



VILLAGE BIBLE CHURCH

SUGAR GROVE CAMPUS

God's Armor

Invisible War: Winning Against Evil | Part 9

Steve Lombardo | August 23, 2015 | Ephesians 6:13–17



Turn to Ephesians 6:13–17. This will be our spiritual food for today. We'll be talking about good and evil, and God's armor for the battle. This is the ninth part in our series entitled, "The Invisible War." It examines the reality of spiritual warfare in the lives of both believers and unbelievers. If you're not a believer, I want to challenge you to take Jesus seriously, to come to Him by faith, to turn from your way and to His way, ultimately gaining the victory that comes through knowing Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. If you are a believer, I want to challenge you to put on the entirety of God's armor. God has given you specific things in your life to help you in the battle against evil.

One of my first memories of evil is from grade school. I remember being in the classroom, watching the Challenger shuttle take off. A few moments after takeoff, our class witnessed the explosion on our tiny TV set. I remember thinking, "This is not right. This is wrong. This is evil. There is something sinister about this." Even though what happened was an accident, I knew something wasn't right. A schoolteacher named Christa McAuliffe was among the seven people who died that day. I remember thinking as a young kid, "This is not right."

One of the first funerals I officiated was for a little baby who died from complications ten days after his birth. I remember being with the family for those ten days and going to the wake. I had a new little baby myself. I was just overcome with emotion by the little coffin. Sinister evil is real.

The very first funeral I officiated as a pastor was for my brother-in-law who died suddenly in his mid 30s. Evil is real. All of you have experienced evil in your own lives. You've witnessed it. You've been part of it.

There's also good in this life. As a young child I heard the truth about Jesus Christ, that there's forgiveness in the Lord. Even though we're sinful, there's hope because Jesus died for my sin. That was good news. That's the gospel. There's forgiveness in Jesus. We rejoice in the good.

I remember the day that I got married and the wonderful joy it was to see my bride walk down the aisle. God had provided me for her and her for me. I got the best end of that deal. It was a joyful day when my children were born, seeing their little faces. There's good in this life.

Becoming a pastor here a year ago was something good that my family experienced. Tim called me the Sunday after the church voted to offer me the position as pastor here. It passed overwhelmingly. What a joyful day! There were only two "no" votes. I've been diligently trying to find out who those two people are. I will continue to search.

Seriously, there is good and there is evil in this world. The Bible talks about good and evil in pretty black and white terms. There are grey areas in the faith. The longer you live as a Christian, the more things you see in grey areas. However, there are no grey areas when it comes to good and evil. There are only two sides. You're either on one side or the other. You're not neutral.

This past week my family was in Missouri. I met a newscaster from a major city who did the weather forecast. He actually stood up at the pool one day and gave my family the weather forecast for the area. I gave him a hard time, saying that he wasn't as good as Tom Skilling. He didn't enjoy that. But we talked to him for a while. When he found out I was a pastor he went on to say that he was agnostic. I wrote down what he said later. He said, "I'm not against the idea of God; I just don't know all there is to

know about if He's real or not. So I try to keep an open mind and go with the flow." That sounds good: Open mind. Go with the flow.

Jesus said this however. "If you're not for Me, you're against Me" (Matthew 12:30). You're on one side or the other: good or evil. Today, as we continue our series, we will look at these two sides. As we get to God's side, we will see that He gives us armor to do battle against evil.

Ephesians 6:13-17 says:

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 the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,

As we look at the text, I am going to ask six questions to help us understand what Paul is writing concerning God's armor.

1. Do we fight against people?

Ephesians 6:13 begins with the word, "Therefore..." Whenever you see this word, you know you need to ask, "What is it there for?" It's there to remind us of Ephesians 6:12, "*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.*"

Paul's answer to this question is, "No, we don't."

Wait a second, Paul. You're an apostle. You're the guy who was originally named Saul when you weren't a Christian. Before you met Jesus, on the Road to Damascus, you persecuted Christians. You came to know Jesus on that road. Your life was changed. However, you experienced a bunch of stuff at the hands of people. Paul was beaten. He was stoned. He was arrested. People lied about him. People doubted that he was an apostle. People would say, "He's tough in his letters, but when he comes in person, he's incredibly weak."

"Paul, what do you mean that we're not fighting against people?" I think Paul would respond in this way: "In some ways we fight against people. We experience people's sinful actions, but there's something deeper going on. Even though harm comes through people, we fight the sinister, spiritual evil that is behind the sinful actions of men and women." In reality we're not fighting people, but the evil behind those actions. That doesn't mean there's a demon behind every evil action that someone does to you. If someone attacks you, lies to you, hurts you or damages your family, it doesn't mean there's a demon possessing someone to do that. Let me give you two examples.

The first example is from Acts 5:1-11. On the surface, it does not seem that there is a direct correlation between a demonic influence and a person's actions. They were a part of the early church. God was doing many miraculous things. People were coming together and being saved. They're sharing what they have with others. They're studying the Word of God and the apostles' teaching. Then we come to Ananias and Sapphira, who were part of this early church, and they sold a piece of property. With his wife's knowledge, Ananias kept back for himself some of the proceeds and brought only part of it to the apostles' feet, saying it was everything. Peter said:

"Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God." When Ananias heard these words, he fell down and breathed his last. And great fear came upon all who heard of it.

Then his wife came in and the same thing happened to her. She keeps up the lie. Peter says two things, "*Why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit*" and "*Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart?*" A demon has not necessarily possessed the hearts of Ananias and Sapphira, but there's the general, satanic evil behind the lie that was in Ananias and Sapphira's hearts. They didn't need to lie, but for whatever reason—pride, selfishness—they did. Peter told them that they could have given whatever they wanted. There was demonic influence. Ananias and Sapphira could have been believers; yet, because of this evil they sinned against God and were judged on the spot.

Then we have another kind of influence which is directly demonic. Acts 16:16, "As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling." Let's stop there for a moment. She could predict the future. The demonic spirit of divination told her what the future would hold. How does that work? How can demons know the future? It's not that demons know the future any more than any of us do; God alone knows the future. God is in control, but demonic powers can play parlor tricks when they're behind the scenes. It is an invisible war that we're fighting. If I said, "In five seconds, my phone will ring," and in five seconds my phone rang, it looked like I knew the future. But I told someone beforehand to call me at a certain time. A demonic power could do the same thing. They could work behind the scenes to make it look like this slave girl could predict the future. Really, it's just a fancy parlor trick.

Let's continue. Acts 16:17, "She followed Paul and us, crying out, 'These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation.'" This demonic power causes her to proclaim truth. Isn't that interesting? "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." That is true, but consider the source. It is this slave girl who's making money from predicting the future. She's a distraction. She's following them around. Paul has had enough of it. Acts 16:18, "And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, 'I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.' And it came out that very hour." From then on she's unable to do the parlor tricks, her owners became mad and Paul and Silas end up in prison.

There are two examples. There are specific demonic influences where there is demonic possession and then there is the general evil caused by Satan that each of us struggle with and experience. In both cases, the evil that we fight against is deeper than just the actions of people. When we understand this properly, it changes the way we think about people, doesn't it? It changes the way we think about enemies.

I remember being bullied in junior high. As we grow up, we forget about some of the difficulties of childhood. It was difficult for me to go out into the hall between classes because of one guy named Jim. He would bully and pick on me. He would put me in a headlock while he walked down the hall. That was miserable. Now I can look back at that story and laugh, but back then, I was scared to go into the hall. Then I would come home and go to youth group and hear that Jesus says to love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. All I could think was, "Are you kidding me, Jesus? How can I love Jim? Have you seen what he's done to me?"

However, when we understand that it's not the people whom we're fighting, but the sinister evil behind the evil, we understand that our enemies' eyes are blinded to the truth. In 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, Paul writes this about unbelieving enemies:

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

So Jim's eyes were blinded. That changes the way we think about our enemies. Who has given you a hard time? Who has hurt you? Who has done evil toward you? Remember this: there's a bigger evil that you're fighting. It's not that person whom you are fighting. This invisible war is against a greater, more sinister reality. That's what you're up against.

2. What are our objectives? | v. 13

We are commanded here, "Put on the whole armor of God..." Why? "That you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm." When Paul writes the same word twice in one sentence, that's on purpose. He wants to draw our attention to this word. The word translated, "withstand/stand firm" can also be translated "to resist" or "to cope with." Really it means to put on the whole armor of God so that you can get through the battle. Put on the armor of God to stand firm.

A few weeks ago, we were praying for the Fatorma family. We got to be part of Thomas Fatorma's life as he was diagnosed with cancer and died two months later. Through doctor's appointments and house visits, the elders grew very close to him. It was a very emotional week as Thursday was the visitation and the funeral was Friday. It was emotional, powerful and God-honoring as the family stood in faith and trust and hope in Jesus Christ. Some of you came alongside this family during that time. On the following Sunday, I saw the Fatormas walk through the door a little bit after the service started. They were standing firm in the midst of evil death. They face a sinister spiritual reality ahead of them.

This is our objective. We put on the armor of God so that we can stand in these times. We stand together in these times. The Fatormas are not alone. The reason they're at church is because they are standing together with other believers. In Ephesians

6:12, Paul says, *"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood..."* It's not just you wrestling; it's not just me wrestling. It's not just Paul wrestling; it's *"we"* wrestle. This has implications for us. We are together in this. We are putting on God's armor so that we can stand together, side by side, with the Lord God Almighty.

This is why church is a big deal. This is why we come together. This letter wasn't only sent to Ephesus; it was circulated throughout that area. These churches were all on the same page. We're called to put on the armor of God together. Together is better than alone. Ecclesiastes 4 says that two are better than one. When you fight, it's better to have someone who has your back. Ancient fighters would stand back to back. Two are better than one. When we stand together, we stand firm.

Let me give you a couple areas in which we must stand together:

- We stand together in our struggle against sin. We stand firm together in that struggle. This week, information from the Ashley Madison website was leaked. On this website, married people can find other married people with whom to commit affairs. There are 30 million people whose names were made public. Many professing Christians were on that list. We are susceptible to that sin as well. Do you think the Christians on that list had other believers surrounding them who knew they were on that website? No. They didn't. Those people didn't include other believers in their struggle. The way we get through our temptations with sin and stand firm in the midst of this evil world is by standing together against sin. One of the things that had the most impact on me when I first joined the church was a members meeting. We gathered together and talked about people in the church who were struggling through sin. It was public and it was uncomfortable, but it was awesome because we genuinely cared for one another. We were there for one another during those times of sin and struggle.
- We weather the storms of life together: sickness, death, job loss, divorce. This is what the church is supposed to be. People commonly accuse the church of being a bunch of hypocrites. Absolutely. We are. Church is not a showcase for the sinless. The church is a hospital for the hurting. We come. We're not perfect. We're sinners. We confess our sins to the Lord and bow our knees to Him because He has paid it all on Calvary. He is the One Who is holy. By His grace, He gives us His holiness through His substitutionary death on the cross. So we stand together with the Lord.

One of the things that made America great is also something that makes us struggle: rugged individualism. The church shouldn't be full of people who are rugged individuals. It must be full of people who come together and bow their knees to the Lord Jesus Christ.

William Henley wrote the poem, "Invictus" which encapsulates the idea of "going it alone." It reads:

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll.
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.

That is a sinister, evil lie from the pits of hell. Dorothy Day responded by writing her own poem titled "Conquered":

Out of the light that dazzles me,
Bright as the sun from pole to pole,
I thank the God I know to be,
For Christ — the Conqueror of my soul.

Since His the sway of circumstance,
I would not wince nor cry aloud.
Under the rule which men call chance,
My head, with joy, is humbly bowed.
Beyond this place of sin and tears,
That Life with Him and His the Aid,
That, spite the menace of the years,
Keeps, and will keep me unafraid.

I have no fear though straight the gate:
He cleared from punishment the scroll.
Christ is the Master of my fate!
Christ is the Captain of my soul!

Our objective is to stand. We put on the armor to stand together with the Lord.

3. Who will win this war? | v. 14

Ephesians 6:14, *"Stand therefore..."* There it is. In Ephesians 6:13, Paul said that we put on the armor of God to withstand and then calls us to stand firm. Now he starts Ephesians 6:14 with the same word. *"Stand therefore..."* That means get through it. That means make it through. That means win. *"Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness..."* Those who stand have two essential pieces of armor on:

1. The belt of truth. Belts were critically important in the first century. There was an inner garment, an outer garment, a cloak and a belt. The belt held all the other garments together. The truth operates the same way. We need to be all about the truth. It should characterize our lives.
2. The breastplate of righteousness. You need to be righteous. The breastplate covered the vital organs. It could save your life in battle. What will save your life is righteousness.

The ones who win the battle practice righteousness and truth. But here's the problem. Paul writes in Romans 3:10, *"None is righteous, no, not one."* Now we get to the two sides: good and evil. Which side are you on? You are separated from God because of your sin. You are dead in your sin. Ephesians 2:1–2 says, *"You were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world."* You were dead in your sin. What can a dead person do to breathe? Nothing. What can a dead person do to move? Nothing. You were dead in your sin:

...following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

If you want to win, if you want to make it through by standing firm through the end, you have to be filled with righteousness and truth. This is impossible because you're dead in that sin, enslaved to the god of this age.

But there's good news is Ephesians 2:4–9:

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

God makes us alive through Jesus Christ by His grace through faith in Him. Do you have faith in Jesus Christ? He saves you and changes you. As a result, we live and work for Him. Ephesians 2:10, *"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."* Friend, are you saved? Do you believe in Jesus Christ? Do you have His righteousness? He died for you on the cross of Calvary that whosoever would believe in Him would not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3:16). You can have the righteousness of Jesus Christ in your own life so that when you stand before God Almighty, holy and righteous, He won't see you and your sin, but instead He will see Jesus Christ and His perfection. Are you saved?

Jesus said, *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me"* (John 14:6). Jesus is the Truth. There is truth and there is righteousness. The ones who win have the breastplate of righteousness and the belt of truth. This is life versus death. Because we're talking about such serious things, I need to share with you some of the scariest passages in the Bible:

Matthew 7:13-14, *"Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few."* There are two billion people on this planet who claim to be Christians. Jesus said that the gate is narrow and the way is hard which leads to life. Those who find it are few. How many of those two billion are actually saved? How many people in this room who claim the Name of Christ are truly saved? The problem comes when we're given a distorted view of the gospel. When we're asked to respond to something that's not the gospel, it produces people who think they're saved, who think they're on the narrow way, but they're not. They're still lost.

Let me give you an example. One of the implications of the gospel is that you're saved from hell to eternal life. You go to heaven when you die. That's not the gospel, however. I could go to my kids before bed at night and say, "Hey, Bud. Let me tell you about Jesus. Jesus loves you. He died on the cross for your sins. You can ask Him to come into your heart. Then you get to go to heaven. If you don't, you'll go to hell which is terrible. It's frightening and scary. It lasts forever. But, you can ask Jesus into your heart and you can go to heaven. That's where mom and dad and grandma and grandpa are going. It's a great place. It's wonderful. You've never experienced anything like it. What do you want to do? Do you want to pray and ask Jesus into your heart?" His answer is going to be yes. Who wouldn't answer like that?

Some preachers do this same thing. "Hey! Ask Jesus into your heart so you can go to heaven." That's an implication of the gospel. Praise God that's true. God saves us now and for eternity, but it's not the essence of the gospel.

The essence of the gospel is that God has made salvation possible for you to be forgiven and to know God personally. He has made a way for you to have a relationship with the Creator. That's the gospel. You can be forgiven of all the sinister evil in your life. God Himself can take it away and you can be made into a new creation. That's the gospel. The implication of that is that you will spend eternity with God as His new creation. That's the full gospel.

Some of you have only responded to an implication of the gospel. You've said a prayer. You're hinging all of your hope of eternity on that prayer you've said, but you've never really bowed your knee to the Lord Jesus Christ. You're not walking with Him. You're not loving Him. You're not serving Him. You're looking back on the day when someone gave you the implication of the gospel. You're hanging on to a "get out of hell free" card. That is not the gospel.

The gospel is that God loves you. He died for you so that you could be forgiven. You can be made right with Him and be with Him forever. *"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus"* (Romans 8:1). Are you saved? You may be thinking, "Can't I say a prayer and be saved?" Absolutely. Everyone who calls on the Name of the Lord will be saved (Romans 10:13). You have to understand Whom you're calling upon.

4. Can we get others to fight with us? | v. 15

Ephesians 6:15, *"...and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace."* This is the third piece of armor listed: the shoes of readiness. This means that you are ready with the gospel. As a follower of Jesus, you are ready. You have the shoes on (or sandals in the first century). You are ready to share the gospel.

I think Paul might have in mind here Isaiah 52:7:

*How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of him who brings good news,
who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness,
who publishes salvation,
who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."*

How beautiful are those feet that take the gospel to people who need to hear the good news. Paul writes to Philemon, *"I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective for the full knowledge of every good thing that is in us for the sake of Christ"* (Philemon 6). First Peter 3:15, *"But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect."* Sharing the gospel with gentleness and

respect. You need to know that as a believer, you are called to bring the truth to others. That's how people are saved. They're saved through the church.

You might not agree with that. You might think, "God should just show up in the sky and say, 'Believe in Me.' That would be a more effective means of evangelism." However, we don't get to make that call. God has made the call and has decided to work through people. We are God's ambassadors (2 Corinthians 5:20). We cry out, "Be reconciled to God." That is the work that we are called to do. Therefore we need to have these shoes on, ready to share the gospel in whatever situation we encounter.

This is a big deal. Do you really believe that you have the truth and the life? Are you looking for ways to bring that message to friends and neighbors and family members? To be honest, this challenged me this week. Do I really care about people? I know that I care about my family and my loved ones. I care about some people. Do I care about people enough to share with them the good news of Jesus Christ? You have to be careful here, because this can easily become a guilt trip. Some people use this to try and coerce people into evangelizing. They use examples like, "If a building was burning down, wouldn't you go and tell the people inside? Wouldn't you go door to door and tell them?" Perhaps, but that's not always the most effective way to share the gospel. We learned that from Mormons. They get one convert from every 750 houses. They say, "Those are the numbers; let's go all out for it."

However, relationally are you living out the gospel? Are you sharing the gospel wherever you go? Do you have your shoes on?

5. What if the war gets too fierce? | v. 16

Ephesians 6:16, *"In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one."* This is talking about the pressures felt in the midst of battle. Some of you, or people in your household, are experiencing the flaming darts of the evil one. You're doing battle and you are in the midst of some fierce dogfights. If you aren't there, you will be at some point. So Paul tells us to take up the shield of faith and the helmet of salvation (Ephesians 6:17). This refers to faith in God that you are saved and are being saved. This means that everything you are going through is permitted by and controlled by the God of heaven and earth, Who loves you and has a plan and purpose for your life. This is what it means to have faith and the helmet of salvation. You trust God. You know that He has saved you and that He is saving you. He is allowing whatever you're going through for your good and His glory.

You may ask, "How much faith do I need to get through these times?" Well, that's not really the question you should be asking. The question is not "How much faith" but "In Whom have I placed my faith?" This is why Jesus says that faith the size of a mustard seed can move mountains. It's not because of the size of your faith, but because of Jesus. You may have doubts. You may have struggles. You might sit here and have serious doubts. You're going through trying times and I'm telling you that God loves you. You don't feel that. I'm telling you that God will get you through this. You don't know that for sure. You don't know if you can believe that God is bringing you through this trial for your good and His glory.

Let me give you one of my favorite stories in the New Testament. In Mark 9:14–29 there is a man who comes to Jesus and asks Jesus to heal his son. Let me just give you a summary. The man says, "Jesus, if You can, heal my son." Jesus says to him, "If I can? If I can?" Jesus asks him if he believes. The man says, "Lord, I believe, help my unbelief." The man had doubts. Jesus healed his son. The man came to Jesus. He believed, but he had unbelief. Jesus still healed his son. The question is not, "How much faith?" The question is "Who is the foundation of your faith?"

The world will get fierce. Doubts will assail you, but your salvation does not depend on your feelings. It depends on the finished work of Christ on the cross.

6. What is our weapon of choice? | v. 17

Ephesians 6:17, *"...and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."* This is the only offensive weapon listed. The Word of God is so important. The Bible is the inspired Word of God. It's the history of God's people, Israel. It contains the history of the church. It's the record of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is what we have to fight the battle. This is what I love about this church. We're a Bible preaching, teaching and believing church and so we study the Word of God. This is why our kids study the Word. It is our weapon. It's how we do battle in this life. It's where we get strength.

Jesus is the Word of God. *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"* and *"the Word became flesh and dwelt among us"* (John 1:1 and 14). Jesus is God's Word incarnate. We study God's Word. It's our Sword. Here's the big thing: Jesus is our Defender. Jesus is the One Who protects us. Jesus is the One Who does battle for us.

In Revelation 19:11-15, we read about Jesus fighting this battle. He's not the meek and mild Jesus. He's not the beaten-up-going-to-the-cross Jesus. He's the Rider on the white horse. He's called Faithful and True.

In righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.

This is our Sword. It's Jesus Himself. Put on God's armor. Let's do it together, church. The belt of truth. The breastplate of righteousness. Every believer who comes to Christ. Shoes with the readiness of the gospel to share the good news with others. The shield of faith. The helmet of salvation. When times get tough, when the enemy is attacking us and darts are coming at us, put on the armor. Pick up your Sword, the Word of God. Jesus Himself is our Defender.

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