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## Armor

### Part 7 – Sword of the Spirit

Pastor Ted Cunningham

Today, we close out this series called *Armor* with the last piece, the *Sword of the Spirit*. How many of you grew up going to Sunday school? How many of you remember sword drills? It was a really competitive time, and it was a time to really engage young people. If you don't know what a sword drill is, we would sit there and the teacher would yell out, "Ephesians 1: 6," The first person to find Ephesians 1: 6 and stand won. Then you got bitter with all your friends, and you would fight over who stood first. It was a really great use of Sunday school time, and it always put us in the mood for studying God's Word and worshipping together.

Today, as we talk about the sword of the spirit, I came back to that drill that we did all the time in Sunday school. But as we see today in the scripture... And Travis Brawner... I'm going to give credit where credit is due. I love what he said after the first service. He said, "Ted, you know the sword is meant for the enemy, not for people." I asked Travis to speak more to that. It's kind of like a conceal carry. Raise your hand if you are concealing right now? No, don't. Do not raise your hand. I was actually at a church yesterday and there was a big sign said *no conceal or carry*. I told the pastor I would lose half our church with that sign. We pastor a Bass Pro community church.

Travis said, "We don't walk into rooms just throwing this thing around on people and bullying people with it and beating people up or, as we would call it, thumping people. The sword of the Spirit is for us to stand in battle."

As we've been looking at Ephesians 6: 10-20, we're going to go through the first few verses again just to reorient us to where we've been. **10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.** We've learned we do not go into battle alone. Whatever battle is coming at you, your family, your marriage, this church, this community; whatever battle hits us, we don't have to go into battle alone. We go in with the Lord and his mighty power. **11 Put on the full armor of God...** So, we're not picking pieces here. We're not going to take a couple of pieces, we're putting all six pieces, as we've been studying.

**...so that you can take your stand...** We are not called, followers of Jesus, to back away from these battles, to retreat. We put on the full armor so that we can stand when the battle hits us. And what are we standing against? We see this throughout the whole text. **...against the devil's schemes.** And the devil's schemes haven't changed. He has one playbook that he brings to battle with each and every one of us.

**12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood...** So, we see today, with the sword of the Spirit, this sword of the Spirit is used to defeat the devil's evil schemes. **...but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.**

**13 Therefore put on the full armor of God...** At this church, we say it all the time. Jesus is your source, Satan is your enemy. Your spouse is not your source, and your spouse is not your enemy. Other people are not your source and they are not the enemy. Don't confuse. Jesus is your source. Satan is the enemy, so we put on the full armor of God **...so that when the day of evil comes...** Not if it comes, but when it comes **...you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.**

We've seen, from the very beginning of this series, the playbook that Satan uses, his schemes. Go all the way back to Genesis 3 and it starts with just **deny the Word of God**. When he told Adam and Eve, "You will not surely die." So, he denied God's word. He said, "Open your eyes, be illumined, see that there is a lot of other truth out there." And then what did Satan say? "By the way, you'll be God." And that's what we have today in our culture – a bunch of people running around trying to be God, determining their own truth.

And this is still his playbook. But most of the people I talk to in this church are never going to deny God's Word. We don't deny it outright, but let's look at some more of the schemes. We've said from the beginning that we do not want to be a pawn of Satan. We want to stand in battle when the day of evil comes. But we tend to **doubt God's Word**. We know what it says, we believe it, we say it's inherent, without error, infallible, inspired by God. I know what it says, but I'm really wondering is that what it really means. And we can begin to doubt God's Word.

And then we can **disobey God's word**. As parents, we know that when we ask our children to do something, we want an immediate response. We want immediate obedience because delayed obedience is disobedience. In the first service, a lady went nuts on that with a cheer. I'm like this is not a parenting talk. But we want to come to God's Word, the sword of the Spirit, read it and do it immediately. Not ponder it, not like should I do that? should I be living that way? If I want to live a godly life and it says don't do this or do this, should I or should I not? No. Read it and we will act upon it. We're not talking today about the sword of the Spirit so you can **debate** God's Word. There's a term for debating God's word and it's called Twitter. And twitter, at times, has become this toxic cesspool. I'm seeing it in denominations and with Christians. With pastors lately online. It's been incredible to watch pastors attacking other pastors.

After last week, I shared a story about my friend who I'm standing in battle with. It's always interesting... I didn't give any names, but you assumed who I was talking about. I had one buddy call me and say, "Thank you for sharing my story in the message." I was like, "You're welcome, but it wasn't your story. I wasn't talking about you." And then I had a pastor in town call me and say, "Hey, some of your people have told me that you used me as an illustration, so I went back and listened to the message. Thank you for sharing that." I go, "I wasn't talking about you." It's because we're all standing in battle. These battles hit us, so these stories that we share... Some of you are like this sounds like he's talking to me right now. Well, I am. And I'm talking to me.

I'm not coming to God's Word so I can just get more ammunition to shoot you down in a debate or to convince you of my point of view. I am wielding the sword of the Spirit so that I can go into battle. And when I detect error, when I get the devil's scheme, the lies, I'm ready, you're ready.

In Ephesians 6: 17... that's what we're looking at today. Last week, we looked at the helmet of salvation. We want to be secure in our salvation, certain so that we have courage and confidence in battle.

Today, we're looking at the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. So, for years at our church, we have used this illustration. I call it the US Bus. You can call it whatever you want, but it's what we use... If you're new to our church, this is what we use to teach who is driving the bus in the conversation, in our home. One day my kids will leave my home, get off of my bus and get on their own bus, and I tell them all the time, "When you leave and start your own family and you're at work, I want **scripture** in your driver's seat. I want the Word of God..." At this church, we will never put tradition in the driver's seat. It's in the front seat. It's got influence, but only the driver determines where we end up. So, we put scripture in the driver's seat.

**Experience** is what happens to you, what happens to me – this is great. By the way, experience, emotion, reason, tradition, all of these are influencers. They influence where we're headed, but ultimately the driver determines where we end up. Your experience is very valid. I can learn from your story. I can learn from your experience. But I never want your story to become my authority. I learn from it, it's on the bus, but I'm not going to put it in the driver's seat.

There are a lot of people today changing their view on scripture and what God teaches about marriage and family. We've looked at this. And the reason they've changed their view on this is because they put scripture over here in the passenger seat, they put experience from their family or from a child or a grandchild and they put in the driver's seat. And when you listen to them and you hear them share, I get the pain and I get the hurt; even emotion is up there with it. They reason what they're saying sometimes sounds good is because scripture is still in the front seat, but make no mistake, it's no longer driving the bus, the experience is. When I meet with couples, I can almost guarantee you every time a couple in crisis wants to meet, they've moved emotion from just being an influence on the bus to the driver's seat. And they are making decisions.

Today, we are talking about the Word of God being in the driver's seat. But this is not the primary word picture we want to use. We have used this word picture of a hand for years, probably for the first ten years of our church. We used to have classes offered before Starting Point – 101, 201, 301, and 401. It was about 12 hours of classes. Now, you join the church through Starting Point and some of our long-term members that have been here for 20 years come up to me all the time and they're like, "We sat through 12 hours to become a member of this church and now you do it over a bar-b-que in 45 minutes?" You're welcome.

This word picture that we taught in 201, the maturity class, is a much better image for today because we want you to get a firm grasp. We want you to hold tight to the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. And here's what we're after today. As we look through each one of these five, we want you to take a

step. We're always wanting you to take a step at this church. So, for some of you, your intake of the Word of God, the sword of the Spirit, is just hearing. And if your primary intake is what you get on Sunday morning at Woodland Hills, we encourage you today and want to implore you to take a step and go beyond just hearing... By the way, the reason *hearing* is the pinky finger is because that's the weakest finger you have. You want to go a little bit further and start reading, spending time each day in God's Word.

Some of you are hearing and reading and your next step is going to be to begin to study, to go deeper into the context and the understanding of the passage and who the author is and who the reader is in the original text and in that day. We were taught in seminary how to be a fly on the wall in that conversation or when that scripture or where that letter is being read.

Some of you do study well on your own. You do it in small group, but we're going to encourage you today to take a step toward memorizing and meditating as well.

Let's jump right into **hear**. Let's start with hear because this is where a lot of us will begin. In Acts 2: 14. I love this text. It's right after the Holy Spirit falls on the Day of Pentecost. He comes down and I just love it because Peter has to explain... The introduction to his sermon is, as everybody is speaking in tongues and people are watching this and the church is getting started. It just looks confusing to many people. Peter, in his introduction, has explain that they are not drunk; it's only 9:00 in the morning. And he is going to begin the message by quoting from the prophet Joel. He's going to talk about the coming Messiah and that the Messiah came, and he was here. He died for us, and he gives this beautiful message.

I want you to see what he says. **14 Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you;** I am going to tell you about Jesus, the one who died for your sins. I want to give you the gospel as clearly as I can. Your role in this explanation right now is what? ...**listen carefully to what I say.** I want to encourage you, as you step in here each week for this very first part, the hearing, just hearing the Word of God, to come in prepared. How do you do this?

I asked Amy years ago about listening in our marriage. I met her for lunch at Sugar Leaf and said, "Scale of 1 to 10, how am I doing as a listener in our marriage?"

And just like that, she said, "Five!"

I was like wow! I said, "Alright, why don't you take the lunch hour and think about it a little bit? I don't need an answer right away." My wife is really good at this. She bails me out when she can tell something is heavy on me or something is happening.

She goes, "Hey, listen, Ted, you want to know what moves you to an eight or a nine like that?"

I said, "What?"

She goes, "It happens just like that."

I go, "Tell me."

She goes, "When we have your undivided attention, when you lean in and you listen, you're not a five listener, you're an eight or nine listener at that point." Some of you are wondering if you can ever be a ten as a husband. Is it even possible? Do you know what moves me to a ten? This is true and this will help every man in here and it's not a marriage talk today, but it's going to lead you to what we're talking about with hearing. But if you want to go to a ten, all you have to say, after she speaks, is "Tell me more," and you are a ten husband. Let's give yourselves a hand. Just the guys. The ladies are like, "Wrong!"

It's my favorite Old Testament term when it comes to listening. It's incline the ear. I love that. Do you know what incline the ear is? Just lean in. Guys, you want to move to become an eight or nine listener, just lean in. But that means your mouth is closed. That means you're tech free, children free, distraction free. You're leaning in and you're listening. That's shows you care. The lament psalmist uses *incline the ear* to God. These are the three parts of the lament psalm. I'm hurting, the enemy is winning, God, you seem distant and angry; you're not listening. I'm feeling pain here and I don't know where you are. And what does the lament psalmist say? Incline your ear to me. I want you to hear what I'm saying.

I love it in Proverbs. I always picture Solomon sitting on the end of his son's bed talking to him. What does he say? "I need you to incline your ear to what I'm about to share with you. Incline your ear to instruction and to wisdom."

And then God speaks this to his children through the prophets. "You rebellious children, you stubborn, stiff-necked people, incline your ear to me and hear what I'm going to say." When we listen to sermons... And there are all sorts of ways that we hear the word of God. But we listen to sermons, podcasts, worship music. I want to encourage you. Lean in. Before you step in here each week, pray. We've talked about this a lot. Don't let your first question walking in be who's speaking today? Push that aside and walk in saying "God, I want to hear from you today. As your word is opened, as it is preached, I want to hear from you today."

Then when you leave, keep hearing it, process it. Go to lunch after this and talk about it, discuss it with your small group.

Here's the thing that hurts as a teacher and it hurts as a parent, but you are going to retain about 5% of what you hear. So, let's just go home now. Isn't that kind of sad? Most research tells us you are going to retain about 5% of what you hear, which means you need to take another step.

What's the next step? It's **read**. And we want you to read. For some of you, this is going to be the best step you take this week. You're going to read the scripture outside of a Sunday morning gathering. This is so important. We would call this being a self-feeder. Outside of church, outside of a small group gathering, learning and growing together.

Here's why it's so powerful to read. We need to understand the Word of God is alive and active. It gives you everything you need to walk through the battles of this life. ***Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even in dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*** – Hebrew 4: 12 This is why you need to be in it every day. Now I'm going to tell you that quiet time is always something... If you grew up in church, you heard the term quiet time... I'm not legalistic with this. I went to a school that the founder of the school... And I love him to death, but he would always say, "If you're not up and in the Bible by 6:00 am, you are out of the will of God." That's pretty strong, isn't it? I'm just telling you that you need to be reading outside of this. Not everybody... Listen, I've been with some of you at early morning breakfast. 6:00 am is not your best time. I'm just going to be honest with you. Others, 6:00 am is your best time. Find time in the day.

And we have so many great resources today to help us get into God's Word and to get a firm grip on the sword of the Spirit. We have Right Now Media that our church is part of. We pay a fee every year that allows you to download so much stuff. The Bible App is free. You can download it right now. And if I see people on their phone, I'm going to assume you're doing that and not playing solitaire. But the Bible app has reading plans, it has devotions. You can wake up in the morning and it's going to have something sent to your phone. You can be like *let me hear from God today, let me read today, let me see what today is about.* The Bible App. I have it on my phone. I love it. You can download the apps where a guy with a British accent is going to read the Bible to you as you drive down the road. We have so much available to use today. I want to encourage you to read. But even with reading, we go from 5% retention to 15%. Your like *wow this is encouraging; you're really picking us up today, Ted.*

That's why we need to **study**. That's the next one. For some of you who are hearing and reading, we want to encourage you to take the next step of studying. I love how Paul shares this with young Timothy in 2 Timothy 2: 15, ***15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.*** We want to know what God's Word says.

By the way, this is so important to understand about Bible study methods. God only meant one thing by what he said. You're like *why are there so many other interpretations?* I need you to know that he only meant one thing. Now there are hundreds of applications that you can make, but this is why we need to study, and we need to see it in its original context, and we need to understand what is going on. It's why I recommend not just studying bibles, but also commentaries. This is my favorite; I've had it for 25 years. I had to use it in seminary. It has a couple of my professors that were a part of it. This is one volume. It's *Nelsons New Illustrated Bible Commentary*. Go on Amazon today. I think you will find used copies of it for \$25.00. What a great companion to have with your Bible that when you get to a text that you're reading and you decide this is somewhere I want to camp out for a little bit. I want to know a little bit more that you can dig in, read more about the author, more about the city, more about the people, more about the context. So, a commentary study Bible is a great way because once you start studying, the number is growing. We're not there 100% yet, but you're going to be at about 35% retention.

My friend, Paul Purvis, was my next-door neighbor for years. He was the pastor at First Baptist Forsyth. He now pastors at Mission Hills in Temple Terrace Florida. He said this week and I love him; I have to

quote him. He said, "Most Christians are educated beyond their obedience." We're not studying just so we can win debates and fill our head with knowledge, for knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. They do not need more depth, they need more do."

So, as we study, if you're going to take that step and begin to study, understand that the sword of the Spirit is used for battle, not to bully.

Last week... And I hope my friend is back. He's been coming the last couple of months. We've just started to develop a friendship. He came up after the second service and he goes, "You know what? I want to learn the Bible. He is right at 70 years old. He said, "I just want to know it." He's a very bright guy, very educated guy. He has become a dear friend in the matter of just a couple of months. I just warmed up to him. We can help with that. Wouldn't we want that from every single member of Woodland Hills Family Church, and our guest as well, to just lean in and dig into it?

Why is it important to know the word of God at that level? I don't know if you saw it this week, but I was having fun with it. I didn't do any posts with it but did anybody see this going viral and everybody was posting red flags. They are pretty hilarious. My favorite ones were single people putting one-liners from guys they were dating or girls they were dating and then a bunch of red flags going leave that relationship immediately. That's what that meant.

I overuse emojis. I see a whole group of young people here. Who overuses emojis, let's just be really honest. Thank you. It's not just the old people and your parents. But the red flag. But then pastors started doing it. I was having a ball watching pastors give lines that they get from church members or guests and then putting red flags behind it. I probably hit the heart button a few too many times. I felt very validated, I'll be really honest with you, through the whole thing.

My one friend in Jacksonville posted this. *When some one comes up to you and says, "The Lord told me to tell you..."* and then all these red flags. Run. They probably ain't quoting scripture; they're probably going to correct something that you did. I haven't had one person tell me that today after putting this up, so we may put these in big posters out front.

Do you know why we study and why we get this much into the word of God? It's so when the lies come at us, the red flags go up. We can say, "Whoa, I think that is a lie. That is not true. That is not true." And again, it's not so we can start killing people, but we... I love what John Piper says. "The sword of the Spirit..." Remember, the sword only has one purpose; it's to kill. And it kills the deadly sinful deeds that we live out. It tears down the lies that come at us. This is why we need to know the word of God and go to a new level with it. We need to study it so that when we are able to detect the lie and we are able to have that red flag go up, we want that kind of radar for everybody.

The last thing I saw this week... I had to put it into the message. Silver Dollar City put this: "What's cinnamon bread? (followed by a lot of red flags). And if you aren't on Twitter, the only reason you need to be on Twitter is for Silver Dollar City's Twitter account. It's the best thing they've got going. A great sense of humor. This is basically saying, "If you don't know about their cinnamon bread, we can't be friends."

The next one is **memorize**. Some of you use all of these great tools, you study, have study bibles. You've been hearing the word of God for years. You've been reading it and you've been studying it. But today may be that jolt we all need to begin memorizing it again, memorizing the Word of God. The scripture says, in Psalm 119: 11, ***I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*** That's what having the sword of the Spirit does, killing those sinful deeds within us. This is scripture in your mind and heart. If you memorize scripture, what is your retention rate? It's 100%.

That's why years ago, Stephanie Watson and I created these family devo cards. They are A to Z. I think we did this 12 or 13 years ago, so there are a lot of new people at our church that are unaware of these. We wanted to get God's word into the minds and hearts of our children. I think our kids were like 5 and 7 when we started this. If you will follow these... I call them hooked on phonics for the Bible because there are critters, things from nature to help you memorize scripture. And for parents here today, we're going to give you a set of these. If you are new to our church and you've never gone through these, there are going to be stacks of them out there at the Welcome Desk. Please swing by and pick one up. You get a lot of my tone in these with it. Stephanie did an unbelievable job illustrating them all.

You know my passion for hard work. That's the A, the ant. So, we would start every night at A and work up to the next letter. In a couple of months, your kids could have 26 passages of scripture memorized. ***Go to the ant you sluggard; consider his ways and be wise.*** And we would talk about hard work. Each card has a little talk time, a main point of hard work, and then discussion questions.

The B is ***Kind words are like honey, sweet to the soul and healthy to the body.*** Again, I have a 16 and an 18-year-old who have been through these. I don't walk around with flash cards with a 16 and an 18-year-old, but we got them. They are in our hearts, they're in our minds. My encouragement to you is to begin... We say for preschool and elementary age. This is our honor card. How to speak words of high value over each member of the family.

The C is the camel. This is our fight against materialism. ***It's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter heaven.*** And we talk about less stuff.

The D is the dog. I love the dog. ***As a dog returns to its vomit, so a fool repeats it's folly.*** I love to ask my kids, "Do we allow mistakes in the Cunningham home?" Yes. "What do we try to avoid at all cost?" Making the same mistake over and over and over again. We don't want to be dogs returning to the vomit.

The E is the eagle. Unlimited power

The F is the fox. Healthy marriage.

Pick this up. Tomorrow, start with the A and work up to the next letter with each new day, but tonight, just for fun, I give you permission to go straight to the V. I love the V. So, if you have a five-year-old daughter, get her all tucked into bed, all comfy, and right before she dozes off, I want you to read the V card. Proverbs 30: 17 says, ***The eye that mocks a father, that scorns and aged mother will be pecked***

**out by the ravens of the valley and will be eaten by the vultures.** “Night, Night, baby girl, you sleep good.” You don’t let her go to sleep until you read the card.

I have a little bit of my tone in here that you are going to hear, but having your eyes pecked out by ravens and eaten by vultures is a word picture for death. Not listening to your parents, making fun of your dad, treating your mom as a servant, will cause you much pain as an adult. The Bible is very clear that we are supposed to honor our parents even after we leave home. It’s the first commandment with a promise. God gives us parents for our lives, to go out into the world. When you listen to their instruction, it helps you throughout your entire life. I have parents that after an event, they would take the V out and they put it on the refrigerator. And whenever there is a discipline moment, now when they send kids to time out, Mom goes, “Go get the V and get in the corner.”

If you don’t have a set of these, Woodland Hills would love to get that to you today. Go home, start with the V, give our children nightmares tonight; it’s going to be a lot of fun.

As we’re talking about memorization, Adam Donyes sent me this great video.

[Video Plays] *Memorizing scripture guards my mind, making it easier for me to detect error and the world is filled with error because the God of this world is a liar. Memorizing scripture enables me to hit the devil in the face with a force he cannot resist to protect myself and my family from his assaults. What are you hitting him with? He is millions of times stronger than you. And he hates you and your family and your marriage and this church and God. How anybody walks through this devil-ruled world without a sword in their hand is beyond me.*

Ted Cunningham: Now, some of you will not be able to focus the rest of the message because of one misspelled word. Stay focused the rest of the message. We memorize so we can meditate.

I love Deuteronomy 6: 4-7, **4 Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.** There is a God, there’s only one God, he is the Lord, he is our Lord. **5 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. 6 These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts.** Mom and dad, before you try to get any of this on the hearts of your children, it starts with your heart. Because what’s on your heart will find it’s way onto the heart of your child. They see everything, they hear everything, they forget nothing, and then they repeat. This is why verse 7 in Deuteronomy goes on to say what? in Deuteronomy 6? **7 Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.**

Begin memorizing scripture so you can **meditate** on it. We read this in Psalm 1, **Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, 2 but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night. 3 That person is like a tree planted by streams of water...**

Years ago... It’s one of the best illustrations I’ve ever seen before my very eyes. Gary Smalley had a pond at his house, and he planted two willow trees. There was the pond that was probably 100 yards from Taney Como and the two willow trees. This willow tree, the same size when they were planted, was

three or four times bigger than the other one. I said, "What is going on here?" He walked me over to it and you could see the roots from this tree had made their way to the pond. The other one, for some reason, I don't know why, I'm not a horticulturist, but its roots were heading toward Taney Como and they hadn't gotten there yet. The other one did not have a root system by a good water supply like this one and as soon as this one hit the water, it grew fast. And this is exactly what it does when we put our roots into the scripture. And we don't move away from it, we don't shy away from it, we don't dismiss it, we don't deny it, we don't learn it just to debate it, but we have our roots deep in here so we can be like that person planted by streams of water **...which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.** This is the transforming power of God's Word within us.

I asked Joe White, a member of our teaching team... I don't know anyone who has memorized more scripture than Joe. I don't know anyone who has inspired believers to memorize and meditate on scripture more than Joe. I'm grateful he's a part of our church, I'm grateful he's a part of our teaching team. I asked him this week, "Hey, would you send me a quote." Now if you've been here for a while, you know Joe and he always likes to give you a little gift when you leave. I said, "Joe, give me a quote about memorizing and meditating. His thumbs went to work. He said, "This will only work if you give everybody a bag of M&Ms." I'm so sorry because you just got all excited, didn't you? We're giving you cards instead. But swing by and get some M&Ms if you want to do that later today. He got me the quote pretty late; I didn't have time to run buy 5,000 bags of M&Ms for everybody. Here's what he did say and I love this. This is the heart Joe has for memorizing and meditating and encouraging us to do the same. *"Memorizing and meditating on scripture brings intimacy with God, freedom from sin, emotional peace to the heart, and rest to the weary soul."*

This is why we spend so much time encouraging you to put scripture in the driver's seat. And today, through hearing, reading, studying, memorizing, and meditating, that you would take a firm grasp on the sword of the Spirit, and you would not stand in battle weaponless, that you would know the Word of God and you would know how to use it properly and correctly. And when those red flags come up, you know and you can detect the error and you can detect the lie.

I'm going to close by reading 2 Timothy 3 - **12 In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.** Do you know what the word persecuted there means? It means to be hunted. We've said it from the beginning of this series. When you take your stand in battle for the Lord, you will be hunted. You will end up on Satan's radar. And if you spend your days trying to avoid his radar, this is not God's plan for your life. You stand firm in battle. You put on the full armor of God and you stand against the devil's schemes.

You will be hunted, you will be persecuted **13 ...while evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it...** A godly mother and a godly grandmother putting the word of God... They didn't have these cards, but we're wanting to do the same thing. **15 and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures...** You've known the Word of God. Continue in that. **...which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in**

***righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*** And all God's people said... Amen.

Father, it's in the name of Jesus that we come to you today. For the one that has never placed faith in Jesus that today would be the day of their salvation, that the Holy Spirit would call them by name right now. They would confess their sin, they would confess with their mouth Jesus is Lord, believe in their heart that he has been raised from the dead, and they would call upon the name of the Lord to be saved. That today is the day of their salvation.

I pray for this church family that we all would take one step today. I know for me personally, it's to spend more time memorizing and meditating because I can get stuck at that study piece. That this would just spark something in us.

As we close out this great text that we've learned so much from in the last seven weeks, we want for every believer in Christ Jesus in this church to stand in battle with the full armor of God against the devil's schemes.

We pray that in the name of Jesus, and everyone agreed and said... Amen.