



## **Wisdom's Toolbox – Part 5**

### **Dealing with Demons**

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Well, believe it or not, right now in this room, there is a battle going on in the unseen realm. Right here, right now as you look at my face. There are forces of unseen activity going on that are very real. It's a fight of sorts that is taking place, a set of clashes and collisions, you might call them, vying for dominance. The strong over the weak. If that sounds creepy to you I don't know what to tell you. You're up to your neck in it. It's the way things are. You really are interfacing with it every day. You know what I'm talking about, right?

Most of it takes place on the 5GHz band of frequencies, some still on the 2.4 GHz bands. And sometimes they call it clashes of data packets that are trying to vie for dominance inside of our routers after it gets through the transceivers of our antennas around this building. It's a kind of conflict between weak signals and strong signals, and so much of it is trying to get in line and in place as this flying around of data of ones and zeros trying to get from your phone and maybe your tablet or your laptop as you have it here to our transceivers and into our routers and our routers out into the Internet and then trying to get information back as rapidly as possible so that you can see whatever it is that you're trying to see and download whatever you're trying to download. It's a big circus of activity, actually, that's going on all the time.

And if you don't think it's all that complicated, go ask your IT guy at work, particularly if he has an enterprise-class level WiFi, which about 60% of all Internet traffic now is through wireless frequencies that are transmitted back and forth from your devices. And, you know, with our homes the way they are, we have so many Internet devices that are hooked up and just a slew of stuff flying around that you can't see, but is very real. You didn't think of some of that spiritual stuff at the beginning did you?

I wasn't, but I could be, because just as real as all of that information is that's floating around in these radio frequencies there's another reality that you can't see but is just as real. And it is a lot of the push and pull of what's going on in your life. It's not about the push and pull of data through the air into your devices. It's really about what's going on in your mind, in your life, in your activities, your relationships. These kinds of things are genuine the Bible says. And the Bible says that you need to at least be aware of it, not so that you're not ignorant, although that would be nice for you not to be ignorant of these things, but because they really affect so much of your life it's good for you to know that it's there so that you can know how to respond, so that you can know what to do.

It affects everything from your priorities to your prayer life if you can see what's going on in the unseen realm, and that is important for us to know. And so every now and then in the Bible, what's very interesting is that God pulls back the curtain to show you what's going on in the unseen realm. And it's something we don't give enough thought to, frankly. And as Paul said, as he wrote that great section of Ephesians, that it's not against flesh and blood, that ultimately we're interfacing with or dealing with. I mean, that is our interface. But it's these spiritual forces, these powers, these authorities, these principalities. I mean, this activity that's



going on in this unseen realm that has an effect on everything around us and in our lives. And we have to be cognizant of that. We have to be aware of that so that we can know what's happening and respond the way we ought to.

Now, I bring all that up because we're studying Acts Chapter 16 where Paul has gone to Macedonia. He's in Philippi. And he led last week, if you were with us, Lydia to Christ, and she becomes the host for the missionaries and it's the base of operations for the work that's being done here in Philippi and a lot more to happen in Philippi. But today I just want to deal with three verses as we reach verse 16, verses 16, verse 17, verse 18, those three verses, I want to look at, because it's one of those passages where you get the curtain pulled back, where you start to see some things in the spiritual realm that we're not used to even thinking about.

And so I want to do that because it's important, but I don't want to dive right into the spiritual realm. I'd like to look at the physical manifestation of it, which if you were, you know, Luke's wife, at the end of the day, you might say, well, that was interesting. What happened there by the river if we didn't have verse 16 and the bottom of verse 18. So let's start in verse 17 if you're following and none of this makes sense unless you have your Bibles open, but open your Bibles to Acts Chapter 16. Let's start in verse 17 to see what happened.

There's a pronoun here pointing back to someone we're going to describe and explain later. But it's this gal and she, it says in verse 17, "She followed Paul and us," remember Luke is writing. So Luke's with this team now and Timothy and others are there. There's an entourage, I'm sure, but this gal is, strong verb, "crying out." So this is like yelling. "These men," speaking of Paul and the missionary team, "are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." And this she kept doing," verse 18, "for many days, Paul, having become greatly annoyed." Okay, I want to stop right there.

So far, what do we have? We've got a gal who is disrupting by yelling something that, in this case happens to be true, and Paul is annoyed and he's about to do something. I'm just saying, just look at that. It'd be like, you know, you saying I went to church and there was this gal who was yelling and disrupting the service. Now, if that's all you saw, that's all you'd report on. But if you're really thinking contextually about Paul and Silas, Luke, Timothy all trying to share the gospel at this place where they've already seen responses to the gospel, you think what a critical place this is to go where people are praying to the real God and there are God-fearers there, people who worship God, but they need Christ. And here you got this gal who keeps yelling out something over and over and over again. You could see where Paul's going to be annoyed and want to do something about it.

What he does gets to something that just seems creepy. Look at the next verse or at the bottom of verse 18, I should say. He turned and said to the spirit, small "s," the spirit that is in this gal who is saying this. "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." You go, "Oh, okay. I've seen that movie. I know what you're talking about." Right? Head spins around, projectile vomit, eyes glowing. Does he bring his cross out? Does he have his Bible or rosary beads? I mean, you picture that because Hollywood has sensationalized that, but



this is like an exorcist line, right? "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ, come out of her." And it came out of her that very hour," which is just the way to say it just immediately responded.

So this is an exorcism. This is weird, right? What's not weird, even though it is odd, is that there's a gal who is disrupting the evangelistic efforts of Paul and the missionaries. Right? We know that's bad because we know it's good for them to be doing what they're doing. But what we find out is this gal's got a spirit in her, and Paul's about to cast this spirit out. Wow.

Well, who is this gal? Well, it shouldn't surprise us that something's not quite right with this gal, because we learn about her and her occupation, which is really just making money for her owners because she's a slave girl. Take a look at verse 16, "As we were going to the place of prayer," remember they're by the river outside of Philippi, and they won Lydia to faith in Christ. There are other people there just like her. I'm sure they're going back to do their evangelistic work.

"We were met by a slave girl," now, look at this, "who had a spirit of divination." You know what that word means, right? I mean, divination? She's saying, "I'm reaching across into the spiritual realm, and I'm able to get information there because I have a special ability you don't have. And I can tell you stuff about that." And in this case, what most people want to know is if they can get beyond the natural, I want to know what's going to happen in the future. And of course, that's what she was doing. "And she brought her owners much gain by fortune telling."

Now, there are some people that are, quote unquote, fortune tellers who don't make a lot of money. This gal was making a lot of money for her owners, which we assume was like a father and a mother, a man and a woman, a married couple who have this gal here. I'm just telling you that right there we should certainly raise our interest, like this is something like maybe not just like some con artist, like saying general things about the future, like in the newspaper horoscopes that happen to come true. I mean, maybe there's something to this. Maybe she's in touch with some kind of weird spiritual insight or power or spirit.

Well, we already see that God has pulled back the curtain to tell us, yeah, she had a "spirit of divination." So we know that. Which, by the way, if you look at your Bibles or you're a Greek student, you got your Greek New Testament out, you see that, it's not the word divination that we would expect. It's the word really transliterated into our English word, "python" or "snake." Now, I don't need to get into all that for the sake of this sermon, but to try and at least recognize that I know that this particular word is snake, the python, pneuma python, this spirit of python has to do with a historic and somewhat localized though important cult at Delphi, Apollo. And the snake became this... Ultimately, it all gets down to the kind of stuff that was done in the cultic work of this particular temple in central Greece was something that came to be known as someone who's doing divination.

Now, was she connected to that? Well, perhaps because she's not far from it geographically, but it doesn't matter. I think the English Standard Version translators translating "a spirit of



divination" instead of like a "python spirit," which could translate it literally, is giving us the right kind of translation because it's the idea she has a spirit that's in touch with things that the Bible would say are bad because all the gods of the people, they're just idols. They're demonic to go back to the Old Testament. The idols that pull people away in their religious devotion to something other than the real God. Right? This is demonic activity. And she is connected with that. And the particular role within that temple worship of the cult in middle Greece is to speak the future, to give oracles about the future.

So all that just to know that I know what it is there, even though it's really not relevant, it may be interesting and maybe it's a platform for you to study more what was going on there at the temple in Delphi. But the point is, she's a fortune teller and the point is she's disrupting by saying something which, by the way, is true. "These men are servants of the Most High God," verse 17, "who proclaim to you the way of salvation." You think if you were Paul and Luke, you'd say, "Well, thanks for the introduction. Great. That's what we are."

So it wasn't that it was false. But much like we see when some of these demons encountered Christ, they say true things. "We know who you are. You're the Son of the living God. We know things." And it's like they're blurting it out, Well, she keeps blurting this out. She keeps crying out. It doesn't mean she was just saying it respectfully like an introduction. "She keeps saying it," verse 18, "for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit," this spirit of divination, "'I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her,' and it came out of her that very hour."

Okay, let's start with some basics here. You read that, particularly verse 16, and you start having a girl who has a spirit of divination and she's making a lot of money by fortune telling, you think, well, she's really doing something that is tapping into some occultic, spiritual, demonic thing, and that starts bringing up all these weird thoughts. And it's like, "I don't know what to think about that. Can't I just have a Christianity without that weird cultic, you know, reality or angels and demons? I don't want even to think about that."

But let's stop and say, well, we have to at least think about it, we have to acknowledge it, we have to be mindful of it. And let's just start by saying, I hope that if you are a Christian, if you're a theist, you sit here today and you're not a philosophical materialist, I mean, you're not a modernist, as they say. You're not someone who just believes in naturalism, that all there is is the material stuff, right? You believe there's something other than just the material stuff. But if you're a philosophical naturalist, you then would say, like, God, by definition, is excluded because God is something other than material. Matter of fact, he's the creator of the material things.

So if you're a theist, I hope you say, well, of course I believe there's something other than what we can empirically see and measure, the stuff of this planet. Everything that seems like spiritual the materialist would say is a phenomenon. And a lot of the people today who are like ardent and militant atheists are working hard to try and explain some of it as it relates to human beings in particular. Dan Dennett, for instance, writing about human consciousness. I mean, that's really an area you're going to have to solve because there's something about the



reality of who we are that seems to be more than just the trillions of cells that make up your physical, natural body.

So, you know, the atheists who are hard-core materialists or naturalists, you've got to come up with some ways to explain that phenomenon, right? You kind of think you are something more than your bodies. But as Christians, we say, well, of course, we believe that we're something more than our bodies. Matter of fact, the way that God described the creation of us was not just the body that is somehow just working because all the parts are there, but he creates man out of the dust of the earth, and then he, here's the key phrase, breathes into them the "breath of life."

Okay, now that, by the way, maybe you haven't thought of this, is true of animals as well. It says it in Genesis 1, they have the breath of life within them. They're animated animals because they have the breath of life. Now, what's unique about the breath of life in human beings? Breath, by the way, both in Greek and in Hebrew, in the Old Testament, is the word for "soul" or "spirit." So God gives us spirit which animates this thing through which the spirit is expressing itself. Right now I am moving my arms and there's something that's making that happen. If I did not have a spirit animating that in a Christian worldview, we would say, "Well, then your body would be dead." Matter of fact, that's how it's described. When Rachel was dying, it says her spirit, her soul, left her body. James 2 says that the body without the spirit is dead.

The difference between a living body and a dead body, we would say, from God's revelation, is that there is a spiritual component. That's why I hope you're here today saying, well, I'm not a naturalist, I'm not a materialist. I'm not someone who believes in a kind of monastic, there's just one thing, and that's material stuff. And if I can't subject it to some scientific method, if I can't see it under a microscope, if I can't somehow just look at a tactile reality of the material stuff of the atomic or cellular structure of something, well, then it doesn't exist, right? We would say, no, we're more than that.

And so that's a good starting place to say, okay, just by nature of being a theist, I believe there's a spirit that sits outside of the material world. And if I'm a human being, and I think in terms of biblical concepts, I'm actually spirit that happens to be encased and enmeshed in a body. And that's a helpful way for us just to start before we look at this middle group of spirits, because really we're saying we're all spirits expressing ourselves through material bodies. And when my spirit leaves the body, that body is dead. And I'm also saying there is a God who lives outside of material things, and he is by nature, John Chapter 4, spirit. And as Luke 24 says, if you are a human being in a body well then you're more than just a spirit. Jesus said, "For a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see that I have." I'm just a disembodied spirit. You wouldn't have any of that. But no, I'm real. Touch me and see.

So human beings are enmeshed in that body. They're encased in that body. And so I think about myself as a spirit, and I think that way all the time. And so do you. There's nothing weird about that. And we think about God, right? Just as all of us are intuitively theistic, we think about a God who sits outside of all this and he is spirit, he doesn't have a body. So that's





clear. But it's this middle ground that starts to freak me out, like when I hear words like a "spirit of divination." What is that? How does that relate to a demon.? You already use the word demon a couple of times in this sermon. Okay.

We are spirit in human bodies created in a material world. God is spirit, sits outside of all that. Right? The personhood of God. Right? That the persons of the Godhead in his image created us, unlike the animals, to have the breath of life that's distinctively reflecting the characteristics of the personhood of God. Well, there's a whole other group of beings in between all that, actually created previous to that, who are spirit beings that the Bible talks about a lot, 400 times. Think about this. I mean, at least 400 times in the Scripture we have references to a whole different class of spirits. They just don't happen to live in material bodies.

Now they're not dead people. In other words, disembodied, previously used to live in a body on earth that now become angels like the angel gets his wings and all that. Stop. Dead people are disembodied spirits. Absolutely. Second Corinthians Chapter 5 verses 1 through 5. They exist, as Paul says, naked. And they long for their eternal dwelling. And they're going to get an eternal, resurrected body. But there's a whole class of people who sits outside of that. And I call them people, they're angelic people, because if I define personhood as being reflective of God's innate properties, who he is, the intellect, emotion and will and lots of other ways to describe it. But we have that reflection of not just consciousness, but the descriptive kind of reflection of the ontology or who God is. Right? We're not God, we're not deity, but we reflect that. We know there's a whole other category of people that are angels that have that.

Now, you know, if you know enough about the Bible, you know, there's a description of one particular angel who's in a particular class of angels called a cherub and in Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14 we have these descriptions of the prince of Tyre and the King of Babylon. But if you read them carefully, we start to talk about the spirit behind it. And I guess at that particular time in Phoenicia, in Tyre and in Babylon, the one who was pulling the trigger behind the geopolitical scene was Satan himself because then God starts to describe through the prophet how that cherub that was made in perfection was filled with pride and was cast out of heaven.

So we get the first rebel against God, and according to what we read in the rest of Scripture, it's like a third of these angelic beings went with him in rebellion. So that middle class of people, I think about three classes. I've got the spirit of the eternal Godhead. Right? I've got spirits now that are made here as we read in our Daily Bible Reading this morning, if you kept up, even speaks of that, God giving the breath of life and making living creatures in every generation, not just in Genesis Chapters 1 and 2, but for all time. For every baby who is conceived, the breath of life is given. They become human souls. Okay?

There are other classes been split in half now. We could split the others in half too in terms of, you know, human beings. But let's just think about the angelic class. We've got rebels and we've got the faithful, as Paul called them to Timothy, he called them the evil angels and the elect angels. So we got good and bad spirits. Angels, just the word itself, it means they're



messengers of God and just inferring they're faithful to God. They do what God asks them to do. The rebels, of course, do not. We often call them demons.

But the reality is, according to the Bible and it's punctuated all over the Bible, every biblical author refers to angelic beings. And the reality is that they're interfacing in this world either for good or for evil. And as characterized as that's been, as cartoonish as that can be with the little picture of an angel on one shoulder and a demon on the other shoulder, the reality is those spirits, according to the Bible, are either for good or for evil in this world, interfacing with what's going on.

They can't be seen. They're not material. In a couple of situations they do materialize and God does it for a special reason as a messenger coming to do its job. But the reality is they've got an effect, a push and pull, as I said on the intro in the things that are going on and that we need to say, okay, that's a reality. Let's just at least acknowledge it, let's be mindful of it that I am a spirit, God is a spirit, and you got a whole another class of people that were there at creation according to the book of Job, they were rejoicing when God created the world. And of course, we know that also one particular powerful angel fell and a bunch fell with him.

Number one if you're taking notes, just I think about a spirit of divination and a slave girl who's a fortune teller, it should get me thinking, okay, the Bible has a worldview where there is a spiritual set of realities that sit outside the material. So, number one, "Be Mindful of Spiritual Realities." Let's just at least say, okay, I have confessed those. I realize that. If I'm going to be a biblical Christian, I've got to say that is real. And I don't think it's hard for you to see yourself as a spirit encased in a body. You know, you're more than the trillions of cells that keep replicating themselves, some really quick.

Your skin, for instance, the skin you have today is not the skin you had a few years ago. The lining of your gut. Even faster turnover of the lining of your gut, all replicating, of course, according to DNA. And some are slower, your bones take a long time. The bone cells, your brain cells are slow in reproducing, not that your brain cells are slow, yours are really fast, but they slowly replicate. And every time they do there are mutations and degradation, and that's called aging. And then, you know, eventually they're not as good as they used to be, which all of us, most of us can confess.

But if I say I am not the person I was 20 years ago, I'm not singularly, cellularly, no. All the blueprints have been repeated, but I'm still the same spirit. We all sense that, that's intuitive. God, of course, by definition, and that's intuitive as well, we say spirit. Now let's just affirm this middle class and say, okay, I'm going to be mindful of that and I'm going to be mindful that if there is a spirit who is engaging with a person to the place of being able to give her information about the future, I know one thing, that's not the godly angels doing that, right? That's got to be the evil angels.

A couple of things. Deuteronomy 18, at least jot that down. Deuteronomy 18 reminds us that if it has to do with seeking people to be in touch with the spirit world, to tell me the future, I know that's in a bad category. And let's talk about that, because you can say, well, what's the



difference between God telling a prophet about the future, like where the Messiah is going to be born in Micah 5:2? What's the difference?

Well, here's the difference. God knows the future, right? He's sovereign over the future. He is a God who sits outside of all that. God is a God who can tell his prophets to tell us what's coming. And he has, in many situations. God to the prophets telling us the future that's one of four kinds of foretelling of the future. Right?

Another kind in Scripture that's not moral, it's an amoral thing. It's when we see like in Proverbs passages we could piece together about people prognosticating or forecasting about the future. Right? Doing that with an intelligent guess about the future. And they're not claiming any spiritual advantage or spiritual superiority. They're just good forecasters. Right?

And you got people you entrust your money to, perhaps as a financial planner, you hope they're prognosticating well about the future or you become a person who's going to go out golfing. If you want to know if it's going to be raining when you're out, you check with a meteorologist. They're forecasting based on the past. They're educating, guessing. There's nothing wrong with that. Matter of fact, the Bible applauds that you're availing yourself to trying to see what the trends are and to forecast, to think ahead. If there's danger on the path you better take cover. You better make sure that you're prepared. Right? Don't just keep walking without any thought to the future.

So futurizing as a prognosticator with forecasting if you know it's just educated guessing, great. Amoral things, sometimes it's bad. I've had some bad forecasters in my life. You've had bad ones. We've had good ones. Okay. God can tell his prophets, there's nothing wrong with that. That's great. And it stops where it stops, right? Deuteronomy 29:29, "The secret things" that he doesn't reveal, we don't know. And so we can't know. And that's the way it is. We can prognosticate and guess.

Then third, there are some people who claim some spiritual connection who say, I'm going to tell you the future, but they're con men and con women. And the way you can kind of see that is by how they give these predictions. Right? They got their sign up and they got stars and, you know, wizard hats or whatever. And they want your money to give you a reading about your future. Or they're at the Irvine Spectrum mall and you go read the tarot cards, they're going to tell you about your future. And it's all this creepy stuff and it seems spiritual. You think, "Oh wow, there's a kind of fortune telling." What am I to make of that? Well I'm supposed to make of that what the Bible says. Any effort to try and get to the other side in the spiritual world to tell my future or to contact the dead.

This is all spelled out in Deuteronomy 18 because they're about to go into Canaan where they did a bunch of this, and God says, that's an "abomination to me." I'll tell you what you need to know about the future. You don't go seek the spirits to figure this out. So I know that's bad, but in this case, it's a con and most of what we see is a con in our day. And you know that, right? Because of the way those prognostications are given, these spiritual prognostications are so general.





As I said, it's like the old horoscopes in the newspaper. They read, "Well, look, when I was born and I was born in September, so I'm this and I'm going to look what it says, and it says today you're going to meet new opportunities." Well, okay. Duh. Well, I can read the guys who were born in April and everything's true for them. "Today, you'll have some things you're sad about. And there will be struggles for you and trials. You need to meet them as..." Of course. Right?

There's nothing there beyond the natural than someone just saying these general things about the future. And you see it. And there are all kinds of, I don't have time, but there are methods of people learning the shysters' tricks to be able to get you to think they know something about the future when in fact they don't. They're con men. Okay, so God can tell his prophets. That's a prognostication about the future, but it's absolutely sovereign. There are people who can in a very amoral way, they can make educated guesses about the future. There are people who claim to have spiritual connections. They don't, but they're trying to tell you they do.

Then lastly, we got this girl, which is a class of people that we do see in the Scripture, where they are engaged with some kind of spirit that is able to tell the future. Only God knows the future. Only God KNOWS the future. Right? Yes, you're right. Because only God is sovereign over the future. Okay? But I want to tell you how can a demon give any information that's more specific. And here's what I like to say. It's affectable information. That's not a word we use very often, but affectable. It's affectable. It can be affected.

Here's an example. If I said I got a guy here and you need to check in with this guy and he's going to prognosticate in a spiritual way about the future. And I'm going to go whisper in his ear and I'm going to say, "Tell them that next week when they come to church instead of donuts there are going to be burritos out there on the tables." And then the guy says it, "Hey, I've tapped into the spiritual world, and I'm telling you, it's going to be burritos." Well, if it was me telling him that and then next week you come and there are burritos, you would not be amazed, particularly if you found out that I'm the one giving that information. You think, well, he's the pastor. He's got a little pull around here. He probably made that happen. And I could make that happen. Could I make it happen absolutely? Well, who knows? I could get hit by a bus after I tell this guy that and maybe I won't be able to get burritos out there.

But I do have influence and I can make a call. I might have to borrow from this budget to that budget to amp up next weekend to pay for burritos out there. But you'd think, well, he's got an effect on that and he could make that happen. Okay, demons, here's the thing, right? These demons can relay information. And in this case, they got an open source to communicate information to this slave girl. Right? She's given herself over to this kind of thing. And you could have information given to her that now a demon could affect in the future, if it's an effectible thing. It can be specific and it can happen. Well, what if God wants to throw that demon in the abyss this Thursday? Well, then maybe it won't happen next Sunday. Whatever the thing is that this demon is saying will happen.



But all I'm saying is I get that because demons have an influence on the realities of this world. And so that happens. Is that real fortune telling? It is, but it's not a sovereign fortune teller. Do you see the difference? But man, it's weird and wacky. And not only is it wacky, it's evil. Because Deuteronomy 18 says even a con man, you shouldn't be trying to play around with this. But certainly if you're tapping into it. Right? Now, you're becoming an instrument of this demonic communication. So that can happen. And it hasn't.

But I want to tell you is, why don't we see more of it? Because Satan is not really interested in doing that. Right? This is not his forte. This is not what he's about. That's not the point. Well, what is the point? Well, let's look at our passage. The point is exactly what's happening here. It just happens to be in a sensational way and it's not all that big of a deal, because Lydia could establish that "these men are servants of the Most High God proclaiming the way of salvation." Lydia could have said that. It's not that it's hard information to find, but they're saying it and that saying it and crying it out, yelling it out, and doing it every single day is now a distraction. It's an impedance upon the missionary work to where Paul is annoyed.

Why is he annoyed? She just keeps telling the truth. He's annoyed because she's disrupting. Just like if someone disrupted in this auditorium right now, it would be a disruption. I'd want it to stop. So I don't care if you're saying, you know, "MIKE FABAREZ, HE'S OUR PASTOR THAT WENT TO SCHOOL." Okay it could be true, but shut up. Right? Stop. I don't want... you're disrupting. I'm trying to preach. And that's the point. It's a disruption. It's a strategy that is used by an adversary to keep me, in this case, from doing what I'm supposed to be doing.

Paul is supposed to be, according to Acts 9, a messenger to bring salvation to the Gentiles. Talk about it. He's never been in more Gentile territory than he is now in Macedonia. Get it? You're going into Europe. This is awesome. To Greece you go. Right? Now he's doing exactly what Acts 1:8 says, and that's what Acts 9 is all about, getting Paul on board with Acts Chapter 1, which is to be witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, ends of the earth. Talk about ends of the earth. Is Paul and Luke and all these guys doing God's will? Absolutely. What's this gal doing? She's an adversary. An adversarial spirit is utilizing her just to be a disruption, an impedance. an irritation, an annoyance at the least.

Okay, number two, we should "Be Aware of Adversarial Strategies." Number two, be aware of adversarial strategies. First of all, realize there is a class of beings called angels and demons. That's what we call them shorthand. They have a strategy to be in the broadest sense to keep you from doing what you're supposed to do, what God wants you to do. Okay, let's break that down, three categories. Let's talk about our goals. Let's talk about their means and let's talk about their strategies.

So let's start with this Letter "A." Goals. I have goals as a Christian that I've been given by God. For instance, let's just get in the shoes and sandals of Timothy and Luke and Paul. I'm supposed to be an evangelist. I'm supposed to share the gospel. I'm supposed to hold out the words of life. I'm supposed to be the light of the world. I'm supposed to bring the fragrance of the knowledge of Christ. I'm supposed to do that. So I know, Matthew 28, I'm supposed to be making disciples. Okay? I know this, Second Corinthians Chapter 4 verse 4, Satan does not



want that to happen. He does not want people seeing the glory of God in the face of Christ. They do not want that the top of the pyramid. Satan does not want that. Demons don't want that. They're going to be an adversary for that.

So I know my goal is to do what God asked me to do, just like Paul is supposed to do what he's supposed to do. And all of us in this room are supposed to be sharing the gospel. If there's something that keeps us from doing that, we'll look at means in a minute, we say, "Oh, we got the adversarial spirit probably at work here. It could be other things. But let's just start with that. Okay? Another thing. I could make a list of 40 things but let me give you four. Number two under Letter "A," God wants you to be holy, does he not? First Peter Chapter 1 verse 16. "Be holy as I'm holy." Right? As obedient children. Don't obey your passions. Obey what God says. So God wants you to be holy.

I know this, First Thessalonians Chapter 3 verse 5. Satan is a tempter who wants to tempt us and wants us not to be holy. So I know that. My goal is to be a godly Christian, a holy Christian. And I know Satan and that team as adversaries, which, by the way, I keep using the word adversary. And I've said this recently I think. The word Satan in English is the same word as "Satanas" in Koine Greek in the New Testament and "śāṭān" in Hebrew in the Old Testament. All we do is transliterate it. But what do each of those mean? Right? All the way back to Hebrew it means an adversary, an opponent. Okay?

So Satan is an opponent and his team is an opponent. And those spiritual beings that are here in the background, doing the stuff that they do, are trying to oppose me from doing the stuff I'm supposed to do, which I know, I'm just listing four, evangelist, I'm supposed to be holy. Here's another one. How about this? I know this: it is one of the last prayers Jesus gave in his great high priestly prayer in John 17. "I want them to be one," the Son says to the Father, "even as we are one." He talks so often, John 13, "I want them to love each other. The world can see that they're the people they're supposed to be because they love each other." First Corinthians Chapter 1 verse 10. I want them to be perfectly united in their minds and thoughts. I want them to be together as a Church. They ought to be unified. Right?

So I know this. Here's a mind-blowing passage in Second Timothy Chapter 2. Paul writes to Timothy later as he's pastoring in Ephesus which they haven't even gotten to on this missionary journey yet. He says, there are people in your congregation who are ensnared by Satan, the adversary, "to do his will." Context? There are people causing division in the church. They're adversarial, they're quarrelsome, and that manifestation of that kind of division in the Church is absolutely 100% opposing the goals that all Christians should have. That if we're Christians, particularly within a local church, First Corinthians 1:10, we should be working to be unified, to love each other, to lay down our lives for each other.

We're called to be evangelists, we're called to be holy, we're called to be unified. How about this? This is a broad category, but let's pick this one. Hebrews Chapter 6 says that God has gone to great lengths so that you would have assurance that his promises are true. We call that faith. You should have faith that what God has said is true. Okay? So I know that my goal as a Christian is to have faith and believe that God, whatever he said, is true. Satan, the first



time we have him show up in the Bible in Genesis Chapter 3, what is he doing? He's dealing with that. "I don't want you to believe what God has said. Did God really say...?"

Okay. So I know Satan's job and all of his henchmen, all the demons that are in this world, they would love to impede what God has told us to do. The goals of the Christian life. I've given you four. We should be an evangelist, right? We should be holy. We should be unified. We should trust him. You can make a list of 40, but let's just get your brain thinking. You can go further this week and think that through and know that Satan is against the things that God wants you to do. Paul's trying to do evangelism, Satan doesn't want him to do that because God wants him to do it.

What are the means? How does he get this done? Let me give you just four examples of how he gets it done. Let's look at our passage. How does he get it done here? How is he getting the evangelism to stop by the riverside outside of Philippi? A person is yakking when they shouldn't be. Let's just put this one down, number one or Letter "B" or whatever we're at. You're keeping track. People are a means. I just quoted Second Timothy 2 where it says people are ensnared to do Satan's will within the church. People. Right? You got problems with people. Sometimes those people problems trying to get you to not do what God has asked you to do. The goals of the Christian life are being impeded. And one of the means are people in your life who are making that difficult.

And all I'm saying is here is Satan though he may not have a person completely given over to the work of a demon like this girl here, the influence, the impact, the ensnaring in the sin that Satan has got them into, has led you to realize people have become a problem here. And the person is a problem with me being holy or me being unified or me trusting God or me doing evangelism or whatever else you're writing down in the 36 other things you think here are things God wants me to do. That's a broad category, but here's a person and the person is a problem.

Let's talk about circumstances. Job Chapter 1. The Sabeans come, steal Job's stuff. The whole point was Satan, the adversary, he's called that in that passage, the *śāṭān*, the adversary, is trying to get Job to not do what he's supposed to do. What he's supposed to do is love God, serve God with all his heart, soul, strength and mind. But Satan is trying to get him to stop. And how does he do that? Well, first he does it with circumstances. Right? Let's kill your kids. Right? Let's have all your bank accounts be completely liquidated and you won't have anything anymore. And let's use circumstances to pull you off of doing what you should be doing.

Now, it doesn't work, right? Circumstances are hard. They would make any of us feel bad. It made him feel bad. Terrible grief over the loss of his children. I mean, he's got no stuff anymore. He's in bad shape. And yet, praise God, Job, God is vindicated by him being continually saying, "Hey, blessed be the name of the Lord." Great. Satan goes back and he says, "Great, well, you know what? He didn't curse you to your face, like I said. But hey, if you touch him, his body, well, then he'll curse you." And God said, "Fine, just don't kill him." Right?



So here's number three under Letter "B," how about this? Our health, right? One of the means of adversarial work in our lives can be our health. I mean, I know that from Second Corinthians Chapter 12. Do you remember that passage? Where Paul says, "I have a thorn in the flesh." Remember how he describes it? "A messenger of šātān." Satanas in Greek, a messenger of the adversary. Okay?

Well, that was obviously under the purview and sovereignty of God, as all things are even in Job 1 and 2. But that personal attack upon his health, just like Job ends up having this health problem in his life, we recognize this that can be a real problem. That makes me maybe not do what I'm supposed to do or trust the way I'm supposed to trust or get along the way I should with my brothers and sisters in Christ. Whatever your list is, all the goals that God says about what we should be doing. Health can be a problem. I just need to know the means that Satan uses sometimes.

So I got circumstances. I got health. I've got people. The last one is a big one. John Chapter 8 verse 44. Jesus calls Satan "the father of lies." Okay, it's a big category, but let's just... The means of the enemy is to lie to keep us from doing what we're supposed to do. The people who were listening to Jesus should have been responding in repentance and faith. Satan was utilizing the Pharisees who were saying things that were not true and lies were the means by which Satan was trying to accomplish opposition to God's will. And so we know that is the case, as is the case today. I mean, it can come through a sermon, it can come through a Christian book, it can come through a radio broadcast, but people can take biblical-sounding things, and it should be no surprise because even Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light, but he's doing his adversarial work to get you to believe something that's not right, that will lead you to stop doing the thing that you're supposed to do. I see that all the time.

People get into some Christian book. They read about the high view of God and the sovereignty of God in evangelism and they think, "Well, then I don't have to share the gospel because if God wants them saved they'll get saved because I believe in God's sovereignty over salvation." Well, sure that's true. But Satan has just won because you're believing a lie by not seeing the totality of Scripture and realizing that you got to do what God says regardless of what your theological ivory tower has led you to think in trying to excuse your obedience to Christ. So lies can be very subtle, but lies are always the thing, like in Genesis Chapter 3 where Satan is trying to say, "Well, it ain't true? That ain't true." Okay?

Means. I've given you some means: people, difficult circumstances, our health, lies. Here are the specific strategies. And by that I mean, Letter "C," I want you to look at the things that actually are trying to be accomplished in your heart. Right? What are Satan's demons trying to produce? Number one, we can see this from Genesis 3, is doubt. Okay, let's put down "C1," doubt. Doubt is what Eve was... That was the goal. The strategy was I can get her to stop doing what she was supposed to do if I can tell her that God was trying to keep something from her. "You know, God didn't really say that." And Eve all of a sudden was starting to doubt what God said. Doubt. Okay? That's an inverse of some of the things we've talked about.





How about this? Fear. And even to think about that when he said, "Well, God, just trying to keep from you the knowledge of something that would be better for you to have. But he wants to keep you dumb, and so, you know, that's why he..." I mean, it's the first episode of "Fear of Missing Out," right? FOMO is right there in the Garden where she said, "Oh, man, if I don't sin here, I'm going to miss out on something." And there was that sense of fear. I mean, fear, you can see it all throughout the Bible, is often something Satan uses to get people derailed. Smyrna. Chapter 2 verse 10 of Revelation, Jesus is writing a postcard and he says, Satan is going to really persecute you guys. I just want you to know: "Fear not, be faithful, even if it's unto death."

My point is, don't be afraid. Fear is a strategy that demons use, adversarial spirits use, to get you to keep you from the main thing which is doing what God told you to do. Doubt. Fear. How about this one just to relate it to some of the issues of unity? How about this: bitterness? I know that one's true because in Revelation Chapter 12 verse 10, bitterness. Revelation 12:10. Satan is described, one of his main things that he does is to slander the brothers, to accuse Christians. Now think about this. That's the passage in Revelation Chapter 12 verse 10. It says, "The accuser of the brothers," talking about Satan, "is going to be thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God."

So I know one thing. There are people in this church right now who Satan and demons are accusing before the Father as demeaning and putting down and slandering. And here's the thing. If Satan can get me to do that, then, hey, I'm in league with him. He's winning. They're winning. So I know that when I have bitterness in my heart toward brothers and sisters in Christ, I mean, there it is. There's the strategy, the strategies to get me to be a bitter person or a fearful person or a doubting person.

One more. How about this one? Discouragement. Discouragement. Now, I don't know if I quoted it or not, but in Second Corinthians Chapter 2 verse 11, Paul at the end of this sentence, it starts the verse. It says, "So that we would not be outwitted by Satan," Satan, the adversary, "for we are not ignorant of his designs," or his schemes or his methods. Literally, methods. What's the context of that? Do you know? It's when they were talking about this kind of discipline they were doing in the church and it says be careful, two verses earlier, "that he not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow."

I just wonder if there's not a little reflection of Satan's work in Paul's life a chapter earlier when he says, you know, "the hardship we had in Asia," it was so bad we were so discouraged, he said. We even just were lamenting the fact that we were alive. I mean, "we thought about death." It was just a terrible discouragement.

I think even in Jesus' temptations when the tempter came to him in the wilderness in Matthew 4, much of that temptation dealt with, "You can't do it." It starts with him being fatigued and hungry. And here come these things, like discouragement. I can't prove that right now to you but I think that's an underlying part of this. And Christians from Job to Elijah to I think Jesus, at least in the temptation, trying to get him to that place. And certainly with us, like Paul



confesses it in Second Corinthians 1, we know that's one of his strategies. Doubt, fear, bitterness, discouragement.

Could we go on? We could go on. But I only get 3 hours to preach. (audience laughs) So here are four. Right? Did you follow any of that? Right? We got goals that we're supposed to accomplish that he's trying to get in the way of. Means that he uses to get in the way of it. Strategies of what he's trying to take root in our hearts. Okay, well, how do we solve it? I'm glad you asked. Go back to our passage. In the middle of verse 18, "being greatly annoyed" at this disruption, this barrier, this impedance to the work that God wanted to do, "he turned and said to the spirit, 'I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.' And it came out of her that very hour." Problem solved. So I guess you're working to write that sentence down exactly as it's put there. "I-command-you-in-the-name-of-Jesus-Christ, come-out-of-her."

So before you just write that down and recite it to the guy at your work who's being the annoyance in your life, (audience laughs) I just want you to keep a few things in perspective here. Okay. A lot here I can talk about, but let's get this in... First let's start with the book that we're studying. What's the name of the book that we're studying? Acts. What's the long name of it? Acts of the Apostles. You ain't one. Can I remind you of that? You're not an apostle. Let's think about the apostles. Okay. By definition, the "Apostolos," the apostles were these ambassadors, these representatives, these emissaries of Christ.

Now, jot this down, if you would, Luke Chapter 4. I want to show you that Christ was showing his credentials with exercises of power. Healings, miracles and exorcisms. Listen to this passage, Luke 4:36. "And they were all amazed," he had just done an exorcism, "and they said to one another, 'What is this word?'" With what, "Authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and they come out!" It's amazing. He tells demons what to do and they do it. Okay. Now jot this down, Luke Chapter 9 verse 1. "He called the twelve together," the apostles, "and he gave them power and authority," first thing on the list, "over all demons and then to cure diseases, and then he sent them out to proclaim the Kingdom of God." I just want you to catch that. Right?

Here are people who are supposed to listen to Jesus of Nazareth, born in a humble stable in Bethlehem, growing up, and now as an itinerant leader. Hey, you're the Son of God. You're the Daniel, you know, Chapter 2, Daniel Chapter 9 fulfillment of all the messianic prophecies. Right? Prove it. He did. He proved it. And they were like, Whoa! The storm can be calm. The paralytic can walk, right? The blind can see. The dead are raised and demons obey him at his word. He gives that power to his apostles. His apostles would be the ones who would lay down the foundation of all the revelatory truth on which every generation then would derive its truth from.

Follow me now. Ephesians Chapter 2 verse 20. The Church "was built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, Christ himself being the chief cornerstone." So it's all about Christ. But Christ in the Upper Room said, I'm going to give this task of you having called to mind all the things that I've taught you, and I'm going to bring that to mind. You're going to



write it down. And that will be, even though they had this real sense of the imminence of Christ's return, God finally got them to the place of writing all of this down, and it becomes now the New Testament. All this New Testament preaching without a New Testament as I've often said needs some kind of authentication.

And I've quoted this many times, Hebrews Chapter 2 verses 3 and 4. That's the gist of that text, where it says, "Listen, we know we can't ignore what has been said because it has been authenticated by "signs and wonders and various miracles" by the apostles, "by those who heard him." Right? That truth of that authentication, that attestation, is very important because Paul now is claiming apostleship and he becomes the apostle to the Gentiles. And so he has this ability that has endowed to him with a word to do something that we would call an exorcism.

Now, it's a weird word, and you think of the Hollywood movies, but it is a biblical word. Thirteen times in the Greek New Testament, we have this word that we translate, not all the time, sometimes it's translated exorcize or exorcism. Sometimes it's translated to "Adjure," which is a weird English word, to adjure, that you're speaking a word that is authoritative. It literally means an oath. The second half of the word, it's a transliterated word, "exorcism." "Ex," Greek preposition "out of," "orcism," which is not how you say it in Greek, but orcism, the second half of the word, it starts with "O" an omicron, is the word "to put under oath." I'm "adjuring you" sometimes that is translated. I adjure you. I command you. I demand of you that you come out. Okay.

There's a lot of adjuring that's going on between individuals. Think about it. You got the high priests saying to Jesus, "I adjure you," uses the same word, for you to get out of your mouth what I'm asking of you, and Jesus didn't do it. The high priest had no authority. He has authority, but he couldn't make Jesus say something. Right? He couldn't make Jesus answer him. He was silent before Caiaphas. But what's the point? You can adjure a lot of things. The demons adjure Christ, they use the word "I adjure you." Right? Don't cast us into the torture before the time. Well, Jesus didn't have to do it. Actually, he does it in that passage, strangely enough, with the demoniac of the Gerasenes in the pig scene. That word is a strong word and it's a demand and it's a demand in this case, when you put an "ex" in front of it to come out of this person.

And we know this is an extra spirit, because when the spirit comes out of the girl, just like we see in Jesus' exorcism, they don't die. And if the spirit meant she is kind of a spirit of divination, well, then she'd be dead. You can't have the spirit leave and not be dead. Well, this is an extra spirit and this spirit that's there within this gal, whatever "within" means, controlling her. Which, by the way, I guess you should say, is the Greek word that we translate as demon possession, which is such a spooky word. Right? Demon possession. I just want you to know the word is a three-part word. "Daimonizomai." Daimon, demon, is this passive causal stem, that's passive, right?

Daimonizomai means there's a demon-caused passivity. This cause of you not being what you would normally be. Like, the demoniac who was cutting himself and living among the



tombs and all that. It's like, well, that wouldn't be where you normally would live. Right? But he's making decisions that are not like his. And that kind of schizophrenic-like dual personality, that idea of, well, is this some other entity here in this person? Well, when that is removed through a, quote unquote, exorcism, it's a demand of someone. Now, here's the thing. Demons could demand of Christ and he doesn't have to follow. The high priest can demand of Christ. He didn't have to respond and he doesn't respond.

People can demand me to do a lot of things, people can demand you to do a lot of things. I can demand you to put down someone's name in your phone to pray for him for seven days, and you don't have to do it because you can defy my demand. I can put you under oath to do what I say. You still don't, whatever. You can choose to do it or not to do it. Okay. Here's something about these demons. When Christ says something, when Christ demands something, by the way, in his authority as Christ, every molecule obeys, every spirit has to obey. Okay?

When that happens in the apostolic band, you're proving something here that is very different than the average person, because even people who that wrote down this sentence from verse 18 in Acts 16, and they're going around saying, "I command you in the name of Jesus, come out of her." As I often say, the people that are these kinds of exorcists, they can't even get their kids to make their beds. Right? And I'm thinking, why not? Because your words don't have that authority.

"Well, I can say make your bed and in the name of Jesus Christ." And they still don't do it. Right? Because it isn't the words, right? It's the acknowledgment that the authority is not mine and they're making a statement that comes first person. I adjure you, I command you. And they're doing that because they are standing in a position that needs the authentication, where later Paul would write the book of Romans in a clear fashion so that Lydia and everyone else could read here's what the gospel is. We don't need the miraculous authentication. Okay.

Now that's something I just think that's helpful to know so that you don't write the sentence down going, "Well, I just found the means by which Satan is trying to keep me from doing God's will. And I realize that the strategy is starting to take root. But I'm going to start commanding this to go away." Turn with me to Jude, the second to the last book of the Bible. Jude verses 9 and 10. I want you to look at this passage and show you there's a difference between what Paul does here and what Michael, the stinking archangel does. I mean, think about it. He's like at the top of the rung. He's there hanging out as like arch, leader, authoritative. Look what he does when he is dealing with the adversary. It's a little different than what we see in Christ and the apostles in the New Testament.

Are you with me on this? Jude chapter... Well, there's only one chapter, but verse 9. When the archangel Michael was contending with the devil. Some say, "Ah, that's what we heard a sermon on that today. I want to contend with the devil." All right. It would be a good eighties Christian music song, right? "Contending With the Devil." There are probably some non-Christian songs with that line in. But whatever, OK?



"He was disputing about the body of Moses." That's a whole another sermon but a weird thing there, at the end of Moses life. "He," Michael, "did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment." Okay, blasphemy I've told you many times, blasphemy is the word that means taking something that's up here in loftiness and sacredness and authority and greatness, it can be used in a lot of different ways, and bringing that down to the common. Taking something that's up here, authoritative and big and it can be used of God, of course, because he's the ultimate, and treating him or his name like it's nothing, common, that's bringing it down. That's blasphemy.

Now, Michael could pronounce a blasphemous judgment. Just think about what that means. He could take things that are powerful and authoritative. And you think, well, man, I think you're equally matched with Michael. Michael's got to be a big gun, too, right? But he doesn't do that. What does he do instead? Look at this. Instead of doing that, he says, "The Lord rebuke you." Well, that's an interesting shift. Who's the subject here? The Lord. What's he wanting? He's wanting the Lord to deal with this, I want the Lord to put you down. "But these people," who he's talking about in the context of Jude, "blaspheme all that they do not understand, and they are destroyed by all that they, like unreasoning animals, understand instinctively." Right. "Woe to them! For they walk in the way of Cain," there's an interesting tie there to this, I don't have time to explain, "and banning themselves to the gain of Balaam," which often happens. Right? They're trying to get money, as that often takes place. "And perish in Korah's rebellion."

Three historical situations which are worth looking up that deal with part of what's going on when they kind of act like they have all the power to do what Jesus did. Right? Well, that's not it. Could Michael be endowed with apostolic power to command demons to do whatever he wants? Well, sure, but he doesn't, because that's not the common normal course of things. What's the normal course of things? To say, "the Lord rebuke you." I want the Lord. I'm appealing to God to deal with the adversarial spirit, to deal with the adversarial strategy. To stop this. To deal with that. Why? Because I'm trying to purpose and determined to do what I'm called to do. Which, by the way, one more passage. I'm finally going to give you the third point. Trust me, we're going to get there.

But let me read for you Exodus 23 verses 20 and through 22. Exodus Chapter 23. "Behold, I send an angel before you to guard you on the way to bring you into the place I prepared." So they're going to go into Canaan, the Promised Land. God sending this messenger, perhaps the pre-incarnate Christ. "Pay attention," verse 21, "to him and obey his voice; do not rebel against him, he will not pardon your transgression, for my name is in him." Well, that's freaky and weird, but the reality is here is this call to obey.

Verse 22, "If you carefully obey his voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries." Right? So I'm saying the determination to obey what God says, whether it's evangelism, whether it's holiness, whether it's unity, whether it's faith, you name your list, what God has commanded, I'm going to be determined to do that.





And then I'm saying, I know this: God is there standing at the ready, "to be the adversary to my adversary, to be the enemy to my enemy." And the enemies that I face are not just a flesh and blood enemy of a girl who is disrupting the auditorium. It's the stuff behind the scene that I can't see. And I'm asking and I'm praying for God to do that. Okay, thus the third point, three, right? "Be Determined and Prayerful." Not repeating the line and try and exercise a demon from someone this week. It's you praying to God to deal with the demonic stuff that lies behind the spiritual powers and forces of darkness that are behind the kind of opposition that you face that can take its means in a variety of ways.

Listen, we can look at something like this either in Luke 4 or Luke 9, or we can look at it here in Acts Chapter 16 and say, "Well, I wish we could do that. Just I wish we could go to church and learn how to exorcize demons." And I'm saying, I get it. There's something like dynamic and raw about that. It's like you're looking back at a sword fight in the first century with daggers and swords and long polished swords, and they're sharp and they're out there wielding and its hand-to-hand combat. I get that. But if you're in an FA-18 Hornet and you've got laser-guided missiles, I'm saying fly that plane and take that joystick and hit that button and do it that way. Right? This is better.

And all I'm telling you is this: the reality of us envying what's going on in Acts 16, "I wish I could say those things." I'm saying we got something different and it's different and it's conventional in the sense that now God is saying you need to be people of determination and prayer. You pray and God becomes an enemy to your enemies. And you say, I'm going to follow and do what you ask. I'm just saying there's something so proper about us saying this is the goal. And I say that because when they came back in Luke Chapter 10 verse 20 from seeing the spirits be subjected to them, Jesus said, "Do not rejoice that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

How do we get that done? We get that done by quoting the words of the apostles and prophets. We get that done by determining to do what God asks us to do. We do that by relying on prayer to see God be the enemy to our enemies. And God says that's the most important... The important things are the things that we've been saying that seem boring to you now, right? To love and evangelize and serve and be holy. That's our goal. Determined to do that. And praying all the way, knowing of what's going on in the unseen realm, at least as far as we can know it.

Because the things that God is asking us to do, they seem very non-flashy. The armor of God. Right? Belt of truth. Breastplate of righteousness. Shoes of the gospel. Shield of faith. Helmet of salvation. Word of God. Prayer and vigilance. I mean, all of that. And it's not like learning the exorcist's incantations. It's getting down to those things, the bread and butter of the Christian life. All right. Stand with me and we'll let you go after talking about some things today. How's that for a sentence?

Let's pray. God, we want to walk in obedience to your word, which means we've got to take those things seriously. We've got to know that we're up against a lot of spiritual forces in this



world that we should understand. We shouldn't be ignorant of them. We also shouldn't be trying to act like apostles and exorcists in the modern day. We should be praying. We should be determined to do what's right. We should keep marching with the marching orders that we have, with the word of God as the sword of the Spirit, committed to prayer, always being vigilant in our praying, praying at all times.

God, those are the kinds of things that we need. We need more of them. Some of us want to do things that seem spectacular from biblical passages, but we don't want to spend a half an hour just praying about it. God help us to see the importance of the powerful tools we have at the ready in the armor of God that's described there. It doesn't feel like some things that some want in the sensationalized version of us fighting the darkness or being engaged in spiritual warfare. But the spiritual warfare are the things that have been taught so often from this platform that are just things that we take the determination of our priorities and our schedules in our lives, just making these the focus and the goals of everyday living. So, God, I pray with your help, with your empowerment in our lives we will be faithful this week.

In Jesus name. Amen