

Welcome back to Redemption Church in Plano Tx. My name is Chris Fluitt and I love God's Word and I am excited to share it with you.

Greetings to everyone with us in-person and everyone joining us online. Blessings in the name of Jesus to you all.

Unseen Battle

We are the 2nd week of our series Unseen Battle.

Last week we talked about identifying the battle.

Let's remember our scripture memory verse for this month.

Ephesians 6:12(NIV) For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world

and against the spiritual forces of evil
in the heavenly realms.

We have a struggle, but it is not with people (flesh & blood). Our struggle is with spiritual forces of evil.

We taught you that everything in the physical has a spiritual counterpart.

When the bully at school says hurtful words, although you experience it in the physical, there is a spiritual counterpart behind the actions of the bully.

When there is a drive by shooting in your neighborhood and you find the bullet holes in your garage door, that is scary physical evidence, but there is also a spirit at work desiring to kill, steal, and destroy.

When a loved one becomes sick, although this is a physical sickness that can be seen under a microscope, we understand that all sickness & death is a spiritual condition brought on by man falling into sin way back in the garden of Eden.

We must identify the battle.

Spiritual Weapons

Once we identify the battle as spiritual, we must take hold of spiritual weapons.

2 Corinthians 10:4(NKJV) For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds,

Zechariah 4:6(NIV) 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the LORD Almighty.

- Armor of God

Ephesians 6 lists a whole spiritual armor that we are to utilize.

Truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, and the Word of God make up the armor of God. These are spiritual weapons to use in our unseen battle.

- The blood of Jesus

The blood of Jesus is a spiritual weapon. The original Passover taught us that if the blood of the lamb is applied to the door of the home, the enemy can't enter. All that Jesus did needs to be applied to our lives, our homes, our children... every part of our life.

When you sin, repent and reapply the blood and you get an instant win over the enemy.

Don't wait for your next sin, why not every day reapply Christ and his blood to your life. We do this through prayer... prayer is a spiritual weapon.

- Prayer & Fasting

Philippians 4:6(NIV) Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

I think we misunderstand prayer. In this one verse Paul does a lot of teaching.

Prayer is the Greek word proseuchē (pros-yoo-khay') and it means to “talk to God” and it also means a set apart place to pray to God. I present to you the idea that prayer is an atmosphere where you can walk with God in relationship – much like how God walked in the Garden of Eden.

Prayer is a set apart life powered by open communication with God.

What kind of communication... Paul tells us.

Petition – Asking God for you need. This is prayer!

Thanksgiving – Thanking God, worshipping and honoring God. This is prayer!

Requests – Asking God for what others need. This is Prayer!

When you communicate with God are you leaving out Petition? Thanksgiving?

Requests?

Do you have a set apart life where you walk in relationship with God?

If you don't, you aren't in the battle.

When you are in the battle and all these attacks are coming on you, remember to dial 911.

Dial 911

Do you know where 911 is in your bible?

Psalm 91:1 He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. 2 I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust."

There is a secret place that the enemy does not know.

Like the invisibility cloak of Harry Potter, or the cloaking device of a Klingon ship... one moment you are there and the next moment the enemy can not find you or

attack you. There is a secret refuge in God, and you have access to this refuge ONLY THROUGH A SET APART SPIRITUAL PRAYER LIFE.

Dial 911

Remember to dial 911 in prayer.

Jesus utilized prayer and fasting.

In Mark 9, there was a demon that the disciples were not able to cast out. Jesus cast out the demon, and later the disciples asked, “why were we not able to cast the demon out?” Jesus said this in Mark 9:29.

Mark 9:29(KJV) And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.

There is a spiritual enemy that requires spiritual weapons of prayer & fasting to defeat.

Fasting is abstaining of food. Abstaining from food makes you weak in the physical...

2 Corinthians 12:9(NIV) ...for my power is made perfect in weakness."

Your weakness allows God's strength & power to be perfect and whole in your life. The weakness of fasting gives you greater access to the spiritual by denying the physical. Instead of sustaining yourself on the physical, you are sustained by the Spirit of God!

Fasting does more than make you weak... fasting weakens your spiritual enemy.

Isaiah 58:6(NIV) Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the

chains of injustice and untie the cords
of the yoke, to set the oppressed free
and break every yoke?

-There is a weapon that loosens chains of injustice... Our world talks a lot about injustice... here is a spiritual weapon against it!

-It unties the cords of bondage & slavery!
What are you slave to? Here is a weapon!

-Sets the oppressed free!

-It breaks every yoke. The very device that enslaves you is broken by this spiritual weapon.

I want to encourage you to pray and to fast. There is much more instruction from God's Word, but I feel the need to allow you to study that on your own, and to change your focus towards a difficult subject.

When Prayers are not Answered

Sometimes we pray, we bring our petitions and requests to the Lord, and they are not answered.

There are some in the body of Christ who teach that if your prayer is NOT answered it must be a lack of faith or some grievous sin in your heart that caused God not to answer. I want you to know this is not Biblical.

Ackley Pursley

This is my buddy Ackley. A few weeks ago he became sick and went to the hospital

As a church we prayed. Every connect group prayed. I am aware of people who in secret fasted and prayed for our friend.

Beyond this local church countless people were asking the Lord to heal Ackley.

Last Monday evening Ackley passed from this life and entered his eternal life. While I am glad for heaven, I myself really struggled with this outcome.

Our struggle is not with flesh and blood... our struggle is beyond the physical loss of our brother and friend. I needed a spiritual answer and I want to share how the Lord helped me in my struggle.

Here is how I reacted to Ackley's passing.

Did I fail?

Did I not pray enough?

Did I not fast enough?

Did I not believe enough?

If I were closer, more consecrated, more dedicated, and sinless...

And the Lord in his love and gentleness let me know...

Yes I failed

God very rarely tells me what I want to hear... He tells me what I need to hear.

The only one to never fails is Jesus..

Compared to Jesus, did I pray enough?

Compared to Jesus, did I fast enough?

Compared to Jesus, did I believe enough?

What if I compared my life to Jesus' life...

His closeness to the Father, His consecration, dedication, and sinlessness...

Compared to the perfect standard of Jesus... yes, I failed.

Here is exactly the thought that exploded in my mind and really saved me this week.

“Your failure has never been worthy of a news headline.”

You and I act like our failure is really surprising and new. It is not new or surprising that we fail.

We make sure our failures end up on the front-page headline of our mind.

It shouldn't surprise us... our close friends... nor especially our Lord!

Romans 3:23(NIV) for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

We have all sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Did we fail? You might not want to hear this... but compared to the perfect standard of Christ, ON OUR BEST DAY we fall short of his perfection.

Church there is a reason that Redemption opens its altars and asks EVERYONE to come... because we are failures.

This Church is full of failures! We do need to pray and seek God's face. We do need to repent. We do need to release our burdens. We do need to pray more, fast more, be closer, more dedicated, and turn our backs on temptation and sin.

So in my tears I asked the Lord if I failed... and He said yeah, but there is no failure in me.

There is no failure in God

Scripture is clear that God does not fail.

His power...

His grace...

His love...

His Word...

His promise...

You want to know what **IS** headline worthy... here it is.

God overcomes our failure

The headline is not that you have or have not failed... the headline is that our God, our savior, our advocate, our healer, friend, Jesus Christ has never failed!

On Christ the solid rock I stand all other ground is sinking sand!

A man asks Jesus to help his son in Mark...

Mark 9:23-24(NIV) "Everything is possible for one who believes." 24

Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"

I do believe... help me overcome my unbelief...

Say it another way... I believe, but my faith also fails... help me.

I pray, but my prayers also fail - help me.

I fast, I try to live a holy life, I try to be closer to God... but I fail... help me.

Jesus DID NOT SAY get out of here, you failure. Come back when your belief does not fail. NO, Jesus delivers the boy.

Although the man had a faith that was failing, Jesus never fails and is able to overcome all our every failure.

We truly serve a God who overcomes not only demons... but He overcomes our failures.

When Prayers are not Answered

When the prayer is not answered like you want it to be answered, it was not your failure that stopped God.

Some prayers are not answered as we would desire. Think about Jesus in the Garden.

In Matthew 26 Jesus prays in the garden of Gethsemane. Jesus prays “Let this cup pass from me.”

Jesus prays that all the suffering he is about to encounter would pass him over. Jesus prayed that He would not have to go to the cross and die. Jesus prayed that He would not take on the sins of the world and be forsaken by the Father.

Jesus prayed 1 time “Let this cup pass from me.” It says that he was so sorrowful that he almost dies.

Then Jesus prays a 2nd time “Let this cup pass from me.” It says angels came and ministered to him.

And Jesus prayed a 3rd time “Let this cup pass from me.” As he prayed scripture says Jesus sweated drops of blood. The agony and tension at which he prayed is the height of devotion and prayer.

Jesus prayed 3 times... and Jesus does not receive the answer he prayed for. The hour grows late... Any moment Judas the betrayer will come with guards to arrest Jesus and take Him to everything He prayed to be rescued from.

Jesus prays as long as he can.

Jesus prays as hard as he can.

Then Jesus surrendered to the will of the Father and says...

...yet not my will, but yours be done. – Luke 22:42

musician

Redemption Church, this message is for you.

You prayed as long as you could.

You prayed as hard as you could.

But in the end we always surrender to the will of the Father.

The Father wanted to take our friend. And who could blame our Father...? Ackley was a wonderful friend and we wanted him to remain with us longer. The Father wanted Ackley now, at this time.

I believe we give the spiritual enemy a foothold when we misunderstand the purpose of prayer. Prayer is an essential

weapon, but if misused this weapon can cause friendly fire.

- Raise your hand if you know someone who no longer believes because they prayed a prayer God did not answer the way they would have liked... This is not unusual.

We must pray and understand the goal of prayer.

The Goal of prayer is to come into alignment with God's Will!

Prayer is not twisting the arm of the Lord.
Prayer is not bargaining... "God if you do this, I will teach 4 Bible studies..."

Prayer is not convincing God you deserve it...

Prayer is not convincing God your will is best...

When prayer changes you... that is a victory.

When you surrender to God's will... that is a victory.

When your will comes into alignment with your creator, that is when the victory comes... the miracle... the healing...

When we bring our life into alignment with God, that is a spiritual victory in the unseen battle.

Do you want your will to come into alignment with God's will today?

Let's pray! Let's set apart this place and this moment to talk to God.

Bring your petitions, thanksgiving, and requests... bring yourself... bring your failure... bring your surrender...