

The Armor of God

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Date: 12 August 2018

Preacher: Gordon MacLeod

[0 : 00] Just before we turn to Ephesians chapter 6, I just want to share with you a thought that came to me a couple of weeks ago.

Paul Farquhar was preaching on John 3.16 and shared with us how much Christ had suffered at the hands of the Roman soldiers and then on the cross at Calvary.

And I just want to read in Luke 23 and at verse 23, you don't need to look it up, and it's when Jesus is before Pilate and Pilate has already put Jesus to Herod.

He's already pronounced that Jesus was innocent and he asks the people what they wanted to do and the people cry out that they want Jesus to be crucified.

And then he said to them the third time, why, what evil has he done? I found no reason for death in him. I will therefore chastise him and let him go.

[1 : 15] And then in verse 23, but they were insistent, demanding with loud voices that he be crucified. And the voices of these men and of the chief priests prevail.

Mentioned last week by David that our communion season is coming upon us. A time when each one of us is called to examine ourselves. A time when many who haven't yet made a profession of faith will be faced with the challenge going out again.

What will you do with him that is called the Christ? Will you listen to the voice that says, Come unto me, all ye that are weak and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Will you listen to the other voices that go on in your head saying, I'm not ready, there's plenty of time, I've heard this all before, it doesn't matter for me.

Are you going to turn your back on Jesus and listen to the voices of the world? Or are you going to listen to Jesus and come to him? I might never get the chance to say it to you again.

[2 : 32] Each one of us is given opportunity to either stand for Christ or turn our back on Christ. Are we going to listen to what Christ has to say to us and come to him?

Or are we going to let the voices of the world prevail and we're going to take another stand against Christ? Think about these things and pray about them in the coming week.

For those that are Christians, we'd ask that you would continue to pray for the souls of those that are lost. Those that haven't yet given their life to Christ.

That each one of them that you would uphold them. We've already prayed for the children, for the seeds that have been sown in their young lives. And many that come here Sunday after Sunday hearing God's word.

Having heard it since they were children. As the battle goes on in their hearts. That Christ's voice would indeed prevail above the other voices.

[3 : 35] And unlike Pilate who wanted to appease the crowd. And then was left alone. That they would listen to God's word. And Christ's call upon their life.

And that they would come and join the battle. And join the army. And join the one who says, I will never leave you. Nor forsake you. Just a thought.

As we turn to God's word this morning. We can then turn to Ephesians. Ephesians chapter 6. While I was at the holiday club this week.

There was something else. I was doing. In the afternoon. Two afternoons this week. I spent time. With Hannah. Learning. About some new technology. Diabetes is something that. I've known about. Most of my life.

[4 : 37] My older brother. Has diabetes. Two of my nieces. Have diabetes. And Hannah. Has diabetes. So something I've known about.

But over the last week. I was learning about some new technology. That assists. In the monitoring. Of diabetes. It's a small disc.

That. That. Diabetics. Can wear. On their arm. For those that were sharp eyed. The night that. Donald Trump. Met. Theresa May.

In London. When she was wearing her long. Sleeveless red dress. She had a white disc. On her arm. And that's what they call. A freestyle Libra monitor.

Or patch. And in that. There's a whole lot of technology. There's a wee needle. Underneath it. Goes into the skin. And monitors. The glucose. And from that.

[5 : 35] You're able to take. Some readings. If I can get this to work. It's okay. I'll show her over this side Hannah.

Since there's so many medics. Sitting on the other side. There's no connection. So it's not going to show us. Sorry. But in that. It gives a reading.

And beside the reading. There's an arrow. And the arrow can point straight up. Can point diagonally up. Can be level. Diagonally down. Or straight down.

So while you get a reading. The key thing that you've got to watch. Is what direction. Is the arrow pointing in. Is the arrow pointing straight up. Indicating that your blood glucose.

Is rising. Very rapidly. Is it going diagonally up. Indicating that while your blood glucose. Is going up. It's going up. A wee bit slower.

[6 : 32] Is it level. Is it going down gradually. Or is it dropping very quickly. And depending on the reading. You can then adjust. Do you take more.

Glucos. Or do you take. More insulin. To make sure. That you try and get back. On the level. Why do I share that with you. Not because I think it's great.

But. It then made me think. What would it be like. If we were each having a patch. On our arm. That we could scan it. And it would tell us.

How close we were to God. Did it tell us. That we were. In need. We were going. Too far away from God. On one hand.

That we were gradually moving away from God. That we're walking close with God. Or we're turning. Away from God. Either way. If you've got high blood glucose.

[7 : 28] Or low blood glucose. It can be dangerous for you. But if you're not walking. Level with God. And you're turning away from God. It can be equally. Dangerous for you.

We can. Monitor. Hannah's. Blood glucose. And we can see. What's been happening. With her blood glucose. Over an eight hour period. And it gives you a wee line.

And you can set a range. As to how you would like it. To sit. So. Generally you would want it to be. Between. Between four and eight. But you can tell. If there's any spikes.

Or any dips. In. Her blood glucose. And it monitors it. All the time. We need a layer. Pick something up. Every minute.

How do you think. The person on your right. Or the person on your left. Was able to see. How your walk was with God.

[8 : 27] On a daily basis. Do you think. We would all be sitting here. No. Because we don't sit here. In our own strength. We sit here. In the strength. That God gives us.

I made the point. Earlier on. What voices. Are you listening to. And what voices. Are you going to let. Direct you. Are you going to listen to voices.

That are going to take you. Away from God. Or are you going to listen. To the voice. Of God. That calls. And says. Come. And stay close to me. And I will never leave you. Nor forsake you.

We're teaching the kids. During the week. About the armour of God. And how they had to have the belt of truth. Fitted. Around their waist. Now we all know the difference.

Between right and wrong. But do we actually live our lives. On a daily basis. Standing. With the belt of truth. Around their waist.

[9 : 25] Fitted firmly. Around their waist. The belt. Keeps the breastplate. In place. We have the gospel.

Of peace. On our feet. The helmet of salvation. On our head. The shield of faith. And the sword of the spirit. And each one of us.

Goes forward. In a battle. In reading and preparing. I was really. Starkly reminded. About the armour. The armour is all front facing.

It's there to protect us. As we go forward. For Christ. As we go forward. In the battle. There's nothing. In the armour. For our back.

And if we turn our back on God. We're totally exposed. To the devil. So when we put on the armour of God. We walk forward. And we walk forward for God.

[10:22] Not in our own strength. We walk forward in the strength. That God gives us. Each and every one of us.

Faces trials. And challenges. On a daily basis. Each and every one of us. Has doubts.

And has fears. It's only natural. That we have that. But it's not about trusting in ourselves. It's not about leaning.

On our own understanding. It's about standing. It's about standing. With God. And standing for God. And standing in his strength. The strength that he gives us.

Each and every day. That each and every one of us. Is able to go forward. And is able to face. The trials. And the tribulations that we have.

[11:19] I'm not promising. And neither is the Bible promising. That when we give our lives to God. That it's going to be easy. But we've learnt.

As we've studied in Joshua. That he's given us that promise. That we can be strong. And we can be courageous. That he will never leave us. That he will never forsake us.

That each and every one of us. Can stand in the strength. That he gives us. I say it's not an easy walk. What I was trying to show you.

On my phone there was. Hannah has a scanner. And she can scan. The patch. With her phone. And from her phone. A message is sent to Jillian and I.

To tell us what the blood readings are. So that we can guide her. In terms of how much insulin she should give. Or what she should actually do. To try and lower. Or raise.

[12:19] Her glucose. To make sure that it comes back on to the level. It assists her. In terms of managing. Her diabetes. Paul.

When we read here. He asks for prayer. And he asks for prayer for me. That. Sorry.

Contact things is a. Proven difficult to read with today. And for me. That utterance may be given to me. That I may open my mouth boldly. To make known the mystery of the gospel.

Paul was in prison on trumped up charges. He had every reason. To complain. About the treatment that he had got. It would have been so easy.

For him to stand up and say. This isn't right. Why am I in prison here? And he probably identifies. That he may have had a weakness here. That it might have been.

[13:16] His want. To do that. But he asks for prayer. Because he can't do it. In his own strength. And he writes to his Christian brothers and sisters. And asks them to help him.

That when he speaks. He speaks boldly. He speaks as an ambassador for Christ. Not speaking about himself. Saying I've been hard done by.

But speaking to the glory of God. And each one of us. Should seek out. Somebody that we can get alongside. And that we can talk with.

And pray with. That we can uphold one another in prayer. It's also good. To be able to speak with somebody. A lot of churches call it mentoring.

Whether that's what's needed or not. I'm undecided. But you need to have a buddy. That you can get alongside. And pray with. And share the difficulties. Sometimes that's best done.

[14:13] In a marriage. Where you can actually sit down. And say I'm struggling with this. Can you pray for me? But sometimes. In terms of a work setting. It's good to be able to sit down with somebody.

And pray about a particular situation. That's challenging. It's not about doing it. It's not about doing it. It's not about doing it. It's not about doing it. It's not about doing it. On your own. It talks about putting on the whole armour.

You don't stand alone. When you put on your battle armour. You're part of an army. There's a squad going forward. And you support one another.

When somebody sees you falling. They lift you up. They uphold you. In each and every step. That you take. And as a body of Christ. That's what's expected.

Of each one of us. As Christians. When we come together. We need to uphold one another. It's not about patting one another. On the back. And saying. You're doing a great job. It's about encouraging one another.

[15:09] I know things were difficult for you. This week. But I'm praying for you. And I'll continue to pray for you. I know that you're facing challenges. But you're not on your own. God is with you.

If I go out. I work in an organisation. Where I wear a uniform. And a daily basis. If I go out. And part of my uniform is missing. I'm very aware of it.

Whether it be. An epaulette on my shoulder. Whether it be the belt for my trousers. Whether it be handcuffs. Whatever. If you're not carrying it. You can focus on the fact.

That it's not there. Because it's a weakness. In your armour. And you can start to think. Well. If something happens. How am I going to respond. Because that's not there. If we don't have.

The full armour of God on. We're not able to focus. On God. Because our focus then becomes. Something else. That is a distraction. And takes us away from God.

[16:17] Put on the whole armour of God. You know. I've heard the kids singing. Song through the wall. One of the songs that they learnt. At the holiday club was.

Put on the armour of God. Put it on. The full armour of God. It's not just about putting on the boots. It's not just about putting on the breastplate. You have to carry the shield of faith.

You have to have the sword of the spirit. You have to have the helmet of salvation. Each and every part. Must be there. And fitted securely. With the belt of truth. We are in a battle.

Each and every day. We see it. On our television screens. We read about it. In our newspapers. The devil tries to get the upper hand.

In each and every situation. We see politicians. Who are challenged. And seek to appease. As Pilate did. The crowd round about. Changing laws.

[17:16] Softening laws. To make sure. That the masses. Are appeased. And each and every time. The word of God. Becomes diluted. Let us stand firm.

Fully. Wearing. The armour of God. So that when we're challenged. We're able to stand. Not in our own strength. But in the strength. That God gives us. Paul.

Asked for prayer. Don't be afraid. To ask somebody. To pray for you. Don't be afraid. When you. Have somebody's. Name. Or face. Come to your mind.

When you're going about your day. To stop. And pray for them. It's not by chance. That all of a sudden. You start thinking. About somebody. Who you hadn't even thought about. When you get up.

In the morning. God may be laying them. Upon you of heart. So that you pray for them. And you might very well. Be getting laid on the heart.

[18:17] Of somebody else. And they're praying for you. Because of the situation. That you're going through. Sometimes when we face trouble. It can be very difficult.

In and of ourselves. To pray. Because we focus. On the trouble. That we're in. But be reassured. That others are praying for you. They may not know why.

They may not know the difficulty. That you're facing. But they will be praying for you. Because God has laid their name. Upon their heart. To pray for you. And that's what we must do.

For each and every one of us. We do face struggles. We do face challenges. And we may face them.

In the coming days. The coming weeks. The coming months. But please be assured. You don't face them on your own. God is with you.

[19:15] Each and every step of the way. And you know what the greatest thing of all is. See if we put our trust in him. He has promised. That he will never leave us. And he will never forsake us.

God is good. Not just some of the time. God is good all the time. And all the time. God is good. As you go out into the coming week.

Think. Or even before you even leave. This building this morning. Think. About where you are with God. Are you walking close with him?

Do you have your armour? Are you wearing it? Properly. For God. Made the point that I work for an organisation.

We wear a uniform. Somebody. Goes out. And. In the course of their work.

[20:21] Says something. Inappropriate. Does something. Overbearing. You'll get a complaint about it. It'll appear on social media. And all of a sudden.

Everybody. Within the organisation. Is marred by the same brush. The world. Looks. At Christians. And seeks to find a way.

To turn around and say. That they said they were a Christian. And they did this. Or they said that. We have to be on our guard. Each and every day. But again.

As I said. It's not about standing in your own strength. It's about standing in the strength. That God gives you. And recognising. That while you're in a battle. You're not in a battle on your own. A word of prayer. Amen. Dear Heavenly Father.

[21 : 27] As we come before you. And as we. Focus on these words. Of the armour of God. And we thank Heavenly Father.

Of how Pilate. Listened. To the voices. That sought to crucify you. And their voices prevailed. Heavenly Father. He made a decision. That affected. Not only himself. But the rest of the world. Heavenly Father.

We pray that. Each one of us. Here this morning. That as we search our hearts. As we think. Heavenly Father.

Of how we have heard your words. So often before. We have turned our backs. Heavenly Father. And listened to the voice. Of the world. We have seen again.

[22 : 23] Heavenly Father. This week. That. Death can come. At any time. Not one of us. Is promised tomorrow. May we indeed.

Heavenly Father. Humble ourselves. Before you. May we recognise. Heavenly Father. That. Well you are indeed. The God of glory. That you are a God.

That loves us. And you loves us so much. That you sent your son Jesus. To die for our sin. And Heavenly Father.

Even at this time. Your son Jesus. Sits at your right hand. And intercedes. On behalf of each one of us. Heavenly Father.

That our sins. There are many. That can be washed. As white as snow. Oh Heavenly Father. May we indeed. If we are Christians.

[23 : 21] Here this morning. Put on the whole armour of God. That we may indeed. March forward for you. Heavenly Father.

That we would recognise. That we are not in our own. That we are ambassadors for you. And that Heavenly Father. That we can uphold one another in prayer. That our witness for you.

May indeed be strong. Heavenly Father. That in our walk. And in our talk. That we may indeed reflect your glory. And Heavenly Father.

We pray that we would not leave this place this morning. Without considering our walk with you. And Heavenly Father. That we would listen to that still small voice.

That calls to us. And calls to us once again. Come unto me. All ye that are weak. That are burdened. That are heavy laden.

[24 : 21] And I will give you that. For Heavenly Father. That you have promised it. When you are with us. That we can be strong. And we can be courageous.

For you will never leave us. Nor forsake us. Guide us this morning. Watch over as we pray. And forgive us for our sins.

In Jesus' precious name. Amen.