

Seven Essentials In The Christian Family

Essential #6

Assault Of Adversary/Allies - Lifting the Fog of War

Look with me, if you would, at Ephesians 6:10...

“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might, put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil 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 firm, stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace in all circumstances, take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one, and take up the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God, praying at all times in the spirit with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly as I ought to speak.”

The grass withers and the flower fades. This is God's word. It abides forever. By his grace and mercy may be preached for you. Please be seated.

The year was 1969. That was the year I went to war. In March of 1969 even with the opportunities of marriage, I went down to Pecan Avenue to the place that they assigned for me to take a test and a physical to join the Marine Corps. I took the physical, took the test and called me back to take another physical. And then they sent me home. And a couple of months later, while I was awaiting for orders to go to Parris Island, I got these orders and it was, unless we declared this as a war, you are unacceptable. And, so I went from A18 to A1Y and, and of course, the Vietnam conflict was never a declared war, so I never got called.

So I'm still awaiting orders, and, I haven't gotten them yet. Well, Harry, you just said you went to war in 1969. Oh, yeah, I did. That was March and in December of 1969 I became a Christian, and that was the day I went to war. That was the day I got drafted into the Army of the Lord. That was the day I got introduced to the Armor of the Lord, the Weapons of the Holy Spirit. That was the day I went to war. That was, in a sense, a great war because the war had already been won! I got called to battles, so I got called to war to battle for my testimony to Satan who right from the very beginning attempted to tear it down. I got called war and battles for my new wife. My first wife. Thankfully, my only wife! I was in a battle for my marriage. Satan constantly tried to detour me and distract me. I was in a battle, after that, for three children that were born to us.

Three children that I looked through the window of the infant nursery. And I will admit to tears, but also the excitement of raising these children. And then I'll admit to fear, because I'd been a Christian long enough to know what I was getting was actually three people dead in their sins with a promise from God. Thankfully, I'll be a God to you and to your children after you, but dead in their sins. I was called in to the ministry and I've been at war ever since. Satan attacking against the church and inside the church. Satan's constant incessant, like the waves upon the seaside, assault. So, when I became a Christian in 1969 I went to war.

We've been covering the Christian family. I've been studying and it's no accident that the Apostle Paul, when he says, I want you to be filled with the spirit, says the evidence will be your submitting to one another. It's no accident by the Holy Spirit after he said, submitting to one another, he tells husbands how to submit to their wives by loving them sacrificially and leading them as servants. He tells wives how to submit to their husbands by coming alongside them, being their helper, completer, respecting them, and honoring them as their husband. He tells parents how to submit to their children by raising them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, to know the Lord, love the Lord, and serve the Lord. He tells children how to submit to their parents by honoring and obeying them. He goes on to deal with other institutions, such as the slave master and the governor and citizen. And then when he gives all of this order of the Christian life to show forth the power of the spirit in our lives, he then immediately goes to spiritual warfare. Ephesians 6 -- put on the armor of God. Stand firm. Fiery darts are coming. Schemes of Satan. You stand against cosmic powers. You will wrestle, but you do not wrestle against flesh and blood. You wrestle against cosmic powers. It is no accident. He goes to spiritual warfare.

When I was preparing for the ministry, there were a couple of things that PCA pastors did well. One thing... all PCA pastors bought a blue blazer with khaki pants. That was a uniform. I still have my first one and I have it on today. Secondly, probably every PCA pastor that you'll meet near my age, you'll find this book in their library – It's by William Gurnall called The Christian in Incomplete Armor. It's 1600 pages and it's on these 11 verses I just read to you.

And... I know every PCA pastor my age with this book hasn't read it yet. This is one of the most overwhelming books you've ever seen in your life. I remember reading and thinking, my goodness, if he spent 1600 pages on 11 verses, what in the world am I going to do? Trying to preach through the Bible? I can't do that. Even in my whole life. But you see what William Gurnall is telling us in this book is not how to preach and that 1600 pages are required for 11 verses and expositional preaching. Well, he certainly would tell us to preach expositionally. The reason he took that much time on these verses is because William Gurnall believed that this was the key text on spiritual warfare, because Jesus Christ does not want you to cope. Jesus Christ wants you to be an overcomer. He not only wants you to stand firm, he wants you to take the enemy's captive. He wants you to walk in the triumph of Christ. So, William Gurnall spent all this time because he believed that this was the Christian life.

Brothers and sisters, I am fully aware that as we've walked through the essentials, the five essentials that we've covered, truth trumps technique. We're not looking at techniques to survive a marriage or stay married. We're looking at truth. The truth of God's Word about what it means to be married, what it means to commit to marriage, what it means to raise a family for the Lord. We're looking at God's wonderful design of a miracle. One plus one equals one. This covenant of marriage, by the way, is only a temporary institution pointing to the permanent relationship of Christ and His bride. The church, and the essentials of a husband who love sacrificially and lead the servant the essential of a wife who with fearlessness and faithfulness, comes alongside of her husband to respect him. I know that if you are committed to this Christian life for the Lord personally and in your marriage and in your family, then you're in a war.

Most of us think of spiritual warfare as a subset of the Christian life. I know it, and I'm just right with you. I'm a victim of this as well. I'm under spiritual warfare. I sense that as a pastor, I'm in a period of spiritual warfare. Brothers and sisters, if you're living the Christian life, spiritual warfare is not a subset of the Christian life. It is the Christian life. You are always in the battle. The only time Satan leaves you alone is if you've decided to retreat to the rear. If you've given up on your marriage, if you've given up on your family, if you've given up on your children, or if you've conformed to the world, or if you've given up on his church, or if you've given up on evangelism, if you've retreated to the rear, he'll leave you alone. But if you're in the battle and you're living for Christ, then you're at war. You need the full armor of the Lord. In every battle.

As many of you know, I have the opportunity to use, as a bridge for communication to people, the lives of Civil War Generals, both Union and Confederate Generals. And I enjoyed doing that. Of course, one of them was Stonewall Jackson, who in the smoke of battles in the dusk of night, was shot by his own men, of course, that we were fully aware that every war you hear about friendly fire, you hear about miscommunications, you hear about lost opportunities. Why? Because whenever there's war and conflict, there's a fog in the fog of war that many times distracts us or discourages us.

Today, I want to take what I feel highly constrained by, but at least to enumerate for you the five powerful things that God has given you for your warfare to lift the fog of war. You're at war now, by the way. You have an enemy, and the enemy is inside you and outside of you. Satan is your enemy outside using sin, and sin is your enemy inside of you.

Take your Bibles and look with me in Romans 7. Keep your finger there in Ephesians 6, because I'm going to keep referring back to it. But look with me in Romans 7. Here is a very interesting text of Scripture that talks about the conflict in the Christian life that we have.

Look at verse 13.

Did that which is good, then bring death to me? By no means it was sin producing death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin and do the commandments might become sinful beyond measure. For we know that the law is spiritual. But I'm of the flesh

sold under sin, for I do not understand my own actions, for I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now, if I do what I do not hold, I agree with the law. What is the law teaching me that is good. So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what's right. I'm converted. I have the desire, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good that I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now. If I do it, I do not hold it is no longer I do it, but sins that's dwelling within me. So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God in my inner being. But I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin and dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Gospel thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then I myself serve the law of God with my sin, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

So here he is. He's saying, I'm converted. I have this new desire. All things have become new. But I still got this old man tied to me. The picture that he said when he's talking about that body of death, what he's referring to is that if someone committed a capital crime and kill somebody before they were put to death for three days, they would have to walk around the city with the corpse of the person they killed strapped to their back. It was called the body of death. He said, I'm converted. I'm a new man. I have a new life. I want to live. But I got strapped to me this body of death, and I've got to get rid of it every single day. How do I do that? I do that through Jesus Christ. I put on the whole armor of God. I die to myself. But I've got a war. I've got a war outside of me, in the world as Satan do demonic activity through temptation to the lust of the flesh, to the lust of the eyes, to the boastful pride of life with all of his allies, not only demonic, but powers of tyrants and a world that is against me. So I've got a war against me from the outside. I've also got a war going on within me. I've got an old man that keeps wanting to rise up to the ascendancy over my new heart and my new life. I've got this war going on inside me, outside of me now knows Jesus has won the victory. Satan has been defeated. Sin has been defeated. But Satan and sin, while they've been defeated, have not yet capitulated and surrendered. Satan and the demonic forces and sin has broken, even though it's been defeated, has broken into the highways and the byways to ambush, to terrorize, and to do anything and everything possible. And the Lord continues to show his glory by giving us the victory over this defeated yet not surrendered foe of Satan and sin.

But Paul reminds himself, Satan though defeated, sin, though defeated, is still greater than me. I am inadequate for this task. Satan and sin is superior to me, and I am insufficient for the task. But thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ, I have those powerful assets he's given me that I might walk in the triumph of Christ as a man, as a husband, as a father, as a servant of Jesus Christ.

Now, what are they? Well, let me give you all five of them. And each one of them on the very foundations is just going to be very foundational, a very practical and very simple this morning. Let me give you the five powerful assets the Lord has given you to fight these battles day by day,

to win the victory over a defeated, yet not surrendered foe who has laid traps, who ambushes, who wants to discourage you? Who wants to lead you to despair? Who wants to destroy your family? Who wants to distract you? What has he given you?

1. He has given you the power of the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit. He has given you the power of the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit. Acts 1. What did Jesus say to his disciples? He didn't say, all right, I'm going to send you out to make disciples of all the nations. Run out there and get started. No, he said, go to the upper room, and when you get to the upper room, I want you to seek the face of your father, because I am going to send the promised one that the father has promised is going to be sent to you. And when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you will receive power. The power of the Holy Spirit. It is absolutely ignorant and arrogant of us to think that I can serve Christ effectively out of my own strengths and abilities, and my own resolve. No. I must surrender to the Holy Spirit. You got your Bibles – go to Romans 8. By no accident does Paul follow up with the ministry of the Holy Spirit when he gives us this challenge of the war that's within us in Romans 7. In Romans 8, what does he do? He says, he gives us the Holy Spirit. Look with me in verse 5... *for those who live according to the flesh, set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the spirit set their minds on the things of the spirit. But to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law. Indeed it cannot.* Without the Holy Spirit I cannot know, follow, and love Christ according to His Word. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. You, however, are not in the flesh, but in the spirit. And if in fact the Spirit of God dwells within you, here do I have the Holy Spirit within me? If you're a Christian, you do look at the next verse. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of God does not belong to him. So you have the Holy Spirit. So a way with any false teaching that would tell you, you've come to Jesus, now you got to go get the Holy Spirit. You couldn't come to Jesus without the Holy Spirit. You've been born again of the Holy Spirit. You didn't come to Christ to get regenerated. You got regenerated and that's what brought you to Christ. Till then, you were dead in your sins. Now he's brought you to Christ. And now that you're in Christ, you've been baptized with the Holy Spirit. You've been sealed with the Holy Spirit. So you have the Holy Spirit. I didn't hear you. Then what are you. Why are you so passionate about this? Because you have the Holy Spirit. But you can ignore him, quench him, and grieve his work in your life. You can't ignore him by attempting to do it on your own. You can grieve him.

Four years ago, I was at a retreat with the 5 or 6 pastors, and we decided to do a cultural thing, and we went to the movie theater and we just divided up to go see some movies and then come back and try to talk about the life view behind them. So the one I was assigned to, I went in, I'm not even going to mention what it was in focus. Within about three minutes I, I just couldn't handle it. I know somebody needed to deal with that movie, because a lot of people were being drawn to it, and some Christian needed to see it and deal with it. But as I sat there, I

just got so grieved. My spirit was just grieved, and I sensed I was quenching and grieving. The Holy Spirit is what I was hearing in the language and what I was seeing. And I looked to the guys alongside of me and I said, gentlemen, I am just sense the displeasure of God upon my soul in this place. And I just had to get up, leave. Where am I going? What am I doing? What am I watching? What am I listening to? Am I walking in the spirit or am I grieving him, quenching him? Brothers and sisters, you can't live in the triumph of Christ without the Holy Spirit. You have him. Don't grieve him. Don't ignore him. Don't quench him. Surrender to the Holy Spirit.

2. Here's the second thing. If you don't mind, I'm just going to quote from Hebrews 4. The second powerful asset he's given you is the Word of God. The power of the word of God, the power of the Spirit of God. And he's given you the power of the Word of God. I hope and pray you got a Bible, but I hope it's not sitting on your coffee table and you think magically it's going to emanate out into your life and change. You know, you've got to get into it. You've got to lay hold of it. You've got to devour it. You've got to know it. You've got to memorize it. You've got to meditate upon it. Brothers and sisters, the Word of God in Hebrews 4 says *this for the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two edged sword. It is powerful even to the dividing of the thoughts and intentions of the heart.* It is powerful.

When I came to Christ, one of the first guys that came in to preach at this little Presbyterian church in Charlotte, North Carolina, there's a guy by the name of Kyle Thurman, and he was recording the days when he was in Bible College and used to go out and do street preaching, and it's hard to get a crowd. And so what he would do, he had a way of getting a crowd. He would put his hat on the ground and when put his hat on the ground, he'd start running around it saying, it's alive, it's powerful, it's alive. Well, somebody run around a hat. Doing that for a while will draw a crowd. After a while, and when he got enough people there, he would reach over and pick up the hat, and underneath it, he'd have his Bible. It's alive and powerful. Now, let me tell you what it says. Now. I don't know how long the crowd stayed, but he did get a crowd whenever he did that. The Word of God is powerful, but don't leave it in the case.

Let me ask you to turn to a passage of Scripture. Harry, how can I? What is my take away to embrace the power of the Word of God in my life? Take your Bibles and turn me to Acts 17. Look with me in verse 10. *The brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived, they went into the Jewish synagogue. Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica. What made them so noble? Two things. They received the word with all eagerness, and examined the scriptures daily to see if these things are so.* Harry, I want to use the power of the Spirit of God. Surrender to him. Walk in the spirit. Don't grieve him. Don't surrender. Harry. I want the power of the Word of God. Two things. Read it thoughtfully. Study it systematically. Examine it. Harry, how often should I read my Bible? Daily! Examining the scriptures daily. Hear the Word of God preached -- the preaching of the Word of God. I think the most important decision any Christian makes is what preaching they listen to, and how they prepare to listen to it. I believe that's the most important decision you make in your Christian

life. *They heard the word with eagerness and they examined the scripture.* Here's your takeaway - personal reading, systematic reading of the Scripture in your personal life, in your married life, and in your family life. Get this powerful weapon there. Secondly, you and your family and I'm going to say someone will get a lot of trouble, but it won't be the first time. I understand how we kind of like to sit with our friends and all of that, and that's fine. But I believe with all of my heart that was the best thing to do, is to prioritize. And I hope and pray you're not hearing me as a preacher. I'm saying preaching. If this preacher isn't faithful to God's Word, then find one. But I believe the most important decision you make in your life is the gathering of your family on a regular basis, for the hearing of the exposition or preaching of God's Word. And I would encourage you to sit together as families. I would strongly encourage you to do that Sunday nights. Okay. Divide up. But at least on the Lord's Day morning with you and your family, and then on your way home or around the dinner table, what did we hear? What did we learn? Let's conserve it. Let's draw from it. Being together as a family, as a married couple, with the family of God, to hear the Word of God preached. The average attendance of the average church member today in the United States of America, to the preaching of the Word of God, is one out of every four Sundays. Harry, don't you want me have a vacation? Sure. Call me. I'll give you a church to go hear God's word preached while you're there. But we don't take vacations from the Lord's Day. We don't take vacations from the preaching -- I need it every week. I need it constantly. There is this regular attendance unto the pastoral exposition or preaching of the Word of God. That is a foundational, practical commitment that is built upon seven day a week reading *study to show yourself approved as a workman not needing to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth.*

3. The third asset is intercessory prayer. What do you say in Ephesians 6? Lay hold, pray for all the saints. Stand firm. By doing what? Pray. They pray continually. Intercessory prayer in your personal life, in your family life, the power of intercessory prayer that you engage in it, that you're constantly calling upon the Lord. Here you have the Holy Spirit who then brings you to the word. And as you hear the word taught and preached, and as you study the word, he opened your mind and opened your heart, the Spirit of God, the Word of God. Then prayer to God and intercession before the Lord. Now, having heard him, I speak back to him. Harry, what can I talk to the Lord about? Anything and everything. *Be anxious about nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication make your requests known unto God.* Constantly be with him. Regular times of prayer, spontaneous times of prayer, instantaneous prayer, appointed prayer that we're praying at all times. They devoted themselves to the apostles teaching, to fellowship, to the breaking of the bread, to prayers, plural. Prevailing prayer in our life.

When I was a new believer, I went to, back to East Carolina University. And this is before the Lord called me to the Ministry. And, couldn't find a Presbyterian church. I went to a Freewill Baptist Church, and they asked me to be the youth director. So we got a good, reformed Presbyterian youth group. And that Freewill Baptist Church had a great time. There's wonderful

time, great people. I learned so much from them. I left there to go to Covenant College. There were ten women at Trinity Freewill Baptist Church whose husband did not know the Lord. Satan was winning the battle in their home. You know what they did? They got together once a week to pray for each other and their husbands. Now I only had the chance to see three months of that, but at the end of three months, seven of the ten men had come to Christ. You have not because you ask not. And when you do ask, you ask wrongly to consume it upon yourself. Intercessory prayer. The unused weapon of power that the Lord has given to us.

4. The fourth weapon of power is the powerful weapons that God has designed for you. Would you take your Bibles and turn with me to II Corinthians 10. Slip down with me to verse 3. *For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh.*

Of course, not waging war according to the Spirit of God, the Word of God, and prayer to God. All right. What does he then say? *For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but have divine power to destroy strongholds? The weapons designed by God have power to destroy arguments, and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of Christ, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, being ready to punish every disobedience. When your obedience is complete using the divinely fashioned weapons of the spirit.*

Harry. What are they preaching? Prayer. We covered those. Fellowship of the saints is a wonderful weapon. Serving together in the body of Christ is a wonderful weapon. Fellowship, the Lord's Supper, the sacraments of the church, worship. The Lord's power inhabits God-centered, not worship-centered worship. God-centered worship. The Lord's power comes to such occasions. So, brothers and sisters. Do not, do not be indifferent to your family. You're at war. But do not be arrogant to think that your family is all you need. You need God's family, God's army to be connected to God's people, to be united with them so that one cord. If Satan can isolate an individual or family, he'll do it. But that two cords, the three woven together, the people of God united to each other and encouraging one another. Connect. Here's your takeaway for the weapons of the spirit that have been deposited in the Church of Jesus Christ to be used in your life. Connect meaningfully your family to the family of God. Enlist your family in the army of the Lord that you are a vital part of it. No drive by church for me. I want to be a member of the Body of Christ.

That's how I got this. I was going to tell you one of the things that I think is very practical to do all this, of course, is family worship. May I make my plea for family worship? You can have grapefruit strength. Harry, what do you mean by that? All right. Every morning when you get out of bed you can't eat eggs and ham and bacon anymore. You cannot eat grapefruit. So when you pick up the grapefruit, pick up God's Word and pray personally in the morning, get some grapefruit Christianity going. And when you go to bed at night or your evening meal, put your family together. Our family, we just get up on the bed. I've had to keep getting bigger and bigger beds. My children left the home. They come back to visit at 9:30 yes, where they show up back in bed. My daughter used to embarrass me all the time. She'd have friends over to spend the night, and all of a sudden I look up there, I'm in my bed and my bed attire, and she shows up

with her friends. She said, well, daddy, are we going to have family worship? And I want so-and-so to participate. There's all kinds of things you can use that pull all this together. We love to use table talk. I don't have any stock in this. I just think it's one of the best ways to systematically read the scripture, get good teaching, and either personally or with your family. We've used a check Book of Promises by Charles Spurgeon. We've used our daily bread connected to the church. Y'all remember me telling you about my fifth grade Sunday school teacher, Miss Allison? When I got married, she didn't forget about me, even though she was. Everybody at that church thought I was gone. She didn't give up and on my wedding day, she gave us Morning and Evening Charles Spurgeon. And it has been an estimable value for our family. Word of God, prayer to God walking in the Spirit of God, using the weapons of the Holy Spirit. Be connected in your family with worship and then with worship in the family of God. The weapons of the spirit don't be indifferent. Don't be arrogant. Be embracing passionately.

5. Finally, the last thing is the power of the cross and the gospel. The power of the cross and the gospel that cross where the gospel of grace flows, that cross where the love of God met the holiness of God, where the glory of God met the sinfulness of man. Man had God one time and all of history where he could put his hands on him. He crucified him. And you see our sin at the cross, and you see the love of God in Jesus Christ, who stayed on the cross and paid for all of our sins. And it is from that cross that the power of the Christian life comes. It is in that cross that I am forgiven of my sins. It is by that cross that Jesus Christ has purchased the right to send the Holy Spirit into my life and declared me holy. It is at that cross that all my condemnation has fled away. It is at that cross that I am reminded that I am kept in the grip of the Lord. It is not my grip, but his grip that keeps me. It is that gospel. *For I am not ashamed of the gospel.* The power of the cross. *I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord.* It is that cross that you stay fixed on. It is that Christ and Him crucified. It is that cross that you see the love of God that propels your love to God in Christ. And you begin to love all that he loves you love His word. You love His spirit. You love his church, you love the lost. You love all of those things that he loves because he first loved you. It is that cross that liberates you from fear and instills in you the powerful movement of the love of God in Jesus Christ. In your life. It is that cross that brings victory in the home because you go to bed at night and you lay in beside a sinner, and that's the one you said, I do. And she or he is a sinner, and the one laying beside them, you, me, where a sinner and they were get children. You know, when I'm over here holding these babies, thanking God for his promise, but realizing, what am I holding a sinner? Remember, the poison of ASP is under the. I can hear him when I'm holding him. My children that I brought home are covenant vipers in diapers. Where is my hope? It's the cross. It's the cross there. He makes you overcomers.

I took off from Scottsdale. I landed in Dallas. Storms came through. They got us out of the plane. Hooked the planes down. Tornadoes and storms came through the Dallas-Fort Worth airport. We're watching it. Never seen such a show before. And all my life they pass through. We got in

the plane, they said, we're going to take off. I was headed on back to Charlotte -- where I lived in Charlotte. Got in the plane. They said, we're headed on. We got in that plane and I got to thinking I hadn't paid a lot of attention in geography, but those storms were coming through, going to the east and northeast. I was getting on a plane in Dallas, and Charlotte was east and northeast. Even I could figure out we were going to catch up with those storms, or we're going to be flying real slow. And we caught up with them, folks. Turbulence like I've never been in my life. I mean, it's unbelievable. I don't want to go through it again. I love a little bit of turbulence because it opens up some evangelistic opportunities. But that was too much. And I mean, we're going up and down. I got a lady sitting next to me. She had bribed the flight attendant to get the double margaritas. I'll tell you, I've got the Bible open. I'm holding on. I'm. I'm praying, you know, Lord, I'm ready to go. But I'd like to go straight up. Don't go down. And then I was I was negotiating, and so there we were. And I remember baggage coming out and everything happening. And then I, I remember the pilot coming on and he said in this calm voice, folks, we have encountered some turbulence. Yeah, we're going up and down 1000ft a second there. We have encountered some turbulence, and I've gotten clearance. You'll be hearing the engines and I'll give them some power and we'll ride to another level above the turbulence.

You know, Satan loves to use two vacuums in your life. The vacuum of relationships. Do you know how cults succeed? Every cult exists because of the unpaid bills of God's church not properly teaching, and because of a vacuum of sound doctrine, vacuum of sound relationships? That's how the world gets you, and that's how cults get you. But there's power in the word. There's power in the Holy Spirit. There's power in prayer. There's power in the weapons of the spirit, and there's the power of Christ from the cross. The gospel. And the Lord does not promise to take out the turbulence. What he does promise is give you the power to overcome it. In the triumph of Christ, you and your household.

Father, thank you for the time we can be together in your word. Thank you for the privilege to us just briefly walk through these. Pray that Father, in this congregation, men and women have made that first commitment to Christ and now commit themselves and their families to your Holy Spirit, not to grieve him or quench him, but surrendering to him the Word of God, Intercessory prayer. The weapons of the Holy Spirit deposited in the church of the Living God. The army of the Lord, and the power of the cross which bids us come, die and live. I ask this in Jesus name, Amen.