

Message Transcript

HELMET OF SALVATION AND SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

| EQUIP FOR BATTLE

RYAN BRAMLETT | JUNE 29, 2025

Video of Gaby

[Aaron Brockett Message]

What kind of a church are we? What are we trying to accomplish and do? We have got a mission, and we have got a vision. We want to:

Clear the Way

Equip for Battle

Deploy for Impact

We want to take ground for the Kingdom across Indy and beyond.

[Gaby featured during Aaron's message translating it in Spanish]

In the fall of 2023, our church began a plan to Release, Revive, and Restore. The vision calls everyone to Awaken.

Gaby

I gave my life to Jesus. I was involved in a small group, and I did Rooted, which was a really great experience of learning and how to connect better and those first steps that I wasn't feeling that I was making.

When the Awaken initiative came I was there just not knowing where my step was going to be, what my life was going to look like. I didn't know if I was going to be able to be part of the church because I would have to come back to Ecuador. My program was about to end.

I was just there trying to say, "Well Lord, this is what I have right now. This is what I have right now in terms of finances. The program that I obtained is the only thing I have right now. I don't know how that is going to look like next year. But I would like to be a part of this. I would like to be a part of this movement and I'm giving you what I have right now."

Gaby recently served at MIX, a summer camp where dozens of youths receive scholarships that are funded through the Awaken vision.



When you see serving as an opportunity to connect with others and to learn from others and to serve others, we find Jesus there, we find God there. And to be a part of that has been really a blessing.

Sometimes I feel like, "Well, I need to have all of the answers, everything figured out before I can do camp or before I can do translation or to be generous. To say that "Well Gaby, this is what you have right now so you can give it. Jesus has shown me that you just need to be available to Him, to put at His feet all of the resources that you have: time, effort, willingness, disposition, a grateful heart. He's faithful. He's going to be there for you. Just lifting up the Lord in everything. And He's asking you to just trust and give from where you don't have, He is going to provide for you. So, when He does that, it gives you the trust to just try to keep giving.

End Video

Ryan Bramlett

Hey, can we celebrate what God is doing in the life of Gaby? Incredible. I love the honesty of her story. Maybe you've been there, "God, if I had more I would give more. If I knew more, I would do more." But so much of this Awaken season is just saying: Now is the time. What has God given you? How are you stewarding your time, treasure, and talent?

And maybe for you, you're ready to step into that Awaken journey by giving. And it's not waiting, it's saying, "God, what have You given me? How can I give you my first and my best?" And if you want to join us starting today, you can. We've got wall boxes in the back of the room, or you can give online through our app on our website.

And maybe He's kind of doing a work in you already like, "I want to talk with someone about what it looks like to be a part of the Awaken initiative." At all of our campuses Info Central will be the spot that we want you to hit up. One more time before we get rolling, could we celebrate Gaby? Incredible. Well, go ahead and grab a Bible. Open it up to Ephesians, chapter 6. We're going to start in verse 13.

In this series of messages that we've been in, it's really all under the banner of our refreshed Mission Statement that we've been sharing every single week. Does anybody feel like they have it? We're going to do it again next week. We're going to start with it because our hope is that these aren't just words on a wall somewhere, this is our Mission Statement. It impacts and shapes how we live.



Our hope is that when you have a conversation about our church and people ask you, "Why do you go there and what is it like?" You say something so much more than, "You know, it's got great vibes. I love the vibes there. They have free coffee. The music is incredible. And the pastors are fun, sometimes."

What would it look like to take the mission of the church and put that to be your why when people ask you about the church, "What's it like being part of Traders Point?" And you say, "Well, this is what it is all about. Our mission as a church—we're all stacking hands on this idea—we want to clear the way. We believe that Jesus is the only One who can change anyone, so that's what we do. We do it with our lives. We remove all of the unnecessary barriers so we can come face to face and we can bring people face to face with Jesus."

"I love our church because every time I gather, every time I get together with the community of believers, we're being equipped for battle. And not just one day in heaven, but the real battles I face every single day. I get the hope and the help that I need. And when I leave there, as I'm a part of this church I know that I'm not just made in the image of God, but I have been deployed to make an impact. I am a durable disciple who has been made to make a difference."

That's what it means to be a part of Traders Point. Anybody on mission with that? Alright, we're getting there. We're getting there.

But this series of messages has been called Battle Ready where we are looking at what it means to be equipped and trained up for the battles we face by putting on the armor of God. And each week we've just been taking a piece of this armor one by one and saying, "Hey, what is this? How do we put it on? And how do we keep it on?"

You guys enjoying this series? There we go. We're going to get talking today. We're going to get there, slow and steady. That's what we've been doing, taking each piece one by one. And if you are looking at this as spiritual warfare, this war that is in front of us, you and I are soldiers in the army of God.

Now, I've never been in the military myself. But my grandpa was. If you've been around here you know I'm constantly telling a story about Pop. But he was in the military, fought in a war. We have a picture of him. That's a good-looking man. He was a real live war hero.

And he didn't talk much about the military but one day I remember him talking about what it was like to be in the Marines. And what he said was, "Hey, they basically teach you how to do everything their way. You went through your whole life, and you thought you knew how to walk, you don't. They're going to show you what it's like to march and to move at their speed."



"You grew up with guns and you can shoot and hunt. You can do all of those things; they're going to teach you how they shoot. All the way down to the smallest, most minute detail of how to make your bed and how to iron your clothes, they are all going to be united in this mission."

And with Jesus it's very, very similar. I know how to walk. I know how to move through life. And Jesus is saying, "You know nothing. Let me show you how to walk at My pace. Come over here where My yoke is easy and My burden is light. I'm going to show you what it's like to walk through life. You think you know how to love people and to be kind and merciful, let Me show what it looks like to lay your life down for those who you love."

All the way down to the smallest, minute details of our lives. Jesus is saying, "I care, and I want to show you My way." Because Jesus has a version of our lives that He wants us to live. It is the best version and the most fulfilling life. It's His. It's not mine. It's not yours. It's His.

But the tension of this, which we've also been facing in this series is spiritual warfare. It's not that Jesus just has a version of life, because we have a version of life, there is also an enemy who has a version of what he wants our life to look like. And these two versions are contrasted in John 10:10. You have Jesus and the thief, or the devil. And look at the difference. John 10:10, Jesus says: "The thief," He's talking about the devil, "comes only to steal and to kill and destroy; I have come that they," that's all of us, "may have life and life to the full." (NIV)

Some of us have been following Jesus for a little bit or maybe for a long time and we've never experienced the full life. Maybe that's you today. I just want to encourage you to keep going. Keep following Jesus.

Faith is not just a moment of where you are instantly combusting into a new creation, it is moving from death to life and choosing life every single day. And little by little being formed into the image of Jesus. It's about becoming battle ready by being battle tested and proving that our God will be victorious over every situation. And He even uses me and you to communicate that truth. The enemy is prowling around looking for someone he can kill, rob, and keep from Jesus. But Jesus is on the other side offering an abundant life for me and you. The question is: are we going to pick it up? Are we going to put it on? That's what this series is all about—putting on the armor of God. Here's the truth I want us to have today:

The full life Jesus promises is only possible with the full armor of God



So, let's talk about it. And today we've made it to the end of the list. We're on the last two items. But I want to read the whole list in its entirety and then we're just going to double click on those last two. This is Ephesians, chapter 6. Let's start in verse 13. He says:

"Therefore put on every piece of God's armor so you will be ready and able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm. Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God's righteousness.

"For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared. In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil. Put on salvation as your helmet," these are the ones for us, "put on salvation as your helmet and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." (NLT)

So, this is all ours. This is accessible through our faith in Jesus. God is offering up His armor to protect us to stand against the evil one. And the first one we're going to look at today is the helmet of salvation. Put on the helmet of salvation. And I don't know if it's just me, the time I grew up in was the 90s—helmets were not cool. No one wanted to put on a helmet. People were like, "You should put on a helmet." But we were like, "I think we're okay." We were riding bikes; we were doing things that we shouldn't have been doing. We should have definitely had helmets on. And our parents tried so hard. But they failed. I don't know about you but when I was growing up I was all about basketball, football—sports. But there was this tiny sliver of time when the X-Games became really big. And we were all about skateboarding, BMX bikes, ramps—and we were not trained. But someone had a ramp somewhere, someone had some jumps somewhere.

Where I grew up there were some woods behind my house and people made these giant dirt ramps. And I took my Dino Zone, with the pegs on it, and I go back there. It was a new day, it was early in the morning, and the dirt was still wet from rain. I'm on my bike peddling as fast as I can, no helmet in sight. I hit this dirt jump. I'm flying through the air Evel Knievel style.

I hit the ground, and the ground is so wet that my bike just slides out from under me and then for the next forty-five seconds my head bounces on the ground like in a cartoon. And I'm banging my head. I stop. Mud and dirt are caked to my face. I promise you I had this thought, it was me and my cousin, I thought, "I should be wearing a helmet. Why did they let me do this without a helmet?" But, what Paul is drawing the conclusion to is he's saying, "Hey, there is a physical piece of armor for soldiers, and a helmet is for a very important part of your body—it is your brain.



That's why we wear helmets. We wear helmets in football. We wear helmets when you do X-Game type stuff. We wear a helmet to protect your brain. When you are a soldier you wear a helmet to protect your brain.

Paul is saying, "This is spiritual armor. And where a regular helmet protects your brain, a spiritual helmet sort of protects your thoughts. It's going to protect what you think about. It's going to make sure that you stay focused on the life that Jesus has. It's going to keep you from being defeated by the evil one." It's Paul who says it's not just a battle over your mind; it's a battle in your mind. And we need to be very mindful of what goes in and what stays and what we fixate on, and we think about because it all matters. So, Paul says, "I want you to put on the helmet of salvation."

Now, maybe you're asking this question: What is salvation? What does it mean to put it on that helmet? Salvation just means to be rescued from great peril. And when the Bible talks about salvation it's really threefold—the way God saves. Here's a definition for you:

God's gracious act of saving humanity from the grave danger of sin, death, and eternal separation from Him.

Salvation is God's gracious act of saving humanity, that's us, from the grave danger of sin, death, and eternal separation from Him. This becomes a theme of the Bible. If you read through Scripture, this is how God wants to be known as Savior.

This theme really comes to life in Exodus where God rescued and saved His people out of Egyptian slavery and He called them His own. And then it continues as Jesus—His name, Yeshua, means the Lord saves. God is making this very, very clear, "I am a God who not just loves you, not just a God who created you, I am the One who saves you and I am the only One."

And Paul is saying that when we think about this, when we put that over our thoughts, that salvation message, that it's going to protect us from the evil one. God saves. God did save you. He's been saving you. And one day He will save you completely.

I think you and I can agree that when someone saves your life the relationship changes. It's no longer just pleasantries. It's no longer, "I wonder how they feel about me." If you have ever had someone who has saved your life you're pretty clear, "Oh, they love me." And that will change things between you. I was once saved. My life was saved by someone. And it was by that very good-looking man that I showed you a picture of earlier, my Pop. Once he got back from the military he was not only a decorated war hero, he became an amazing husband and father and grandfather.



He worked for General Motors during the day, but he also ran a side business, a roofing business. And one day we were stopping at a jobsite, and he had to finish some things up. But he said that he wanted me, my cousin, and my uncle to wait in the truck. This is the 90s so you could still just leave kids in the car.

And he goes up on top of the roof and he's working, he's putting it together and all he said was, "Hey, don't touch anything." We touched everything in that truck. And not much time goes by when we began to play with the gear shift a little bit, moving it back and forth. Not really sure what it does, but it was fun to drop it down and then to throw it right back up.

I'm not going to name names, but one of us in the truck dropped it down and didn't get it all of the way back up to park. And what you need to know about this job site is that it was on a long driveway to a house on a hill. The truck was parked on the driveway. And once that car didn't get into park, we began to slowly drift down the hill to the road.

My grandpa, he sees the truck begin to slowly move its way backwards. He doesn't climb the ladder down. He leaps from the roof, lands, sticks the landing, sprints after the truck, makes it all of the way there, before the truck meets the road, reaches in cuts the wheel, even shoves his leg underneath to stop the truck before it gets to the road.

He was a bad man. And he saved our lives. Now, what happens in a moment like that? I always knew that he loved me. But it's different when you realize that he saved my life. He was willing to risk everything for me.

You have that with Jesus. You know that He wants to be known as the One who saves. And not just that He saved you. I want you to know why He saved you. Because it's the same reason my Pop saved me. We get a peak of this in Ephesians. Take a look. It says:

"But God is so rich in mercy," and if you are reading, if you are highlighting, I want you to highlight this, "and he loved us so much, that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave his life when he raised Christ from the dead. [It is only by God's grace that you have been saved.]" Ephesians 2: 4-5 (NLT)

I think sometimes when we talk about salvation, God saving us, we get these narratives in our mind of how God views us when He thinks about us. But I want you to hear that from Scripture today. Why did God save you? It's because He loves you. How much? So much. He was willing to do... And it brought Him joy to do it. He knew that He was the only One who could save us from where we were headed.

Do you have that saving moment with Jesus? Do you believe that He rescued you? And not because you were good enough and you met Him halfway and together you guys decided to turn over a new leaf. No.



Do you believe that He saved you? Without Him you were hopeless and helpless headed to a Christless eternity. Until He came, you were rolling backwards just like I was in that truck headed to your death, until Jesus stepped in and saved you.

Do you have that moment with God? Because without it you will never be able to put on the helmet of salvation. Without it you will never be able to see and to have the hope of your salvation. You've got to know that He loves you so much and that He wanted to save you.

That's what Paul is saying. He says, "I want your thoughts to be flooded with our God as a Savior and He really did save you: past, present, and future. So, here's what it means to put on the helmet of salvation: To put on the helmet of salvation is to remind myself of how completely Jesus has saved me—past, present, and future

This is a daily thing. I just want to work through each one and how it begins to shape the way we think about ourselves, our reality, and God. So, the first part is from our past.

He saved me from the penalty of sin

This is Romans 5. We have been justified by faith. We have peace with God. It comes from this idea that there was a debt that we could not pay because of sin, even if we had 1,000 lifetimes, we were going to come up short.

But, Jesus, rich in mercy and grace, left heaven, lived the perfect life that we couldn't live, went to a cross for me and you and paid in full everything that we owed. So, we are justified before God, we have peace with our heavenly Father. We are justified from our past.

When you think about your past, a lot of times all you think about was what was done to you, what you did, your checkered past. And that keeps you from the hope of believing in the love of God. But what He wants you to see when you put on the helmet of salvation is that all of that has been paid for. There is no condemnation for those who believe in Jesus Christ. You have been saved. The second thing is this:

He is saving me from the power of sin

Not just my penalty was taken care of. In this moment, present day, He is saving me from the power of sin. This is Romans 6. Our old self was crucified, no longer enslaved to the power of sin, we have been set free. We have been called sons and daughters who are being sanctified, being made holy. You once were enslaved. You once had no freedom. Now, because the Spirit of God is in you, you have freedom over all of it. That's what it means to put on the helmet of salvation.



And then it continues to get better. Look at the last one:
And one day, He will save me fully by bringing me into His presence for all of eternity

This is in Romans as well. It says, "Who He has justified he will glorify." We are in this day and season processing, formed into the image of Jesus. But there will come a day with a new heaven and a new earth where there is no more sin, no more pain, no more tears. And we are brought fully into the presence of God. And we will sing: holy, holy, holy as we are transformed into glorious bodies. We will barely be able to recognize one another because we will be, in our full self, how we were created to be for all of eternity.

Paul says, "Now I want you to put that on every day. I want you to remind yourself that everything has been paid for. I want you to remind yourself that you have power over sin. And I want you to have hope—the hope of your salvation knowing that one day you will be with God for all of eternity."

Because one of Satan's most effective weapons against us is discouragement. When we are purposefully moving through life we seem to be reminded of our past, our present, and how bleak our future is. But Paul says, "No. I want you to put on the helmet of salvation." Jesus is saying, "I've got you covered on every side, no matter what the enemy attacks you with."

We've got to put on the helmet of salvation. What would it look like just to start every day, "God, thank You. Thank You for saving me from the life I used to live. God, thank You for giving me victories over battles I never thought I could defeat. And, God, I look ahead not even knowing what tomorrow will bring, but I know what my eternity will be. I thank You in preparation for when You glorify me one day." That's what it means to put on the helmet of salvation.

We've got one more item we're going to look at today. Okay? Let's read the Scripture one more time:

"Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

I just want to take a few moments here to talk about we're picking up this sword, which is the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. What is the Word of God? A lot of us would probably answer: the Bible, that is the Word of God. And that is true. But the Bible says some pretty specific things about what it is and how it's to be used. So, let's just look at the first one in 2 Timothy, chapter 3 where Paul says:



"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness." (NIV)

So, I gather your attention to this because, one, it is God-breathed. The Bible says that none of the prophets wrote anything down of what they thought or their opinions, it was the inspired Word of God. He has the authority. He is the only One who is above time and space as our Creator. He has the authority and the ability to write about Himself, to share with us who He is and then, in return, also tell us about what our lives should look like, how they function best. He gathers all of that together and He's willing to share it with us.

It says His Word is useful for two big things: in rebuking and in righteousness. Do you find God's Word useful? When you sit down, do you find yourself being rebuked? Do you find God drawing things out of you that you didn't know and challenging you with them? But it's not just a book to rebuke or to say, "Hey, don't do that." It's also a book of righteousness. A book that says, "Yeah, lay that down but pick this up." Lay that down but I promise when you do I'm going to have something so much better for you. Trust Me."

This is why coming to church is such a big deal. Every single weekend we are not up here sharing our ideas or opinions or giving a motivational talk. We are opening the Scriptures, God's authoritative Word and saying, "God, You speak. What do You want to say?"

We are singing the Scriptures.

And I'm going to be honest with you. I love preaching. I love preparing to preach. I love learning through sermons. I study sermons to figure out how to do it better. And I can tell you with confidence here, that Pastor Aaron is one of the best Bible teachers on the planet.

And when we come, let's come ready believing that God's Word is going to show up and that He is going to call us to some things. He's going to rebuke us. He's going to call us to righteousness. But we lean in and believe in what God's Word can do, we can be a part of that.

And there is one other thing I want to show you about what the Bible says about itself. It's in Hebrews. It says:

"For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires." Hebrews 4:12 (NLT)



The Word of God is alive and powerful. If you're spending time in God's Word you'll notice pretty quickly that it's different than other books that you have read. Because you can come back to it year after year after year. You can read the same Scripture over and over and over again, but when you sit down this time it's like a fresh page. It's like it is hitting you for the first time like God has a unique message for you on this day.

It's sharper—it's the sharpest two-edged sword. Back in the day for soldiers, it means that it could slice both ways. No matter which way you took it, you were going to do some damage. It went through easily. It was effortless. It would slice through like butter.

And God is saying, "My Word is like that. In the most innermost part of your being, I'm going to get to that spot and I'm going to bring to the surface what I want you to be able to see that you couldn't see without it. I'm also going to use it to defend you against the temptations and the lies of the evil one. It's this sword that will protect you on every side."

And it says that as it appears, it expresses our innermost thoughts and desires. And that will really shake you up when you begin to read the Word. And as you begin to study, you start thinking about some things that come into your consciousness and you are like, "I wasn't even thinking about that. How did that get there?"

It's because of God. His Spirit and His Word are exposing our innermost thoughts and desires that we didn't even know, we didn't have access to. It was only by the grace of God. Has that happened to you?

You know, for me, it happened just a few weeks ago. And some of you know parts of the story. We were supposed to have this incredible guest speaker for Father's Day. Long story short—we did not get him for Father's Day. It ended up he didn't make it. Not in life. He's still alive. He just didn't make his flight to get here in time.

And this is going on Saturday night. We find out. It's after 10 pm. He was option A. I'm option B. I have no sermon written. Services are starting soon. I pray and I wrestle, and I feel like God gave me direction of what I'm supposed to talk about. But now it's midnight and I've got to go to sleep.

So, I go to sleep without a sermon. I wake up early and I write this thing between five and a little bit after 7 and send it to the team. And I just want you to know this. The teams that work in the back of all of our rooms, the ones who, when I turn back this way and Scriptures and points pop up, it takes them a long time, like half a day, to do all of that. On that day they did it in like 45 minutes. Can we celebrate all of the people who don't get celebrated enough in the back of our rooms?



But I send it all in and I go up to preach and it's not missed on me. I'm preaching on peace and readiness, which I should have neither of. But I'm over there worshipping, and I feel like I have a peace that truly does surpass all understanding, "I'm going to be okay. God's got me."

I get through the first service at 8 am. And I'm up here preaching at the 9:30. And as I'm preaching this crazy thing happens where I'm talking to God's people and God is talking to me. And in the back of my mind, He begins to expose me. He begins to show me and correct me by rebuking me.

What He showed me is that a lot of times I over prepare sermons to create a sense of peace, because I'm afraid. I'm afraid I won't look like enough. I'm afraid that I'll mess up. I'm afraid of so many things. And I use this as a way to create a false sense of peace.

And in His graciousness He was showing me, "Hey, you can prepare 80 hours if you want to. But the thing that you are searching for, real peace and readiness, it only comes from My Spirit and My gospel. And today you got to experience it." It sliced me open.

That's what it means to sit down with the Word and trust that it is going to search you. It's not about us paging through and looking for what we want to read for the day. That's what the Bible does. We sit before it. It's alive and active. It's the sword. It slices and shows us what needs to be rebuked. It shows us the way we need to walk.

Are we sitting down with that kind of a mindset? Because if not we can carry our Bibles our whole life, in our hands, but it never makes it to our heart, it never becomes this sharp two-edged sword that pierces between all of these things. It never becomes this weapon that we can use to keep ourselves safe and protected and standing strong against the evil one if it doesn't get itself in us. Like, has the Bible ever really impacted you? Pierced your heart personally? When you read do you experience moments that try you and challenge you and change you? The Word of God has to get in us before it ever goes through us before it can ever be used it has to get in your heart.

Here's why this matters. I want to read our verse one more time together because there is one word that I want to double click on. This is why it matters. He says:

"Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."



Now, what's fascinating to me, I'm not going to project that on you, but when I was studying, this was fascinating because the word that is used here for the Word of God is different than what I thought it would be. There are two words that get translated Word of God. There is logos which is the Word of God and that's what we see a lot of times; it's the written Word. Our Bibles would be considered logos.

But that's not the word that he chooses to use when he talks about the armor and the sword, it's not logos, it's rhema. And rhema is something that is a little bit different:

Rhema means "spoken word" or "utterance"

Rhema means the spoken word of God or utterance. Rhema is when God gives us His written Word, the logos, and makes it personal and specific like a sword being placed in your hand for the very real and exact battle that you are facing this day. To deal with the temptations that are coming at you this day and in this moment.

The best example we probably have of this is Jesus going against the devil. Some of you know this. Jesus was baptized and immediately ushered out into the desert by the Spirit to go against the devil. And the devil comes at Him and attacks Him with everything. He offers Him the world to tempt Him away from His mission. But over and over again do you remember what Jesus said? "It is written. It is written." Over and over again He wielded the sword the rhema, the living Word of God. That was His response to every temptation.

Do you have that ability? If the devil was going to meet you out in the parking lot today, if the devil is going to meet you tonight or tomorrow and is coming at you and tempting you with everything, do you have the ability to access the rhema, the living Word of God? Can you respond with Scripture? You've got to give God something to work with.

Are you reading God's Word in such a way that you don't just know it intellectually, but it's deep down in you. It's cut through your soul and spirit. And when you get cut it is what pours out. Do you have that rhema? Because here's what it looks like to take up the sword of the Spirit:

To take up the sword of the Spirit means speaking Scripture over every temptation, trial, and divisive attack from the devil

And the Bible has to get in you before it ever comes out of you. The Bible says it is like the sharpest two-edged sword. But it will be rendered useless if we don't know how to wield it if we don't know how to use it.



My father-in-law owns a wood working company. He has a workshop filled with so many sharp things: saws, sanders, other things you use to make things. And he, as a masterful craftsman, can build anything. He uses these power tools, and he can make benches, tables, cabinets, doors—everything. Because he understands how to wield all of these things.

If you put me in the same workshop—useless. I just have a thousand ways to hurt myself at that point. That's all it is.

A surgeon with a scalpel in her hand is able to perform life-changing surgeries. A scalpel in my hands. I'm just going to cut you faster and harder than I probably should.

What moves the Word of God to being just a book that sits on our coffee table and our bookshelves, moves it from not only being powerful but useful, is when we wield it like a sword. When it gets deep into the innermost parts of our lives. When we change our relationship with the written Word of God we begin to speak it.

I just want to give you four things today for what it means to take up the sword, what it means to change our relationship with the living Word of God, to treat it like it really is useful for all situations. To treat it like it is God-breathed Scripture. How do we do that? That's what I want to give you—four things and they all start with the letter S because I'm just that kind. Alright?
The first one is this. If you are taking notes:

Surrender: Let God's Word be your final authority
So, this is the idea that before you even open up this book, you're coming to this space to stay with the battle/war mentality, Jesus is the commander. Whatever He says goes. I'm releasing my ability to refuse. Whatever He says, I've already made the conscious decision, even if I like it or don't like it, "God, I surrender. This is the authoritative Word of God. I surrender to You. I'm ready to receive what You have for me."

Alright? That's the first—before we even open this book. And the second one is this:

Spirit: Rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to illuminate truth and transform your heart



What I've found in my journey is that usually the people who love the Word of God, study the Word of God, wake up with a cup of coffee and pour over it, while they drink their pour over—do you see what I did there? I know you hear that drop. What happens is, they love the book and intellectually they have beautiful minds, but a lot of times they stop relying on the Spirit of God to show them what they can't see themselves.

And a lot of people who have the Spirit of God seem to not want the Word of God. They are like, "No. God is going to give me a word." Alright. Keep waiting brother.

But it's when those two things come together, "God, I'm going to open Your Word. And Your ways are higher than my ways. I'm going to ask that Your Spirit, Your Helper, will come and illuminate the truth. God, convict me, expose me, show me what You want me to see." It's the work of the Spirit. That's the only way we're going to make sense of it and be able to wield it properly.

But it's not just completely the Spirit of God. There is this partnership that is always between us and God and that's where sweat comes in:

Sweat: Give it everything you've got — heart, soul, strength, and mind I've sat down with Bible reading plans and I've opened my Bible with a highlighter in my hand, but never once thinking about highlighting and wrestling and working through it, it was just used to check off the day, to say that I did it. When we open Scripture, we're not just taking it at its surface level, skimming past it to say that we did it. We're giving everything to help understand and to figure out what it means to be faithful because of God's Word.

Are you wrestling with God's Word? Are you not just pretending like, "I'm okay with that. I'm okay with that." No, when something hits you, "I don't know if I believe that. I don't know if I trust that."

God, as your heavenly Father, is okay with your questions. But we have to take the time to sweat through it and to give Him everything—the last 10 percent. We're going to wrestle with God.

I remember a story of an old pastor and a young boy. The old pastor was telling him, "Hey, I used to spend a lot of my time wrestling with the devil. But these days I spend a lot of time wrestling with God." And the little boy looked up to him with a look like, "Wrestle with God? Do you ever win?" And he said, "I pray that I lose."

It's this idea that I'm going to come with a surrendered spirit helped by the Holy Spirit and I'm going to sweat through it. And at the end of the day, I pray that I lose this wrestling match with God, and I offer it to Him.



And the final thing is this:
Share: if you don't live it, you'll lose it

It's this idea I'm not just reading the Bible so that I can sound smart or holy or better than thou or to show up to group and make sure everyone knows that I read the thing. But I'm reading it knowing that God is going to bless me through it. And I've always been blessed to be a blessing. I'm going to use this to not just better me but for everyone around me. And I'm going to read this and I'm going to be asking the question: what does it mean to be obedient to this living and active Word of God. Who am I going to share it with so they can hold me accountable? Who am I going to share it with so that I can bring the Good News of the gospel to them?

This is what it looks like to wield the sword. It's what it looks like to change our relationship with the written Word of God. Are we ready to do that? To slow down and surrender before God and say, "God, Your ways are above my ways, and I trust You."

What does it look like to call upon the Holy Spirit of God to help make sense in the areas that we can't make sense of? To help us trust in ways that are hard for us to trust but remind us of the salvation of the Lord.

What does it look like to sweat—not to just burn through it or to get through it or to avoid it all together but to say, "No. I'm going to give everything I have because You are worth it. I want to give You my all, Lord. I know Your ways are better."

And what does it look like to share? To say that this isn't going to end on me, but because this is true, what does it mean for my life? How am I going to be obedient to God's Word?

If we could put all of those together, we will be able to still be standing no matter what the enemy throws at us. Are you ready to commit to that? Let Scripture be the only thing that you share with the devil. "His version of life, I don't want anything part of it. If he wants to talk to me the only thing I want to share with him is the Word of God."

And I also know that at all of our campuses, there are probably some people here and you've never really had a relationship with God or with the Bible. To you this book maybe was used to beat you over your head with it. This book was always confusing. You didn't know what to do with it or how to interact with it.



I just want to give you something today. It's not everything, but it's enough to start the process. And it's the way that Jesus talks about what this book really is and what it isn't and what it points to. I'm going to show this to you in John, chapter 5. The words of Jesus. He says:

"You search the Scriptures because you think they give you eternal life. But the Scriptures point to me!" (NLT)

That's what the Bible is. It is a story of God rescuing and saving His people over and over and over again. God sending His one and only Son, the Messiah, to save us once and for all. That is what it means to call on the hope of salvation. That is what it means to be saved.

And what I want to do today is just work through a prayer of salvation. I'm going to pray it over you. No matter what you've been through, no matter what you've gone through this will be a re-centering moment for all of us.

As we begin to step into this season which changes the way we view the Bible, which changes the way we view God, I just want to give everyone an opportunity to respond to the salvation that is waiting for you. God loves you so much. And you can leave saved today.

So, right where you are I just ask you to close your eyes, bow your head and if you have the courage, if you're seeing God for who He is—the One who has saved you, is saving you, and you want what He has for you for all of eternity, you can make this prayer your own. Just follow my words. Let's pray this together.

Jesus, thank You so much, Yeshua, the One who reminds us that the Lord saves. Father, we pray right now for everyone who has been tracking with us during this message, everyone who has heard of Your salvation, that You offer it simply because You love us so much. You have extended Your grace. You have moved us from death to life by believing.

So, God, I pray right now for everyone who has a checkered past, everyone who is constantly reminded of what they have done and what has been done to them—the lies that have crept in saying that that is keeping them from being loved by You and others, God I call on the name of Jesus right now. I pray that everyone would hear that You have saved them. You've done the work. You have paid the penalty. You nailed it all to the cross when You went there. I pray that they could see right now, through Your love, that all they have to do is accept it, believe in this moment that God loves them and that He saved them. That He paid the penalty for their sin. He nailed it to a cross. It is gone. It is removed as far as the east is from the west.



Call on the name of Jesus and you will be saved.

Father, I pray right now for the power of salvation to meet those in this room who need it in the present day. They are facing challenges they can't face alone. They are facing battles they keep losing.

God, I pray in this moment they would know that Your Spirit is with them. They are free. They are no longer enslaved by the power of sin. They have been empowered to live a life of righteousness and holiness.

God, I pray that they would call on Your name right now and be reminded they have the power because You have given it to them by Your Spirit. God lead them.

Father, I pray right now as we look ahead, I pray for the hope of salvation. Everyone in this room if they think about the chaos of their week or how hard life is or what tomorrow is going to be or whatever anxiety is leading them in this moment, I pray that they have this assurance today.

We know You are victorious. We know that you have defeated sin and death. We know that there will come a day when this world fades and in the new heaven and the new earth we will join together for all of eternity with angels singing holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty.

I pray right now that You would give everyone a glimpse into that. Allow them to see the future that awaits them. Allow that to be the hope that they need to carry them through this season. And let them know it's theirs and no enemy or scheme of the devil can take it. Let them believe in the hope of their salvation. Jesus, we ask all of this in Your perfect and holy name. And the church says: Amen. Amen.

Can we celebrate everyone who prayed that prayer?

What we're going to do now is we're going to continue to worship. At all of our campuses, would you stand to your feet? And what we're going to do right now is that the air in here is going to get thin as we look to the hope of our salvation, as we look to Jesus the One who saves.

We're going to join in with a song that we've been singing and it's timeless. We're going to join in with the angels in heaven and sing holy, holy, holy is the Lamb who has come. Holy, holy, holy is the Lamb who was slain. Holy, holy, holy is the One who saved me and you. Let's lift up the name of Jesus together.

