

The Armour of God (Belt of Truth)

Ephesians 6:14

Pastor Jeremy Cagle, May 9, 2021

Well, before we get started in our sermon this morning, I just want to mention that in a few weeks, we have a guest speaker joining us here in a few weeks, we have an old friend and that is George Crawford from Grace Advance. For those of you who are new to us, our church was started with an organization called Grace Advance. It's the church-planting arm of Grace Community Church in Los Angeles, the church-planting arm of John MacArthur's ministry there. They were very instrumental in the early years of our church, many of you remember that. But they helped us to find a pastor, they helped us to create an elder board, write a vision statement, do all sorts of things. And one of the men who was involved in that was George Crawford. George is a retired judge from LA County, I lovingly refer to him as 'the Judge'. So the Judge is coming. But he has served as an elder there for 20 years. And he's been involved in several church plants. I asked him to talk to you about that. But the Grace Advance ministry has recently planted another church in British Columbia, far north of here, thinking, I don't want to quote the name of it, I lost the name in my mind, another one has been planted in Alberta, in La Crete, kind of the northern part of Alberta there. And so they've been very involved in spreading the gospel here in Canada. And he's going to be talking about that on May 23. So if you want to mark that on your calendars, George will be with us on Sunday morning, May 23, we'll put him on the screen up here, up here on the internet, virtually, over the computer. But this should be a real encouragement for us. Because it reminds us that we don't stand alone in the battle. And sometimes it may feel like that. Sometimes you may feel like we're alone when we're outside in a tent, meeting on a farm. But the reality is that we have friends, we have those who stand with us. And we're going to be looking at that here in a couple of weeks on May 23.

And with that said, while we're talking about friends in the church and the battle we have in the Christian life, I want to invite you to turn in your Bibles to a book that talks about that. It talks about the battle that we face as Christians and that's the book of Ephesians. If you would open your Bibles to the book of Ephesians, chapter 6. While you're turning there this morning, we're continuing our study of one of the most well known passages in the Bible, one of the most popular ones because it's on the Armor of God. Ydean just prayed for the crazy world we live in today, but it's been said, 'This world is so crazy that earplugs won't help me, I need the armor of God.' And that's what this passage is about. If you want to read with me in Ephesians 6, verse 10, Paul writes this and he says:

“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that

you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, **HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH**, and **HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**, and having shod **YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE**; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take **THE HELMET OF SALVATION**, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

We'll stop the reading there. Just to say a few words about that, as you read that, you can tell that the theme of this passage is warfare. The theme of this passage is the great battle that we're engaged in as believers, because verse 11 mentions the devil. It mentions him by name. And in verse 12, mentions the rulers and powers and world forces of this darkness, which is a reference to the demons, those who do the devil's bidding. And anytime you read about them, you know that as a Christian, you are in a battle. You're in a fight. Because they're God's enemy. They're God's opponent, and now that you are with God, and you're saved and you're one of God's children, they're your opponent, too. We often don't look at it this way, but before you were saved, you were on the devil side. Before you were saved, you were one of his children. Now that you're saved you're one of God's children and the devil is against you. You have a great enemy in him. Paul puts this in here, he puts it in at the end of the book of Ephesians, to remind you that this won't be easy. All the things you've been learning in the book of Ephesians are not going to be simple, they're going to be hard because the devil is against you.

We often think of the devil as a passive creature, someone who kind of sits on the sidelines, just sort of waiting to pounce, but he's not passive at all. He's a very busy devil. And in order to defeat him, you're going to have to fight. You know, we don't talk about this a lot today, we don't hear a lot about the devil in our circles, maybe because the doctrine is often abused. And there's so many bizarre ideas out there, about Satan and the demons. But it's interesting, if you study the most popular books in the Christian world of the last 50 years or so, many of them have been written on this topic, they've been written on the subject of spiritual warfare. It's captured the attention of a lot of people. And they talk about a lot of things such as generational curses, or the idea that you can be cursed generationally, you can be cursed biologically, because of your ancestors in the sins that they committed. And they talk about praying a hedge of protection around yourself, this idea of fraying a wall of protection around you and your family to keep the devil out, keep them far away. They talk about the demons and how to name them and how to identify them and put them in a hierarchy. You can even find charts in some books about the demons. But the interesting thing in those books is that they often don't talk about this, they don't talk about sin. They don't talk about the fight that's going on in your own wicked flesh. Because they talk about curses, and they talk about hedges, and they talk about the charts of the demons but... because for them, the battle is all on the outside, it's all external. Because the assumption is that people are good and the devil is bad. People are pure and righteous and holy and the devil is not. So in order to beat him, you just have to keep him away. But if you notice in the book of Ephesians, as you read this passage, one thing that jumps out at you is that the battle is far worse than that. The battle is far more significant, because in this books, it says you have an enemy on the inside of you. Not just out there, the war is on the inside.

Because your flesh is on the inside, your sin is on the inside. While the devil can never possess a Christian and take him over and make him do anything, he can still tempt us. As a matter of fact, remember the Garden of Eden when he's talking to Eve. It's a very interesting conversation, because all he does is talk and she falls. And it's the same way here. This is why the battle is so ugly, it's so nasty, because it goes where you go. But the good news is you can defeat him, you can have victory over the devil through the power of God, if you put on His armor. That's what this passage is about. If you wear the armor of God, you can defeat this enemy that's on the inside. And as Paul describes this, he goes into seven pieces of armor here. In the passage I just read to you, there's seven weapons that God gives you to help you in the battle. We're going to be looking at these one at a time. But the first one is the belt of truth. If you read verse 13, again, it says this, it says, "Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth."

I'll say a few words about this in a moment, we're going to walk through what it says. But if you notice the word 'belt' is not found in some of your translations. In the NASB version, it's not in there. I think in the English Standard Version, you see the word belt in there. But it wasn't in the Greek because everyone understood what this was talking about here. Because your loins is just another way of saying your waist, or the middle part of you, which can only be guarded with a belt. It can only be held up with a strap or a rope of some kind, which is what this is referring to. People in the Middle East wore long flowing robes. They had a very different dress code than we have today. They wore very, very baggy clothing, very loose clothing. And in order to fight they had to gird it up. In order to go to combat they had to tuck it into a belt. Otherwise they would trip on it and they would fall. And Paul says, in a similar way, you have to do the same thing as a Christian. You have to do the same thing in spiritual warfare. You have to put on the belt of truth. It's the first thing you have to do when you fight. It's the first thing you have to do when you face the enemy. The word 'truth' here, it's the Greek word 'aletheia', which means something that is true or sincere or genuine. In the way it's worded here, it refers to your soul. Or the middle part of you where the ancients thought your soul was. That's what needs to be genuine. That's what needs to be true. If you want to fight the battle. In other words, you can't be a hypocrite. You can't be a liar, because the devil is a liar. He's trying to trick you. And so in order to defeat him, you can't go that route. You have to wear a belt of truth. I mentioned this because we've all known people who've done this before, they've tried to fake it in the Christian life. Because they look like us. And they talk like us, and they do the things that we do. They come to church, read their Bibles, but they don't mean, they're not sincere. So when a time of temptation comes, they fall, right? They blow it. Paul says you can't do that as a Christian, you can't go that route, you've got to be true. I also mentioned this because we've known people who've done this as well, they've gotten lazy in the battle. They've gotten apathetic, so they're not girding their loins, they're not tucking the robes in. So when the battle comes, they're not ready for that either. Paul says you want to build your life on the truth.

You know, one of the things you find with new Christians is they really struggle with this. And if you've been around a new believer before, but new believers, they have a hard time fighting sin, because they

thought it would be so easy for them when they became a Christian. I think it's because the way we presented it to them. I think it's because of the way we sold it to them, but they thought it'd be a piece of cake. And when the sin comes, they're shocked. And it isn't long before they go back to the same old habits they were doing before. Paul says you shouldn't be shocked when the battle comes. You shouldn't be surprised, you need to expect it and you expect it by starting off with this, you put on this belt, which is what we're going to talk about this morning. So if you're taking notes in Ephesians 6, we're going to look at three benefits to wearing the belt of truth. So that's our outline for today. That's what we're talking about. If you're taking notes in Ephesians 6:14, we're going to look at three benefits to wearing the belt of truth. And we're going to talk about this because each of these pieces of armour comes with its own benefits. They come with their own advantages. And especially the first one here in the list. Because nothing else matters, if you don't have this. Nothing else matters if you don't stand on the truth. In fact, this is the problem of the modern church today. It keeps wavering, right? You guys know what I'm talking about? Modern church, it keeps bouncing around from this thing to the next. I'm 40 years old now. And I've lost track of the movements that have swept through Christianity in Northern America. I can't even keep up with them anymore. People call me on the phone, "Have you heard about this thing or that thing?" I mean, I can't keep up with it. Paul says here, you can't fight a battle like that, you've got to stand on something. You need to stand on the truth. And we're going to talk about that with three benefits to the belt of truth.

The first one is that **it surrounds you**. The first benefit to wearing the belt of truth is that it surrounds you, which means it covers every part of you. The one thing about your belt that's different from other parts of armour is that it doesn't leave anything exposed because it goes from the front to the back. It's the only piece of equipment that does that in the list. And if you read in verse 13, it says, "Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth." If you notice, this passage starts off with the word 'therefore', which points you back to what was said before. It points you back to what was said earlier in verse 12. When Paul says this in verse 12, he says, "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places." So in other words, Paul says, this is why the armour is necessary. This is why you have to have it because there's a war going on with all of these creatures. Just to explain that the word 'struggle', "our struggle is not against flesh and blood." That's the Greek word 'pale', which refers to a wrestling match. It's an interesting word because the Romans had a particular fondness for that sport, they loved wrestling. One Roman writer named Plutarch tells us it was the most famous one at the Olympics, people came from miles around to watch the wrestling match, because it was just one man against another. It was just one combatant versus another one. They believed it was a great test of manhood. --- , that sort of thing. And it ties in wonderfully with what Paul says here. Because in verse 14, he says, stand firm, having girded your loins with truth, and what he means there is that the Romans would often fight naked in the Olympics, they would often wrestle with no clothes on because they would be torn off or ripped off, that kind of thing. But in actual battle, they wouldn't do that, in an actual battle, they would wear something, but in order to

keep from getting a torn off, they would wear a belt. They would keep themselves together with some kind of rope or leather strap of some kind. And the Roman army soldier's belt would often be more than that as well, it would be used to hold up his clothes, but it would hold up his weapons as well. So on a belt you would have things like the sword or the scabbard of a sword. That would be carried on your belt. A shield could be carried on your belt as well. As a matter of fact, if a soldier got weary from battle, they would often prop their shield up with their belt. If he fought for several hours as you can imagine, he'd be tired and worn out so they would take a shield to prop it up on their belt, could do the same thing with the breastplate, part of the breastplate would rest on top of the belt area. But the point is that it was an essential part of armour, it was essential part of the wardrobe because it put them all together, it tied all the pieces into one. If you want to think of this in modern terms, you can think of a utility belt or a policeman's belt. If you've ever seen an RCMP officer recently, and you look at their belt, you'll notice it's just full of stuff. They have their gun in there, they have their flashlight, handcuffs. It was the same idea here with this belt. And Paul connects this to the truth here, he calls it the belt of truth, because that's what this does as well, the truth is what holds up all the other pieces of armour. The truth is what holds up all the other things in the list, because none of this matters if you're a hypocrite. None of these weapons help you if you don't truly mean it. He says, "stand firm therefore having girded your loins with truth." And I think we all understand the only way to put a belt on is you got to do it wholeheartedly. You can't halfway wear a belt. I mean, you can't put it on just one side of you. It's got to cover the whole thing, it touches every side. And the truth has to do that as well. In fact, I told you last week that there was no piece of armour for your back, because God doesn't want you to retreat. There's no part of the spiritual armour of God that covers your back because he doesn't want you to run away. So the belt was the only thing that did that. And this is important with the truth, because here's how the devil operates. Here's how he attacks you. He does it by finding a weak spot in your armour. He does it by finding a place where you're not sincere and he attacks you there. He puts his dagger there. So you need to make sure you don't have any weak spots in your armour.

If you're wondering what this looks like, what it looks like to be surrounded with the truth. There's a couple of ways to do this. One is this you have to give up your secrets as a Christian. You can't hold on to your secrets. There can't be anything that you're hiding between you and the Lord, whatever it is. Secret lust, secret sin, secret fantasies, that type of thing. You can't hold anything back because you're supposed to be surrounded with truth. You have to make sure the person you are at church is the same person you are at home, the same person you are at work and the same person you are in front of the computer at night, all the same. This also means you have to stop going through the motions in the Christian life. That's another way to apply what Paul is saying here. You got to stop being so distracted when you come to church. Or when you read your Bibles or when you pray. You've got to have your mind focused on what you're doing. Because this is what the devil does. He likes to distract you. This is what Satan does. He likes to pull your attention away. One of my classes in university for my communications degree we had to watch commercials and log how distracting they were for us. That's the whole point of them. The devil is like an ongoing commercial. He just wants to just distract you from the things of God and you can't let him do it. You have to have your mind focused on him.

Which leads to another way to surround yourself with truth, you have to stop focusing on external things so much. Can't focus on the outside all the time. And this is important for us. Today, it's a real problem for Christians. Because we like to do this, we like to focus on the outside because we want people to like us. We want them to affirm us. And so we focus on the things you can see, like our clothes, and our hair and our makeup. We focus on our appearance and our looks and our behavior. But God is more interested in the things below all that, He's more interested in the things that are deeper than that. And we have to do the same as well. They have a phrase in Jerusalem, they say "God doesn't care about the smells, and the bells." Everything in Jerusalem smells and it rings. But that's not what God cares about. In fact, this is what I love about our church so much. That's what I appreciate about you guys is we can meet out here in a tent and you're fine with that. We can meet out in the field and you don't care because there's more going on than all of this. There are deeper things in the Christian life. And that's what Paul's referring to here. You have to have your mind focused on something beneath all that. Which brings us to another point to consider another benefit to the belt of truth. The first one is that it surrounds you. This is a belt that covers you from side to side so that nothing is exposed. And you have to be the same way as a believer. You have to be sincere from front to back before you begin this fight.

Which brings us to another point to consider this morning. Another benefit to the belt of truth. And that is that **it gives us security**. Another benefit to the belt of truth is that it gives us security, which means it makes us feel safe. Since it covers every part of us and it goes from side to side. This is something that gives us assurance in the battle. And I won't read all this for the sake of time. But you can tell just by reading this, that there's a lot of danger in this passage. When you read the end of the book of Ephesians here, you see a lot of scary things. Verse 11 mentions the schemes of the devil. It mentions his tricks, which is scary. And it's one thing to be tricked by a man, it's one thing to be tricked by another human being. But it's another thing to be tricked by the devil. That's a frightening thing, isn't it? And then it mentions in verse 12 the rulers and powers and forces of this darkness, which is a reference to the demons, I told you before that the words rulers, powers, forces, that's all pluralized to say there's more than one of these creatures. There's many of them, and they're on the devil's side. And they're dark, and they're wicked, and they're powerful. But Paul says even so you don't have to worry about that as a Christian, even with all of this danger, you don't have to be afraid because you have this, you have the belt of truth. At first glance, that doesn't seem too comforting, because what are you going to do with a belt, right? You know, fling it at somebody, you know, it doesn't sound too helpful in a battle. But that's not what he's saying here. He's saying here that the belt is important because of all the stuff that's on it. The belt is important because all the pieces of equipment and weapons that are hanging on it, which should be a comfort to you in the battle.

It should give you some hope. They're all held up by the truth. The sword of the Spirit, shield of faith, breastplate of righteousness- all that's held up by the fact that you're living a sincere life with the Lord. Another way to say that is all that falls down if you're not. The sword of the Spirit doesn't do you any good if you're living artificial life. You guys understand this, just to kind of dive into this a little bit. You

know what this is like, but sometimes you can be so tempted with a particular sin. You can be so overwhelmed by it that it can make you wonder if you're saved at all. You guys know what I'm talking about? Anybody experienced that before? I think we all have. Make you wonder if you're even in the faith, because this is what sin does to a person. It takes your security away. Doesn't take away your salvation. It doesn't take away your standing with the Lord. But it does take away the comfort of it. It takes away the peace of it. You can read the Book of Psalms and you see how David wrestled with the Lord. And there's times when that guy's is just pouring his heart out because of his sin. He didn't lose his salvation, he just lost the comfort of it. And one way to fight that, Paul says here, is to live a life that is true from the beginning. Anytime sin comes in, you get it out. Anytime sin enters your life, you get rid of it. You know, it's been said that you don't fall into sin, you plan it. You don't slip into it, or slide into it by mistake, you plot it out along the way. So if you see someone commit adultery, I promise you they've been thinking about that way in advance, didn't just happen, their mind has been doing it long before the actual act, or if they steal something, it's the same thing. They've been coveting long before they stole it. And in order to defeat that, the idea that Paul's giving us here is you have to stop it in your mind. This is a spiritual battle. It's a mental battle. And so that's where the victory is won, it's won in your head, before anything else.

In my studies this week, I came across several things to help you with this, just several ways to help you fight sin in the mind. And these are all very simple, but one is that you need to control your thoughts. You need to control the things that you think about, because if the battle is in here, then that's how you win it. If that's where the devil tempts you the most and that's where he attacks you, then that's where you get the victory. You have to be careful where you let your mind go as a Christian. You have to be careful where you let it wander. And another thing is you need to be reading your Bible. In order to fight sin, you've got to fill your mind with the Word of God, because if the devil is attacking your thoughts, and the devil is attacking your mind, then the only way to fight him is to fill it with something else. You need to fill your mind with Scripture. I was talking with someone the other day and they told me, "Man, my workplace is full of foul mouth people. All day long. Vulgarities, cursings, all this kind of stuff, all day long. And it's filling my mind." And the only way to fight that is to fill it with something else. Fill it with Scripture, carry Scripture in your pocket, put it on your phone, whatever you have to do. That's what Jesus did when He was attacked by the devil. It's what our Saviour did when He was tempted. He quoted Scripture to him, right? Which leads to another way to help you fight sin, that's just simply- find some accountability. If you're struggling with sin this morning, find someone who can help you. Because again, you're not alone in this. But the point is that all this is so simple. This is so basic, and yet many Christians forget to do this today. Many Christians fail at this because they don't take their sin seriously. They don't treat it like a threat. Because they fill their mind with trash all week. They fill their mind with garbage and they wonder why they do the things they do. They wonder why they sin, but they do it because they're not taking it seriously. You have to do that this morning. You have to be deadly earnest about your sin.

I don't know if you've been around soldiers before. But my parents live right next to a military base. Fort Sill army base in Lawton, Oklahoma. It's got 20,000 soldiers on it. And if you go talk to the soldiers there, one thing you pick up on pretty quick is that these are serious people. They don't joke. They don't mess around, because they have a serious job. They have a deadly job. It's an artillery base and they're constantly blowing things up and firing off ammo and that sort of thing, all around the base. And you got to be very serious with that. Paul says it's the same way here, as a Christian you need to be serious about fighting your sin. You have to be earnest about it. Which brings us to one more point to consider this morning. Just one more benefit to the belt of truth. The first one is that it surrounds you. It covers you from front to back. The only piece of armour that does that. Brings us to another point and that is it gives us security in the Christian life. This belt is something that gives you comfort. You live a true life with the Lord, makes you feel safe and secure when the sin comes. On the flip side, if you live a dishonest life with the Lord, it takes the security away. So we need to watch that this morning.

It brings us to one more point to consider, one more benefit to the belt of truth, and that is that **it gives us confidence in the Christian life**. A third benefit to the belt of truth is that it gives us confidence which means it gives courage to face the enemy. When you are living an honest life with the Lord, when you are living a life that is sincere and with integrity, He gives you a sense of boldness when the tempter comes. And if you look in verse 13, he says, "Therefore take up the full armour of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth." If you notice the phrase 'stand firm', it's repeated twice in this passage for emphasis. Once in verse 13 and then once in verse 14. That's one word in Greek, 'histemi', and it refers to a soldier locking into his position and not moving. It refers to a soldier standing his ground and staying put. No matter what comes against him, no matter how bad it is. We don't really have this today. But in ancient times, they fought in hand to hand combat, it was a very intimate thing. They didn't shoot somebody from a distance. I mean, they they went face to face, you could smell them, you could see him. You could look into the eyes of your enemy. And the only way to win a battle was to do this, you had to stand your ground. You couldn't let them intimidate you. You couldn't let them back you down. They would often, before wars were fought, one side would try to intimidate the other with jeers and taunts and all that sort of thing. Sometimes they got pretty brutal, because they would take captured slaves from the enemy and execute them right in front of them. But the reason they did that was to get into their minds and knock them down or intimidate them. Paul says you can't do that here. You can't let the enemy intimidate you. And the piece of armour that helps you do that here is the belt of truth, it helps you stand. Because this is what Satan does. He likes to say, 'Did God really say that? Or did God really say this?' The enemy likes to get you to question the truth and say, 'Did the Bible really say this, the Bible really say that? You can give in just this one time.' He wants to get you to doubt what it says. But Paul says you have to stand, you can't let him do that. This means you need to have some convictions in the Christian life, there needs to be some things you're not going to back down on. No matter what the world throws at you. This also means you need to have some courage as a Christian as well. You need to have some boldness. But whatever you do, you have to stand. I mention this because so many Christians forget this today. This is why we're kind of looking at these pieces of armour one by

one. But so many believers, they don't have any courage anymore. They don't have any convictions. Which is why their life is such a mess. And what I mean by that is you know, they come into your office, they come into my office and say their marriage is failing. It's falling apart. So they want to come back to church. And they want to come back into the service and be with God's people. And that's great. I mean, we love that. We want them to come. But what they don't realize is that their marriage is that way because they've made 1000 compromises already. Within what they don't realize is that it's falling apart, because they've already given into 1000 tricks of the devil and just showing up at church one time is not going to fix that problem. Going to a service one time is not going to heal all that. You gotta do more. Or they come in and say they're enslaved to alcohol. They're enslaved to the bottle. So they want to come back to church for that, they want to come back and fix that. But the problem is that that doesn't go far enough. One hour a week doesn't go deep enough. They need to learn how to stand. They need to learn how to fight their sin and live for the truth over and over and over again. You can't do it one time and that's it. You can't do it once and that's all. You have to do it every day.

Friends, I think this is something we all need to remember today. And that is that this is a battle that never ends. This whole battle Paul is talking about here and this warfare, it's never over. Doesn't happen one hour a week. It happens all the time. So the time to stand is now, the time to hold your ground against the enemy is today. You can't do it later. You can't just fight when your marriage is falling apart because then it may be too late for your marriage, you have to do it now. Like we've been talking about this morning, you need to let the truth surround you, you need to let it cover every part and hold nothing back from God. Keep nothing back from Him. You also need to let it give you that sense of assurance, give you that sense of security, so that when the enemy comes, you can have courage. You know, the story is told of the time a Confederate soldier was wounded in the Civil War. And he was told to go to the rear, back of the battle. To which he said to his captain, he said, "Captain, this battle ain't got no back. This battle ain't got no rear, the enemies all around us." He said, "Give me a gun and let me fight." Friends, there's a lesson in there for us, this battle has no rear. There's no back to it. It's all around us. But that's okay. Because you can win if you fight. If you pick up your gun and go to war. So will you do that today? Will you put on this belt of truth and stand against the enemy? We're going to be talking about this more again in the weeks to come. I'm going to be giving you lots of information about that. But let me pray for us now and ask the Lord to give us grace, to apply what we've talked about this morning.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the opportunity this morning to talk about the belt of truth. And to think about the fact that we need to be living lives of integrity before you. Lord we're all guilty of hiding things. We're all guilty of keeping secret sins from you. Which is why we're not, which is why we fail in the battle. But yet you're a God of grace and mercy, and you're God who forgives us. Lord, help us as we turn from our sins and trust in Christ today. As we take the Lord's Supper, may this be a time of examination for us. May we give our lives over to you, every corner of them, so that you purify them for your glory. We pray this in Christ's name. Amen.