

Here We Go

Matt 16:18–19, Eph 6:10–20, Matt 28:18–20

Crosspoint – Dave Spooner – Nov. 14th, 2021

Introduction

- Persecution and hardship come to us in a variety of ways and for different reasons. Some come because we live in a fallen world. Some come because we are fallen people. Some come because we have a fallen foe. Some of the difficulties are overt and obvious, while some of them are covert and common. All of us face these things in varying intensities and seasons.
- The truths of God's word still stand in all these things. They are the rock where we find refuge and the place in which we stand. This is true for all time and will be so in all eternity. This morning we will focus on what Christ has done so we can continue to do what He is doing. These are important truths for all of us to understand so that we will live in a way to overcome and impact this fallen world. The first thing we must remember is that Jesus is building His church.

I will build My church

Matt 16:18b NIV

I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not overcome it.

- Christ is the one who is building His church. This is the active work He is doing in the world. This is His ultimate goal, and He is the one who is doing it.
- The power of sin and death will not have the final word, and Christ and His church will overcome it. However, there will be resistance to the building of the church by even hell itself. The prince of this world (John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11) seeks to destroy what Christ is building.

1 Peter 5:8-9 ESV

Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 9 Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.

- The devil himself (and his followers) looks to devour you. He is resisted when you stand firm in your faith. This is happening throughout the world.
- The good news is that Christ has equipped us for this battle.

I have equipped you

- I recognize that this passage is a sermon series in itself, but for our purposes for today, I am only going to highlight a few things.

Eph 6:10–12 NIV

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 12 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.

- First, I want you to recognize who the real enemy is. The devil is the “master of puppets,” capturing and using people for His purposes. This is where the real struggle is.

Eph 6:13-17 NIV

Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. 14 Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, 15 and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. 16 In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish 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.

- Second, we have to “put on” this armor. In order to receive the benefits from this equipment, we have to live within it. It can’t be “prayed on” but is “lived within.” Live truly, a life that is true, without lies and deceptions. Live righteously in what you do and say. Live peacefully, so that you will not stumble and fall. Live faithfully in the faith of the gospel. Live knowingly, that you are saved by the grace of Christ. Live courageously with the word of God being your weapon. Stand your ground against the schemes of the devil in these things.

Eph 6:18-20 NIV

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people. 19 Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

- Third, pray. Pray in the Spirit, on all occasions, with all kinds of prayers and requests. Pray for the Lord’s people and pray the gospel will be declared fearlessly.
- The next thing you need to understand is that Jesus has all authority. Jesus gave this statement before He ascended in the Gentile (non-Jewish) region of Galilee. It is the last thing recorded in the book of Matthew, and the promises and instructions continue until the end of the age.

I have all authority

Matt 28:18 NIV

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”

- “All authority” means “the right to control or command, authority, absolute power, warrant” (BDAG). Jesus has the right to control or command everything in heaven and everything on earth. He has authority in every place at all times, and His jurisdiction does not have limits. What He says stands. We appeal to Him and His authority every time we pray and ask something in His name. Jesus, use your authority in this situation. Everywhere you go, there He is. This fact gives us great courage and confidence.

I have sent you

Matt 28:19-20a NIV

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

- We have been sent out by God to continue His mission of building His church. This is done through making disciples of all nations, which includes baptism, which designates that they are a part of the family of faith. Teaching what Jesus has commanded is the formation of a disciple. Obedience is the transformation of a disciple. Being a disciple of Christ, and a member of His body, means we hear, understand, and obey the one who is our authority (head) and loves us truly and completely.

I am with you

Matt 28:20b NIV

And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

- Jesus did not just send us out, but He goes with us by His Spirit with His authority. He has not commanded and retired to heaven. He continues to be involved in what is happening on the earth and in the lives of His people. He is with us always, providing comfort and counsel, conviction and correction, companionship, and comradery in all things.

Conclusion and Commission

- Understand and remember that Jesus is building His Church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. He has gifted us and equipped us with His armor; He has all authority in heaven and earth. He has sent us to make disciples of all people everywhere. He is with us, even to the end of the age. We carry in us the light of the gospel.

2 Cor 4:7-10 NIV

We have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. 8 We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; 9 persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. 10 We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.

- One of the practical ways we shine this light to the ends of the earth is through Operation Christmas Child in partnership with Samaritan's Purse. We have asked the kids to bring the boxes forward and place them on the steps, and we are going to pray over them and commission them to the ends of the world. These boxes are a practical demonstration of love so that the message of the gospel will be received and believed.
- Closing Prayer