

Ephesians 6:11 “Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes.”

I love this illustration from Craig Larson who read an article about the Alaskan Bull Moose. The males of the species battle for dominance during the fall breeding season literally going head to head with antlers crushing together as they collide. Often the antlers, their only weapons, are broken. This insures defeat. The heftiest moose with the largest and strongest antlers triumphs. Therefore, the battle fought in the fall is really won during the summer when the moose eat continually, and the one who consumes the best diet for growing antlers and gaining weight will be the heavy weight in the fight. Those who eat inadequately sport weaker antlers and less bulk. Surely there is a lesson there for us. Spiritual battles are happening all the time around us. Satan will choose a season to attack. The difference between living victoriously or being defeated depends on what we do today before the battle begins. The Bull Moose principle is enduring faith, strength, and wisdom for the trials of life are best developed before they are needed. In other words, you have to put the armor of God on before the battle begins. Once the battle starts, you don’t get to call a time-out and say wait a minute. Once the battle begins and the bullets are whizzing buy your head and Satan is attacking you, you don’t get to call a time-out and say you need to put your armor on. It is too late then. Put your armor on before the battle begins. Dress in the armor of God every day.

- Dr. Tim Thompson, Senior Pastor

Romans 8:38-39 “And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God’s love. Death can’t, and life can’t. The angels can’t, and the demons can’t. Our fears for today, our worries about tomorrow, and even the powers of hell can’t keep God’s love away. Whether we are high above the sky or in the deepest ocean, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

The whole story of scripture is the story of how God can’t be kept out. When we sin and mess up our lives, we find that God doesn’t go off and leave us. Instead, He enters into our trouble and saves us. The good news of the gospel is that God is for us. God is present. God is with us despite our past mistakes...
despite our sins...
despite our selfishness and pride.

God continues to love us regardless of who we are and what we’ve done. God continues to show up regardless of how often we ignore Him. From Advent to Easter, the story of Jesus should teach us that God’s love cannot be defeated. His love is greater than sin, greater than hate, and yes, greater than death. This is the good news of the Gospel!

- Rev. Brandon Dasinger/ Teaching/ Missions Pastor

Ephesians 1:13 “You were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance.”

Revelation 6 reveals the early days of judgment on the earth where God sends limited plagues and disasters. God limits the destruction because God desires for more people to come to belief in His Son. Our merciful God wants more people to be saved. But, many still refuse. In Revelation 6:17 we see unbelieving people of the earth crying out for mountains to fall on them. They would rather die than accept the gift of salvation through Christ. They would rather die than give God authority over their lives. These defiant people cry out, “Who can stand in the day of God’s wrath?” Revelation chapter 7 tells us who can stand. All those who have the ‘sealing’ of the Holy Spirit, will stand. God marks his children as HIS. At the moment of your salvation, God takes responsibility for you, His child, and places in you the Holy Spirit. This sealing by God says, “You belong to God and no matter what happens on this earth, you will not only never perish, but will inherit an eternal residence in heaven.” So hang on, endure, hold onto God trusting Him and His Word. God never promises ‘easy street’ on this earth. He promises His strength, His presence, and His peace as we live out this earthly life until we come into our heavenly home.

- Virginia Thompson

Romans 8:39 “Nothing can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

The first truth Christians must firmly establish in their minds and hearts is over the question of salvation. Christians can never successfully live the abundant life God has for them as long as they are insecure about their standing with God. Satan will try to convince you that God doesn’t really love you and that you aren’t really saved, or that God is so disappointed in you that He plays give-and-take with your salvation. You may wonder, “Am I really saved? I don’t always ‘feel’ like I am saved. I still sin. Does that mean I am not saved?” Too many Christians think if they ‘feel’ God close then they are saved, yet when they don’t ‘feel’ God near, they doubt their salvation. Our emotions are always fluctuating and are not a reliable gauge of our salvation. Assurance of salvation is based solely on God and His work. If you have accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord, then you are saved. In John 10:28, Jesus says, “I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.” Our salvation isn’t determined by our feelings or even our hold on God but on God’s hold on us.

- Virginia Thompson

FLOWER DEDICATION

Flowers are placed in memory of Peyton Taylor Crow by his family, Marla, Mike, Cade and Carson Ann.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Prelude: “Processional of Joy” (Hopson) Kelley Garrett, organ
Call to Worship: “Majesty” Choir
Apostles Creed Congregation
Hymn #714/#368: “I Know Whom I Have Believed/The Solid Rock”
.....Congregation
Special Music: “For the Glory of the Lord” Choir
Prayer, Announcements & Call for Offering Kim Hendrix
Offertory: “From the Rising of the Son” Exaltation
Doxology Congregation
Sermon Dr. Tim Thompson
Hymn #462: “Tis so Sweet to Trust in Jesus”..... Congregation
Benediction Dr. Tim Thompson
Postlude: “He Who Will Suffer God to Guide Him” (Bach) Kelley Garrett

SERMON NOTES

DRESS FOR SUCCESS

Ephesians 6:10-18 ¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ besides all these, taking the shield of faith, with which you can quench all the flaming darts of the evil one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸ Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.” (RSV)

SERMON NOTES CONTINUED

— Dr. Tim Thompson

Watch today’s sermon on WFRZ-TV, online at frazerumc.org/media or download the podcast at frazerumc.org/podcast. You may also order a CD of today’s service at the Connection Point desk.

MONDAY

JANUARY 25, 2016

WHAT IS YOUR ACHILLES HEEL?

James 4:7 “Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”

I read a devotional this week, the source of which I do not know. But it reminded me of something important. It said, “Even mature Christians have weaknesses in their spiritual armor that make them vulnerable to a wounded attack by the enemy of their souls. Our pride can provide the very opening needed for the sharp thrust of the devil’s dart. So can the love of money, a quick temper, a critical tongue, or chronic impatience. Temptation is simply enticement to think or say something that is contrary to God’s will. Temptation could come from a weak impulse or from a powerful desire. Temptation is anything that pulls us in a direction that God would not approve of or that God would not desire for our lives. That is precisely where Satan strikes. He is the master of deceit, and he strikes us with temptation telling us that it will be okay, that God won’t mind, and that we will be fine. Remember the ancient Greeks had a story of a warrior named Achilles. His mother had been warned that he would die of a wound so she dipped him as an infant in the river Styx. That was supposed to make him invincible, but she held him by one heel, which the protective waters didn’t cover. It was through that that he received his fatal wound. An important question for each of us to ask and to know the answer to is, “What is your Achilles heel?” What is your greatest weakness? Where can you be wounded spiritually? Where are you the most vulnerable to Satan’s fiery darts? If you know where you are the most vulnerable, then you know that is where you need to put up your greatest defense, and your greatest defense is the Lord and His armor. Put on the armor of God every single day. And when the devil comes close and attacks you at your Achilles heel, because you have on the armor of God, the devil will flee.
- Dr. Tim Thompson, Senior Pastor

TUESDAY

JANUARY 26, 2016

HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

Deuteronomy 30:19-20 “Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Oh, that you would choose life, that you and your children might live! Choose to love the Lord your God and to obey him and commit yourself to him, for he is your life.”

As Christians, we always see the future through the lens of hope. We are always excited and passionate about the future and what it holds. Our excitement is not due to our being naïve about humanity. The future is not promising because people are innately getting better—we’re not. The future is promising because through Christ “the light is already shining and the darkness will soon disappear.” The future is promising because God is “making all things new.” Our task is to have a relationship with the one who controls every future. In Deuteronomy, God’s people were given a promise and a warning. If they would center their lives around God and His mission, the future would be good. However, if they chose to live apart from Him and His purposes, their future would become bleak. The same is true for us; no one can hinder God’s future for us except ourselves.
- Rev. Brandon Dasinger/Teaching/Missions Pastor