

Worship on April 26, 2020

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Announcements:

. This recording is for the worship of Sunday, April 26, 2020 because of the closure of church building due to Coronavirus Pandemic.

. This is the second sermon of the series called The Armour of God. With the Armour of God, let us continue to stand strong in the Lord

Let us worship God with singing!

SONG – There is power in the blood

Would you be free from the burden of sin? There's power in the blood, power in the blood; Would you oe'r evil a victory win? There's wonderful power in the blood.

chorus:

There is power, power, Wonder-working power In the blood of the Lamb;
There is power, power, Wonder-working power In the precious blood of the Lamb.

Would you be free from your passion and pride? There's power in the blood, power in the blood; Sin stains are lost in its life giving flow; There's wonderful power in the blood.

(chorus)

Would you do service for Jesus, your King? There's power in the blood, power in the blood; Would you live daily His praises to sing? there's wonderful power in the blood.

(chorus)

Prayer for worship

You are King and you are Lord of all. You are powerful God and you are worthy to be praised. You own our souls and you purchased our lives. Thank you for the blood shed for us. Thank you for your love. Thank you for calling us and thank you for bringing us here in your presence.

Heavenly Father God, as we worship, please come into our hearts and touch our hearts. Change our hearts, so we may be like you. so we may be holy, different from our past and different from our old sins. We long to be with you. Be praised

and be glorified through our worship. In Jesus' precious and powerful name, we pray. Amen.

Scripture: Ephesians 6:10-18

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

13 Therefore take up the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

14 Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness.

15 As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace.

16 With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

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

18 Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints.

This is the word of the Lord / Thanks be to God.

Title: Stand Strong

When taking a subway or a bus or any public transportation, do you know what people do? Almost everyone is playing with their smartphones. They check

their emails, text messages, play games, and talk on the phone. Usually, they spend time with their phones.

I love to watch them. I am interested in phones. I love to see what kinds of phones they are using, and what kinds of cases they use as well as their screen protectors. Also, I like to see what kinds of games they are playing and what kinds of apps they are using. There are so many different kinds of phones out there, and not many people use the same kinds of phones. However, there is one thing common for everyone. No one uses their phones as it has been released from the factory. No one uses it as it comes out from the factory. All people download some apps according to their needs and purposes. Does anyone attending this online worship have a smartphone? Then, anyone didn't download any apps? Does anyone using the phones as the factory released condition? **No one.** If you use smartphone, you have some kinds of purposes of using it. Or you do something with your phone with different apps.

When iPhone 4 was first released, my wife and I purchased the new black sleek beautiful iPhones on the same day. It was so popular and it was very hard to get it. But, we had to have it! And, we needed two. So, we phoned around phone shops and we travelled around the city to get our phones. We started from North York, to midtown, to downtown, and to Scarborough. Finally, we could get our phones in Scarborough. So, same color, same screen protector, and same price. But, each of us downloaded different apps as time passed. They were the same phones, but at the same time, they were totally different. Because the arrangements of the apps are different on the screen, and the apps installed on the phones were different.

I talked about smartphones, there outward appearances and inside programs or inner identities. **Doesn't it sound similar to something we know very well?**

The color of the cases and the designs are different by the preferences of users. And the inner programs are different by the purposes of users. Some want to play games. Then, the phone will be full of different games. Some want to do some financial works, then the phone will be full of the financial related apps. Some want to use their phones as their camera, some wants to use their phones to watch some moives... all different. **What do I want to talk about using the phone analogy?** Phones dress differently and have different focus of their life. Different dreams and passions. Aren't they similar to us, human? We have our own preferences of how to dress. We have different passions on what we focus on. Some focus on fashion, some focus on history, some focus on food, some focus on children... the list goes on and on and on...

What if our Heavenly Father is personalizing us just like we personalize our phones? What **kinds of apps** does God want us to have? What **kinds of condition of our being** does God want us to be? These two are the main questions as we begin our sermon series, "the Armour of God." As the beginning of the series, I will draw a big picture of the Scripture today. From next week, I will talk about each element of the Armour of God. Today is the second introduction.

We are going to think about these **two questions**. **What kinds of apps God wants to install in us** like we do it in our phones... And **what kinds of conditions or status or images of us God wants from us**? In other words, why do we put the armour of God? What does God want us to do when we put the full armour of God? These are the questions we want to talk about. tyoday

First, if we are like the smartphones, what kinds of programs would God want to download in us? What does God want us to have? What kinds of functions, strengths, tendencies, or characteristics does God want us to have? Let's take a

look at v10-11. **10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.** Be strong in the power of the Lord and be equipped with the whole armour of God. In the context of smartphones, “download all the required apps, download all the programs you need, so that you can do what you need to do, so that you can stand against your enemies.” What do we have in us? What kinds of programs or strengths or what kinds of characteristics do we have in us? What do we focus with our lives? What are the stuffs that fill our lives? What do we think in our everyday lives? Or what are we thinking right now or just before this worship service?

Few years ago, I was invited to my friends' home. She told us a story about her co-worker. This guy in my friend's work makes so much income. He makes enough money that government doesn't approve his children's daycare subsidy. But, because he doesn't report his full income, he sends his children to daycare for free. Learning his story, we said something like this. “If we didn't have Jesus Christ in our hearts, we could get some free money like this person through some dishonest ways and we would have some extra money to enjoy our lives. With dark money. Huhhuhhuh...” We just chuckled. This person, the coworker of my friend, is always thinking about getting some extra money with whatever the ways are. Whether it is legal or illegal, honest or not.. if he isn't caught, everything is good. But, is he really okay?

If we don't put the armour of God on our lives, there will be no God's holy desires or faithfulness or loyalty in God. We would think about all kinds of means to get what we want. Filling up our own desires. Making some extra comfort through whatever the ways might be. God says to us to put on the whole armour of God! V14-17 lists the six elements of the whole armour of God.

1-The Belt of Truth, 2-the Breastplate of Righteousness, 3-shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace, 4-the Shield of Faith, 5-the Helmet of Salvation, and, 6-the Sword of the Spirit. God wants us to be equipped with all these six pieces of the armour of God. From next week, we will take a look at, one by one. God wants us to put the whole armour of God. Every single item, he doesn't want us to miss. This is God's promise. It's not done by our own power, but God's own power, upon our lives. We are all worthy to put these armour of God. God didn't say, "you, who elders of church, put the armour of God." "You, who pastors, put the armour of God!" "You, who do this and do that, put the armour of God!" **NO!!!!** God says to all of us. God wants all of us to put everything whether we are small in faith, or giant warriors of faith. God invites all of us to put the whole armour of God. *When we use a smartphone, we want to download good apps, right?* We are God's precious smartphones, God wants to use us in his own purposes. Good purposes! So, God wants to install the full armour of God in us. Please believe this passion of God for all of us and be encouraged that we are going to put the full armour of God through this sermon series.

For this week's sermon, I introduced two questions. What does God want to install in us? So far, I gave the answer for the first question. God wants all of us to put the full armour of God. Everyone of us. Amen?!

So, the second point is **why?** What does God want us to do when we put the full armour of God? To answer this second question, we have to slowly read the passage one more time. Imagine a boy is standing right in front of you. You are dressing him with the whole armour of God. Listen to this.

*10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the **whole armor of God**, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. 14 Stand therefore, and fasten the **belt of truth** around your waist, and put on the **breastplate of righteousness**. 15 As **shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace.** 16 With all of these, take the **shield of faith**, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 Take **the helmet of salvation**, and the **sword of the Spirit**, which is the word of God. 18 Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints.*

What is the image you get after reading this passage? A boy is standing in front of us. He doesn't have anything on him yet. Let's put the armour of God to this person one by one. What's the first? 1) the belt of truth, 2) the breastplate of righteousness, 3) shoe for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace OR shoe of the gospel of peace, 4) the shield of faith, 5) the helmet of salvation, and 6) the sword of the Spirit.

So, this person put the whole armour of God.

What is he doing right now? Is he sleeping with the whole armour of God on his bed? Is he eating with the whole armour of God? Is he reading a book with the whole armour of God? What's he doing right now?

Look at v11. “Put on the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. God wants him to take his stand. V13, “Therefore take up the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. In New Living Translation, “Therefore, put on every piece of God’s armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm.”

What does it mean? The battle didn’t happen yet. But, what does it mean when God says, to us, to stand firm? **It’s to be ready.** Do you remember the 10 virgins in the gospel story? Five of them had their lamp with oil, but the other five didn’t have oil because they thought they had a lot of time to prepare until the bridegroom comes. But, when the bridegroom came, the five virgins without oil weren’t ready and they were thrown away into the darkness. They weren’t ready when they had to be ready. God says to us to be ready for the day of evil. Otherwise, just like the 5 virgins without oil, we weren’t be able to do what we need to do.

Few years ago, in the winter time, it snowed so much, so I drove my wife to the subway station. From my apartment to the subway station, it’s mostly downhill. We didn’t have any problem getting to the Subway station. But, on the way back home, my car wouldn’t go forward. The tires were worn out and the tread was all gone. After a long struggle in the snow, I came back home taking four hours. It’s about 5-7 minute drive usually. I wasn’t ready to drive in the snow. This is a perfect example of not being ready.

We can consider ourselves being ready for anything. But, like the 5 virgins without lamp oil and like my worn out tire experience in the snow, we might not be ready although we think we are ready. We can drive out in a snow day, but we are going to be stuck in the snow when we don’t have proper tires. I am a good driver,

even in the snow. So, I thought, snow wouldn't be any problem for me to drive around, even on the snow day. But, when I wasn't properly equipped, it caused a big problem whether I am a good driver or not.

Those who have phones, do you charge your phone every day? When you have only 7% of the battery left, what do you do? Of course, you would charge your phone, right? But, why? Why do we charge our phones? Otherwise, we cannot play our favorite games on our phones. If it's not charged, we cannot answer any phone calls. Even though we downloaded the best apps on our phones, when it's not charged, it's no use. It's meaningless.

Putting on the full armour of God is very important. However, if we do not stand with the readiness of the evil days, then God won't be able to use us. When we put on the armour of God, we should be standing our ground with readiness. *Galatians 5:1 says this. This is English Standard Version, "For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery." NIV says, "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery."*

Sisters and brothers in St. Andrew's, I hope and pray that you can put on the whole armour of God and stand on your ground with readiness. We are going to look at the details of each piece from next week. Remember that we are all invited to put on the whole armour of God and we are to stand our ground with readiness.

Let us pray

Loving God, thank you for being with us here today. Thank you for this opportunity to worship you and get closer to you with our sincere hearts. Father God, we want to thank you that you called us yours own and you love us and you strengthen us with your power. Now, with your power, with the armour of God, we

will stand strong in this world. We will proclaim your praise and we will protect the truth. Be with us and remind us that we live not by our own power, but yours.

Continue to pray for the Prayer of the people

God of heaven and earth, we pray for our church. There are people who are in need of your peace and power and healing and encouragement and love and grace and comfort. God, our Father, come into our hearts. Visit each of our lives, and fill us with your presence. Fill our hearts with your love. Shine your light upon our hopelessness, and teach us who you are and who we really are. King of kings and Lord of lords, we are experiencing difficulties and challenges. It's not easy to stand firm. That is why we are here. We are relying upon you. We are desperate for you. Help us. Open our eyes and hearts, so we may experience you in this hardship.

We pray for this coronavirus pandemic situation. Have mercy upon us. Calm our fears. Raise up your church and let us shine your light with boldness to this confused and depressed world. You made us the salt and the light of the world. Let us be what we truly are and let us function as what we ought to function.

We pray for the leaders of countries. Let them cooperate each other and let them take care of each other's needs, so as one, help them to find the best ways to overcome this coronavirus. Give them your wisdom, so that they can save as many lives as possible. Also, we pray for the researchers for the vaccine. Help them find vaccine and give them insight and wisdom. We pray for the people who are in hospitals, protect them as they face dangers everyday. Equip them with proper protections and help them stand strong physically and mentally and spiritually. Use them to provide your love to the people who are most vulnerable. Also, pour out your wisdom upon students who are studying at home to prepare their future. Give them endurance and positive minds. We need your help Lord. Please stop this

Pandemic situation and restore our lives. We long to follow you. Strengthen us, so we can stand strong. In Jesus' precious and powerful name. We pray. Amen.

Song – **Jesus we enthrone you**

Jesus we enthrone you we proclaim you are king

Standing here in the midst of us, we raise you up with our praise

And as we worship build your throne and as we worship build your throne

And as we worship build your throne Come Lord Jesus and take your place

Benediction

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, And the Love of God, And the intimate fellowship of the Holy Spirit, Be with us all, now and always. Amen.

Ponder Upon Questions:

1. What are you equipped with?
2. What do you want to be equipped with?
3. What does it look like when you are standing firm and strong in the Lord?