of the Old Testament, then read a little bit of the new and then read a little old, and a little new like that back and forth. Some people like that, they really enjoy it. Another way to do it is just to read it from start to finish, just open it up in Genesis and go all the way through until you're finishing the book of Revelation. I have to do that personally. Because if I don't I lose track of where I am, if I go back and forth, but however you do it, it doesn't matter. You just need to do it. Make it a daily habit.

And then second, you need to memorize the Bible as well. Another step to start learning the Bible is just to start memorizing it so you can have it locked into your brain, so you can have it sitting on your heart. Just go over and over and over a passage until it just becomes second nature to you. recite it over and over again. You can do that by putting messages on your iPhone, put little reminders in there. You can do it with flashcards as well, put a flashcard in your pocket, carry it around with you. I've heard some people say, "Well, I can't do that because I have a bad memory." Well, do you remember your kids' names? I mean, you can remember some things. Do you remember the statistics from a baseball game or a hockey game? There are all kinds of things we remember. You can do this, it is achievable.

One more step to learn in the Bible is just to join a group of people who are already studying it and learn with them. And like I said earlier, we have a lot of those here. We have a lot of those Bible studies here at our church, you just need to join in with them.

Friends, I mentioned this, because none of this stuff we've talked about today is going to help you if you don't do this, none of this stuff we've looked at about the sword of the Spirit will do you any good. If you don't take the time to learn the Bible, you just have to get started.

This is one of the things I love about our church because you guys do read the Bible. When you come to church, you always have it with you in your hands, or you know where to find it on your phone. I love that because it's been said that there is nothing sadder than a church full of unread Bibles. There is nothing more tragic than that. But I don't think we have that here. But even if that's you and your life, let's take the time to make some changes today.

The story is told of the time a pastor was visiting a family and the wife of the house was wanting to impress him, to show him how spiritual they were. And so after dinner, she asked her daughter to go fetch the most important book in the house go find the one that we all love. And so the daughter went out of the room and came back in with the Sears catalog.

Friends, you want to give your greatest attention and affection to the Word of God because it is the sword of the Spirit. So will you do that today? Will you make them Bible the most important book in your hearts? Let me pray that you would Let's close in a word of prayer.

Heavenly Father, we do thank you for the book that we have talked about this morning. We thank you for the Bible. Not just that it has changed our lives, but it has changed the lives of so many others. every man, woman and child that has been born again in this tent has been born again by the power that is written about in these words. And the word that is given to you is from your hands. Father, we thank you for this gift and this treasure, we pray you would give us the wisdom and insight to see it that way to see this book as a treasure because there are many that don't have it. And Lord, I do pray for those who are here today, if there are any who are lost and don't know the Lord Jesus Christ, that this sword would Pierce their hearts this morning; that it would unravel them until they come to the Saviour for forgiveness and salvation. And I pray for those who are saved as well that this would just spur them on for more love and good deeds. We all need to be provoked in our hunger for your word. I pray that this time will do that today. And we pray this all in Christ's name. Amen.