



# SERMON SERIES STUDY GUIDE

## **Weapons of Your Warfare: Pt. 1- The Manifold Wisdom of God**

Pastor John Riggs

### **Summary:**

This sermon explores the spiritual warfare believers face, emphasizing that Christians wrestle against principalities and powers not from a position of defeat, but from a position of complete victory in Christ. The pastor takes an in-depth journey through the book of Ephesians to demonstrate that before believers can understand how to stand against the devil's schemes (Ephesians 6), they must first comprehend who they are in Christ and what God has provided. The message reveals that God's manifold wisdom—His infinite, multi-faceted plan established before the foundation of the world—is being demonstrated through the church to angelic beings in the heavenly realms. Believers have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ, who is seated far above all rule, authority, power, and dominion. The sermon emphasizes that while spiritual battles are real and have consequences, salvation in Christ is eternally secure, and believers operate from Christ's victory, not toward it.

### **Video Breakdown:**

- Chapter 1: Introduction to Spiritual Warfare and Christ's Position. 0:00 - 10:51
  - We explore the reality of spiritual warfare and discover that Christ is seated above all rule, authority, power, and dominion in the heavenly places.
- Chapter 2: The Mystery of God's Manifold Wisdom. 10:51 - 28:17
  - We discover that the church reveals God's manifold wisdom to the principalities and powers, demonstrating His perfect plan established before the foundation of the world.
- Chapter 3: The Angels' Wonder at Salvation. 28:17 - 36:20
  - We learn that even angels long to look into the mystery of salvation, celebrating each person who comes to faith in Christ.
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- Chapter 4: Our Position: Chosen, Blessed, and Sealed in Christ. 36:20 - 53:50
  - We are blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ, chosen before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless in Him.
- Chapter 5: Wrestling from Victory, Not Defeat. 53:50 - 57:59
  - We wrestle against principalities and powers from a position of victory in Christ, not from defeat, because our salvation is guaranteed and secure.

## Scripture References from the Sermon

### Explicitly Referenced or Read:

1. Ephesians 6:10-12 - Main text about spiritual warfare and the armor of God
2. Ephesians 1:15-23 - Christ seated in heavenly places above all rule and authority
3. Ephesians 3:1-11 - The mystery of the gospel and manifold wisdom of God
4. Ephesians 3:14-21 - Prayer for spiritual strength and comprehension of Christ's love
5. Ephesians 1:3-14 - Spiritual blessings in Christ and predestination
6. 1 Peter 1:10-12 - Angels longing to look into salvation matters
7. Colossians 1 - Transfer from kingdom of darkness to kingdom of light (referenced)
8. Isaiah 46:9-10 - God declaring the end from the beginning
9. Philippians 2 - Christ leaving glory and becoming obedient unto death (alluded to)
10. Revelation 5 - Jesus taking the scroll/title deed (referenced)
11. Revelation 12 - War in heaven, Satan cast to earth (alluded to)
12. Genesis 3 - The fall (referenced)

### Alluded To or Thematically Referenced:

13. John 4 - Satan's temptation of Jesus in the wilderness (likely meant Matthew 4 or Luke 4)
14. Romans - Mentioned as one of three books the pastor would choose
15. Colossians 2:15 - God making a spectacle of principalities and powers
16. Job - Mentioned but not quoted

### Relevant Verses for Main Themes Discussed:

17. 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 - Weapons of our warfare (sermon series theme)
18. Romans 8:37-39 - More than conquerors in Christ
19. 1 John 4:4 - Greater is He that is in you
20. Hebrews 4:12 - Word of God living and active (referenced near end)
21. Luke 15:10 - Joy in heaven over one sinner who repents (angels rejoicing theme)



**Key Points:**

- Christians are not wrestling from a position of defeat but from complete victory in Christ Jesus
- We wrestle against principalities, powers, rulers, authorities, and spiritual forces in the heavenly places, not against flesh and blood
- Christ is seated far above all rule, authority, power, and dominion in the heavenly places
- Believers are blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ in the heavenly realms
- The church demonstrates God's manifold (multi-faceted, infinite) wisdom to angelic beings
- God's redemptive plan was established before the foundation of the world
- The mystery hidden for ages—that Gentiles would be fellow heirs with Jews through Christ—is now revealed
- Even angels long to look into the things of salvation and marvel at God's wisdom
- Believers are holy and blameless before God not because of their own works, but because they are in Christ
- God's wisdom is so complete that every possible scenario leads to His predetermined end—Satan cannot win
- The Holy Spirit serves as a guarantee and deposit of our future inheritance
- While believers may face temporary defeats in battles, their ultimate victory in Christ is eternally secure

**NOTES:**

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**Discussion Questions:**

How does understanding that Christ is seated above all rule, authority, power, and dominion change the way you approach spiritual battles in your daily life?

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In what ways does the concept of God's manifold wisdom—His infinite ability to see every possible scenario and still accomplish His perfect plan—give you confidence when facing uncertainty?

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The sermon emphasizes that Christians wrestle from a position of victory rather than defeat. How might this perspective shift the way you respond to personal struggles or spiritual attacks?

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What does it mean for the church to reveal God's manifold wisdom to principalities and powers in heavenly places, and how does this elevate your understanding of your role as a believer?

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How does knowing you were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world impact your sense of identity and purpose?

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The pastor states that being holy and blameless before God is only possible through Christ, not our own works. How does this truth free you from striving for perfection while still pursuing holiness?

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Why do you think the angels long to look into the mysteries of salvation, and what does their amazement teach us about the magnitude of God's redemptive plan?

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## **Small Group Guide: "What Is Your Battle Plan?"**

**Based on Ephesians 1-6 | Pastor's Sermon on Spiritual Warfare**

### **Opening Prayer & Icebreaker (10 minutes)**

**Icebreaker Question:** If you could only have three books of the Bible for the rest of your life, which would you choose and why?

*(The pastor chose Romans, Ephesians, and Revelation)*

### **Key Scripture Passages**

- **Ephesians 6:10-12** - Our wrestling match
- **Ephesians 1:15-23** - Christ's position of authority
- **Ephesians 3:1-11** - The mystery revealed through the church
- **Ephesians 1:3-14** - Every spiritual blessing in Christ

### **Key Takeaways**

#### **1. We Are Not Wrestling From Behind**

We wrestle against principalities and powers, but not from a position of defeat. We wrestle from a position of complete victory in Christ.

#### **2. Christ Is Seated Above ALL**

Jesus is seated far above all rule, authority, power, and dominion in the heavenly places—above everything that has authority in this present age and the age to come.

#### **3. The Church Displays God's Manifold Wisdom**

Through the church, God's infinite, multi-faceted wisdom is being revealed to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms. Even angels are watching in amazement.

#### **4. You Have Every Spiritual Blessing**

In Christ, believers have been blessed with EVERY spiritual blessing in the heavenly places—the same place where Christ is seated above all powers.

#### **5. You Are Holy and Blameless in Christ**

Not because of your works, but because you are in Christ. When God looks at you, He sees Jesus—holy and blameless.

## Discussion Questions

### Section 1: Understanding Our Position (15-20 minutes)

1. **Read Ephesians 6:10-12 together.** What does it mean that "we do not wrestle against flesh and blood"? How does this change the way you view conflicts in your life?
2. The pastor emphasized that we wrestle from a position of victory, not defeat. How does this truth change your perspective on spiritual battles you're currently facing?
3. **Read Ephesians 1:19-23.** What stands out to you about Christ's position? How does knowing that Jesus is seated "far above all rule and authority" impact your confidence as a believer?

### Section 2: The Manifold Wisdom of God (15-20 minutes)

4. **Read Ephesians 3:8-11.** What does it mean that God's "manifold wisdom" is being made known through the church? Why is this significant?
5. The pastor explained that God's plan of redemption was established "before the foundation of the world." How does this truth about God's sovereignty encourage you? Does it raise any questions?
6. How does it make you feel to know that angels and spiritual beings are watching God's plan unfold through the church—through you?

### Section 3: Your Identity in Christ (15-20 minutes)

7. **Read Ephesians 1:3-6.** Make a list together of everything these verses say about what God has done for us. Which of these truths do you need to remind yourself of most often?
8. The pastor said, "When the Father looks at you and me, He sees someone who is holy and blameless." How does this truth combat the enemy's accusations against you?
9. **Read Ephesians 1:13-14.** What does it mean that the Holy Spirit is our "guarantee"? How does this give you confidence about your salvation?

### Section 4: Practical Application (15-20 minutes)

10. The enemy can only keep you down if you let him. What are some specific ways the enemy has been trying to discourage you or make you feel defeated recently?

11. The pastor challenged us to read Ephesians 1 every morning. What difference might this make in your daily life? Will you commit to trying this for one week?
12. How can understanding your position in Christ change the way you:
  - Face challenges at work or school?
  - Navigate relationships?
  - Deal with fear, anxiety, or discouragement?
  - Pray?

### **Practical Applications**

#### **This Week's Challenge:**

#### **Choose ONE of the following to practice this week:**

1. **Daily Declaration:** Read Ephesians 1:3-14 every morning before starting your day. Write down one truth each day that stands out to you.
2. **Identity Reminder:** When the enemy brings accusations or discouragement, respond with: "I am in Christ. I am holy and blameless before God. I have every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places."
3. **Perspective Shift:** When facing a conflict or challenge, pause and ask: "Am I viewing this as wrestling against flesh and blood, or am I recognizing the spiritual battle behind it?" Pray accordingly.
4. **Gratitude Practice:** Make a list of the spiritual blessings you have in Christ (use Ephesians 1-3 as a guide). Thank God for each one.

#### **Memory Verse**

**Ephesians 1:3** *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places."*

#### **Closing Prayer Focus (10 minutes)**

#### **Pray for one another in these areas:**

- That we would truly grasp our position of victory in Christ
- For strength to stand firm against the enemy's schemes this week
- For eyes to see the manifold wisdom of God in our daily lives



# 5-Day Devotional: Wrestling from Victory

## Day 1: Seated Above All

**Reading:** Ephesians 1:15-23

**Devotional:** Before you face today's battles, remember where your Redeemer sits. Christ is positioned far above all rule, authority, power, and dominion—not just in this age, but in the age to come. Every principality you wrestle against is under His feet. This isn't your future hope; this is your present reality. When anxiety whispers that you're losing ground, remind yourself: Jesus lacks nothing. He possesses all authority, and you are in Him. The enemy wants you to fight from a position of fear and defeat, but the truth is staggering—you wrestle from a position of complete victory. Your Savior stands triumphant over every force that opposes you. Let this truth anchor your soul today.

**Reflection:** What battle are you facing where you need to remember Christ's authority?

## Day 2: The Mystery Revealed

**Reading:** Ephesians 3:1-11

**Devotional:** You are part of something that was hidden for ages in God—a mystery that now astonishes even the angelic realm. Through the church, the manifold wisdom of God is being revealed to rulers and authorities in heavenly places. Every time someone comes to faith, heaven erupts in worship, not because of the person saved, but because of the God who saves. You are a living demonstration of divine wisdom that predates creation itself. The principalities and powers watch in amazement as God's perfect plan unfolds through imperfect people made perfect in Christ. Your salvation isn't random—it's the culmination of eternal purpose. You matter infinitely more than you realize.

**Reflection:** How does knowing you're part of God's eternal plan change your perspective today?

## Day 3: Every Spiritual Blessing

**Reading:** Ephesians 1:3-14

**Devotional:** Stop living like a spiritual pauper. God has blessed you in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. Not some blessings. Not a few blessings. Every single one. Before the foundation of the world, God chose you to be holy and blameless before Him—not through your performance, but through Christ's perfection. You have redemption through His blood, forgiveness according to the riches of His grace, and the Holy Spirit as your guarantee. When the enemy whispers accusations about your unworthiness, he's right about you—but he's wrong about your position. You're in Christ, and that changes everything. You have full access to the resources of heaven.

**Reflection:** Which spiritual blessing do you need to claim by faith today?

## Day 4: Strengthened with Power

**Reading:** Ephesians 3:14-21

**Devotional:** God is able to do far more than you will ever ask or think according to the power at work within you. Read that again. The same power that raised Christ from the dead and seated Him above all things is actively working in you. You're not fighting in your own strength—you're strengthened with power through His Spirit in your inner being. When you feel weak, remember: Christ dwells in your heart through faith. You are rooted and grounded in a love that surpasses knowledge. The breadth, length, height, and depth of Christ's love for you is immeasurable. You may be filled with all the fullness of God. This isn't motivational talk; this is your spiritual reality.

**Reflection:** Where do you need God's power to work beyond what you can ask or imagine?

## Day 5: The Battle Plan

**Reading:** Ephesians 6:10-12

**Devotional:** Finally. After learning who you are in Christ, what you possess in Christ, and where Christ is seated, now Paul says: be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Your battle plan begins with understanding your position. You don't wrestle against flesh and blood, but against spiritual forces. Yet you don't wrestle from behind—you wrestle from victory. Satan knows he cannot win. Every scheme he devises plays into God's manifold wisdom. Put on the whole armor of God not to barely survive, but to stand victorious. When you wake tomorrow, remind yourself: I am in Christ Jesus, seated with Him above all principalities and powers, and my victory cannot be lost.

**Reflection:** How will you approach spiritual warfare differently knowing you fight from victory, not for it?

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## Sermon Transcript:

What's your battle plan?

And last week, we really began to look at what the Bible teaches about the two kingdoms, that there is the kingdom of God in Christ that we are a part of.

As Colossians chapter 1 says, we've been what transferred from the kingdom of darkness, and we've been brought into the kingdom of the glorious Son.

That's the reality for those of us who are in Christ.

And that there is the kingdom of Satan or the kingdom of darkness that is an affront to the kingdom of God on every level.

It opposes and affronts the kingdom of God.

And so we learned a little bit about that.

We'll learn more of that in detail in the coming weeks.

But before we get here to Ephesians chapter 6, and that's where I'd like for you to turn your Bibles this morning, turn with me to Ephesians chapter 6.

And I'm going to read to you just a few verses from

from 10 to 12 this morning in Ephesians chapter 6.

Now, my intent is not to preach the entire book of Ephesians this morning, okay?

But I am going to be going over a lot of the book of Ephesians.

In fact, I thought about this this week.

If you were to give me the option out of all 66 books in the

to only allow me for the rest of my life to have three books of the Bible, what three books would I personally choose?

And that's a very difficult thing for us because we love the word of God.

But I thought through that and I came to the conclusion for me personally, that if you gave me the option of choosing three books of the 66 Old and New Testament, I would choose first Romans.

Number two, I would choose the Epistle of Ephesians.

And number three, I would take the book of Revelation.

If that's all I had for the rest of my life to have to read and to study, those would be the three that I personally would choose.

I love this letter to the church in Ephesus.

In fact, those of you that have heard me speak about this before, when I was just a very young teenager, probably more like eighth grade, one of my uncles, he gave me a challenge.

that I would read and study the book of Ephesians.

So even back when I was in about sixth or eighth grade, somewhere in there, I took that to heart and began, even as a young boy, reading the book of Ephesians and fell in love with this book for many, many, many reasons.

The Apostle Paul here in chapter six now is going to be wrapping up his letter to this church.

This is why I believe in teaching through the Bible

expository preaching where we take the Bible take a book of it and we study it from the first chapter to the very end because if I was simply to read this verse to you which we have done and we're going to read this now in your hearing verses 10 through 12 and we just preached on this alone which we could this morning we are going to miss so much of the truth that is in here

And so that's why we wanna teach through a book so we get a grasp on what is being taught.

It'll be like coming into a letter that someone wrote you that was 10 pages long and only reading the last page.

You would miss a tremendous amount.

But I'm gonna start with this and then we're gonna go back through and read the rest of the pages, so to speak, this morning.

Paul says, wrapping this up, finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.

Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness.

also against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

So Paul here is speaking about the fact that we are to stand against the devil's schemes.

We're not to stand in our own strength, but in the strength of the Lord God Almighty.

and that we are really wrestling here not against human beings, that our real battle that we are in is not against flesh and blood, although it seems sometimes that it is because the enemy also uses flesh and blood to come against us personally.

and also to perform the things that he desires over his little God kingdom here on earth.

He's behind those things as principalities and powers.

Paul also talks about rulers and authorities and cosmic powers that we are wrestling against, Christian.

Not only that, but also the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

So there's a whole lot in this passage of Scripture.

In order for us to have a better understanding though of what Paul is really getting at here and this is why I'm taking a break from just going right on into this and we're gonna be unwrapping this, we need to go back and to get a real good understanding of what Paul is really talking about here and we need to understand how we are wrestling and from the position we are wrestling from

And how we are to wrestle and what does all of this mean for the believer?

I mean, are we really gonna be defeated?

Is that what this is really about?

The answer to that is absolutely not, Christian.

You and I are not gonna be defeated in the realm of eternity.

It's never gonna happen because, Christian, you're not gonna lose the victory that Christ Jesus won.

He's already won.

You understand that.

He's won the victory, and yet we are still against the principalities, powers, and rulers over this dark world and over the heavenlies.

We're still in a wrestling match, folks, because Satan has not yet been bound, and we've not entered into the millennial kingdom, and the end of the age has not happened.

And so until that happens, you and I are going to wrestle a very serious battle.

We're coming against Satan.

very, very real things in the spirit realm.

But we are not wrestling from a position of defeat.

Do you understand that?

Once we read through here, you're gonna begin to grasp why I love Ephesians so much.

You and I are wrestling against these things, these beings, if you will.

We are wrestling against all of these things in the spiritual realm, manifesting themselves in the physical realm.

We are wrestling against them, but we are not wrestling from a position of defeat.

We're actually wrestling from a position of victory in Jesus.

Oftentimes, I think Christians have a mindset that we are really wrestling from behind, right?

We're not wrestling from behind because it's already been won.

But nonetheless, we're still wrestling.

It does not mean that we're not doing anything.

We are very actively involved in this battle.

It is real.

There are real consequences to it.

But one consequence of it is not you ever losing salvation in Christ Jesus.

That has already been done.

It's over with and finished.

But the consequences of allowing ourselves to fall into the schemes of the evil one, there can be consequences there.

We can have our joy robbed.

We can have our testimony affected.

We can have consequences that play out in our physical life to the duration of our life by basically allowing the enemy to what?

To have victory over us in areas which he shouldn't have any authority to have.

But nonetheless, we still do this imperfectly.

but your salvation is secure, praise God, in the Lord Jesus Christ.

So you are wrestling against these things, Christian, but you're not wrestling from behind, you're wrestling in total victory, in total victory, in the end.

It's very important that we understand that.

Go back with me now, and like I said, I'm not gonna preach the whole book of Ephesians, but we're gonna cover a bunch of it, okay?

Go with me to Ephesians chapter one

Ephesians chapter one, and we're gonna pick up in verse 15 to 23.

In verses 15 to 23.

Now we see it begins with the words for this reason, and we're gonna get back to the first part of this later on in this message, because if we just start for this reason, we have missed the reason that he's writing these next things.

But I want for you to see this, that Paul has already spoken about principalities, powers, and heavenly places earlier in his letter to these believers in Ephesus.

This is a very real thing, folks.

Listen to what it says here.

Starting in verse 15, and he's gonna go all the way through 23, here's what I wanna read to you.

In him, that is Christ Jesus, listen to this, this is where we're gonna learn about our position of victory.

Not only our position of victory, but the provision of what God has provided already for us.

We're not only gonna learn about what God has provided for us, but we're also gonna learn how all this can play out in our lives.

So this is what Paul writes to them.

For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, that he may give you the spirit of wisdom.

We need the spirit of wisdom.

And of revelation.

In the knowledge of Christ, in him.

We need the knowledge of this.

Paul says we need the spirit of wisdom, we need revelation, and we need the knowledge of Christ.

We need to understand these things, and when we begin to understand these things, it's gonna change the whole way you view even the wrestling from which we are wrestling, not only from positionally, but who we're wrestling against.

And I will say this, that we read last week that God made a spectacle of the principalities and the powers by triumphing over them through the cross.

There already has been a procession of victory has already happened.

But there's going to be even more to come.

Listen to what he says as he continues here.

Guys, you're going to leave here so encouraged, you're not even going to know what to do.

Okay?

This is such good stuff.

I'm so excited to be here this morning.

Then he moves on and says this.

Also praying that they would have the eyes of their hearts enlightened, that they may know what is the hope to which he has called you.

What is the greatness, no excuse me, what are the riches of the glorious inheritance in the saints of God?

And what is the immeasurable, you can't measure the greatness of God's power toward us who believe.

According to the working, now listen to this, the working not of your might, but the working of his might that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead.

And listen to this, and he seated him at his right hand, guess where?

in the heavenly places.

We just read about heavenly places, and we learned that this fear of principalities, powers, and authority actually is happening in the heavenlies, right?

Because Satan is operating in the heavenlies, but also here on the earth as well.

When you get to Revelation, you find that there's battle in heaven and Michael fights against Satan and the angels, the demonic beings who have rebelled against God and who are against God and God's plan.

And they have followed Lucifer or Satan here.

And there's this big battle and Satan is cast from the heavens to the earth.

He no longer is able to even leave the domain of the earth at this point in Revelation.

But right now he's still operating in the heavenlies.

and also here on the earth.

And what we're seeing here that's so incredible is that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead by God.

But listen, we know Philippians tells us that he left the glory and the splendor of heaven and he made himself, what?

Take upon flesh and becomes obedient even unto death.

He came the greatest distance to save and he was raised the greatest distance to rule.

This is where Jesus Christ now is seated.

But look what the Bible says.

You don't want to miss these things because Paul has it here for a reason for us.

He says that this is where he's been seated, listen, far above some rule.

Is that what your Bible says?

What does your Bible say?

All rule.

Your Redeemer, he is seated in the heavenlies

Above all rule.

All rule.

And above all authority.

Remember Satan said that he had authority to offer Jesus, the incarnate Christ, the kingdoms of the world when he did that in John chapter four.

He had the authority to do that and we learned why he had that authority, that he usurped it with Adam and it was rightfully given to him

And then we see in Revelation chapter five where Jesus takes the scroll from the right hand of God and what?

He is now ruling and reigning there.

He takes the title deed of the earth back.

He is the second Adam.

He's done it perfectly according to what?

The manifold wisdom of God.

Oh guys, when you see this, oh my word, this is incredible.

You think, why are you getting so excited?

Because this is some of the best stuff you're ever gonna hear.

This is incredible, Christian.

So he's seated far above all rule, all authority, and all power.

Jesus is seated there.

What is the demonstration?

Not only all power, but all dominion.

That means rulership.

That means ruler.

To have dominion means authority.

It means all those things.

He is above all of those things in the heavenlies.

God has seated him above them all.

He is above every name that is named.

Not only, listen to this, not only in this present age that you and I are living in, but also in the age that is to come.

Isn't that awesome?

And God put all things, all things, say all things with me.

You want to learn a Greek word today?

I know you don't care.

All.

Do you know what all means in Greek?

All.

Yes, it does.

Look at you scholarly ones.

Yes.

Wow.

He put all things.

God did.

He is sovereign.

God is sovereign.

And he put Jesus where?

Above all power, all authority, all rule, all dominion.

He seated Christ above it all.

He is sovereign.

He is sovereign.

Not only above it all, but he put all things under his feet as if Jesus Christ is standing upon it all with all power, authority, dominion, and rule.

Think about this.

You, dear Christian, are in Christ.

You are not defeated.

No, your Jesus has all power, dominion, authority, rule, all.

His feet are above it all.

What a picture of who Jesus Christ has always been and still remains.

Wow, isn't that incredible?

Not only that, God gave him his head.

He is the head, what?

Over all things, there it is again, to the church.

Your redeemer lacks nothing, nothing.

He lacks nothing, dear Christian.

Jesus is not somehow a poor beggar who does not have the provision that you need in your life.

It's not who Jesus Christ is.

He's been given all power, authority, dominion, all rule, and he is set as head over the church.

Oh, this is crazy awesome.

Which is what?

His body.

His body.

Christian, did you know that you are the body of Christ?

The head of Christ, who is Christ, over the body.

This is where he's seated and this is who he is.

Which is the body, the fullness of him who fills all and is in all.

Is that not incredible?

That's where Jesus Christ has been seated.

So let's go back and let's look at Ephesians.

Flip over to the right, chapter 3, verses 1 through 11.

We might preach most of Ephesians.

Actually, it would take us six months to go through this book if we even got that done in that time.

Now listen to what Paul says.

He uses the word again.

For this reason.

Well, you've got to go back and read all of chapter 1, all of chapter 2.

All of chapter two, it's gonna be explained for this reason.

Chapter three, we're gonna get to this.

Listen to this.

This will blow your mind.

Doesn't take much to blow mind.

Mind, mind, you get that?

Doesn't take much to blow mind.

You all didn't get that.

Okay, sorry, moving along.

Here we go.

For this reason, I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, a bondservant, a willing servant of Christ,

On behalf of you Gentiles, Paul says, assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, how the mystery, oh, here's a mystery, was made known to me by revelation as I have written briefly when you read this.

You can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was, listen to this,

This mystery that Paul's talking about, this mystery of the church, the Gentiles being brought in, made the same as Israel under God, listen to what Paul says.

This mystery, Paul says, is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

And what's fascinating is in verse five he says, this mystery was not made known to the sons of men in other generations.

It was hidden in other generations.

They spoke about it.

The prophets spoke about these things.

But like it says in the Bible, they wondered about who was being talked about.

They didn't know.

Paul says, but in Christ, this has been made manifest.

It's been revealed.

This mystery is that Gentiles are now also brought into the commonwealth of Israel and we are all the Israel of God.

But it's the church that Paul is speaking of when he's talking about these things.

In verse seven, of this gospel, I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power.

To me, though I am the very least of all saints, this grace was given to preach to the Gentiles, listen to this, the unsearchable riches of Christ and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery which was hidden for ages in God.

It was hidden for the ages in who?

In God.

Listen now, this is really amazing.

Here we go.

who created all things.

So that through the church, here it is, Paul says, here's the big mind blower.

This mystery that Paul is sharing about, this gospel being for Gentiles and how Israel and the Gentiles under Christ and faith in him through the shed blood of atonement on the cross of Calvary, this faith in Christ alone that brings redemption and justification before God by faith in Christ, this incredible gift of salvation is both for Jew and Gentile and God in his manifold wisdom has always from eternity past and forever and ever, this has been the wisdom

of almighty God that he would do this it was hidden in God think of this now this is what he says that through the church who's the church not this building folks it's not first baptist it's not grace it's not those buildings those are nothing more than pieces of metal concrete wood and nails that's all that is do you know who the church is you and I

We're learning something incredible here, Paul says, that through the church, through you and through me, and for all who believe, listen to this, the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known, guess to who?

Oh, this is awesome.

Here's these rulers and principalities again, that God through the church, the bride, the body of Christ,

This whole redemption story from Genesis chapter one all the way to the very end of Revelation, the plan of redemption has been God's perfect manifold wisdom before the foundation of the world ever started.

This is incredible.

And he says this, that this now might be made known through the church, but to who?

This is amazing.

To authorities, there that word is again, in heavenly places.

To who else?

Rulers and authorities in heavenly places.

Listen to this.

This is a mind blower.

God created the angelic beings.

They have a free will.

We know that a third of the angels followed Lucifer, and we're gonna learn more about Lucifer in the coming weeks.

Lucifer himself was one of the most incredible beings that God ever created.

In fact, he stood among the fiery stones before the throne of Almighty God.

Satan, though, took pride in himself, and he wanted to be like the Most High.

And he said, I will set myself far above the stars.

He's gonna set himself in the place that Christ has been seated.

This was his goal to be worshiped as God.

So he fell, right?

God says, nope, not happening.

He fell and one third of the principalities and powers that God had already established in his angelic being army, his army that he has, not only his army, but some angels are messenger angels.

Some angels are protecting angels.

Some angels actually are angels who do what?

They actually guard over a nation of people like Michael is over the nation of Israel and so on and so forth.

These are warriors.

These are incredible beings that have an understanding far beyond what we have.

An ability to do things that we cannot do.

And yet a third of them fell and followed after Satan.

And this is where we get the whole thing.

And this is what will blow your mind.

that through the church, through you and me, and through the gospel, from eternity past, before the foundation of the world, the word manifold here, I'm trying to get too excited, the word manifold here is like the spectrum of color.

There's just so many different aspects of color out there, and when you blend some together, they make a different color.

The wisdom of God is like this.

It is a spectrum that never ends.

His wisdom is infinite.

Infinite wisdom.

It's incredible.

And that God's plan from the foundation of the world was you and me in Christ.

And through the church, there's something that's going on to the principalities and the powers.

You wonder why you're in a battle?

You wonder why there's a war that's been waged against you?

Because of this principality and powers that has been shown this incredible manifold wisdom of God.

That through the church, and you don't want to miss this, that through the church, the manifold wisdom of God might what?

be revealed to the rulers and authorities in heavenly places.

That's who?

The angelic beings that God created.

You wonder why in heaven, when one is brought from death to life, there is unequivocal celebration.

And you know what they're doing?

They're not worshipping the one who was redeemed.

They're glorifying the one who did the redeeming.

The principalities and powers that we wrestle against the fallen ones.

This is God's revelation of the mystery of God's perfect plan set before the foundation of the world.

This is what the wisdom of God means.

And A.W.

Tozer, I think, says it very well.

Let me read this to you about what A.W.

Tozer and J.I.

Packer mention.

Let me just read this to you.

Man, all things start falling apart when you turn 25.

All right, you all didn't believe that, neither did I. Okay, here we go.

This is what A.W.

Tozer and J.I.

Packer say about a definition of the wisdom of God or wisdom.

In the Holy Scriptures, wisdom, when used of God and good men, always carries a strong moral connotation.

It is conceived as being pure, loving, and good.

Wisdom, among other things, listen to this, now this is very good, is the ability to devise perfect ends.

Perfect ends.

Perfect ends.

and to achieve those ends by the most perfect means.

It sees the end from the beginning, so there can be no need to guess or conjecture.

Wisdom sees everything in focus, each in proper relation to all, and is thus able to work toward predestined goals with flawless perfection.

This is so interesting about Satan.

There's nothing he could ever do to defeat God.

I want you to think about the manifold word.

It's as if God, who is infinitely wise and knows all things, that means he's omniscient as well,

Every single scenario that could ever happen for all the time of the ages that we live in.

Every single one of them, no matter what happens or what is done, God has already saw every one of them.

He's already thought through all of them.

And every single one, no matter what, will lead to his end, no matter what.

Do you see how incredible that is?

Satan cannot win no matter what he does.

You've got to blow his mind to think the church is the manifold wisdom of God.

This was before the foundation of the world, guys.

This is God working his perfect plan for thousands of years to the perfect end that he established, and nothing will thwart his plan.

Do you see how incredible that is?

If that doesn't give you some confidence today, I can't tell you anything else that will.

Satan knows he can't win, folks.

And that's why there was a procession that Jesus took with him as he descended.

And what did he do?

Let me tell you about my manifold wisdom.

You thought you had me.

You just played into my perfect plan.

You are part of the manifold wisdom.

Every one of you in here who are in Christ, you're part of the manifold wisdom of Almighty God and you know what you are?

The principalities and the powers of this world and the heavenlies, they're looking after all this stuff and it blows their mind.

And every time someone comes to faith in Christ, the angels in heaven are rejoicing and they are bowing down before who?

King Jesus.

Because it blows their mind that this manifold wisdom of God that looked like it all had been lost in Genesis chapter 3, it was all completely redeemed in the Lord Jesus, God Almighty Himself.

In fact, if you go with me to 1 Peter, go with me if you wouldn't mind.

Just turn to your right in your Bible and you're going to see something here that's pretty powerful.

1 Peter chapter 1, let's look at 10 through 12.

We wrestle not against flesh and blood, folks.

We do have a wrestling that we are in.

And when I tell you that Jesus Christ won the victory, I'm telling you it's already been won, but Satan has not been put away yet.

You understand that.

And so knowing that he cannot win victory,

He knows this to be the case.

What does he do?

He comes with schemes and devices and uses principalities and powers.

He uses all of these things in the spiritual realm and he brings them into light in the physical realm through people, through rulers, through kings, through countries, through all those things in order to do what?

To cause you problems.

But he can't take your position.

You understand me.

Cannot take it.

You need to tell yourself that every morning you get up, I am in Christ Jesus, and it cannot be lost.

It can't be.

I am operating today, whether it's in my job, whether it's in my marriage, whether it's raising my kids, whatever it is, I am operating as a child of the living God, Jesus Christ, the head of this church whom I'm part of.

I am operating under every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus.

I'm operating in victory today because of whose I am and who I am in Christ Jesus.

That's who we are.

That's incredible.

And today when you leave your home, the principalities and the powers and all that you're gonna wrestle against, they are all watching and working in amazement.

1 Peter 1, 10 through 12.

Listen to this.

Concerning this salvation.

Listen.

The prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours, Peter says, they searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted.

Why?

He has manifold wisdom.

inquiring what person in time the spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the suffering of Christ and the subsequent glories.

Do you know you're part of the glories of Christ from his suffering?

It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves, but in all actuality, when they wrote the things that they wrote, they were serving you, church.

They're serving you in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preach the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.

Here it is again, guys.

Things into which angels long to look.

There's principalities and powers in here.

Did you know that?

There's an audience in here

You have an audience all week, and it's not just people that you are living with.

We have an audience.

The angels even long to look into it.

Okay, let's get into some more good stuff.

You guys got time?

Okay.

Bad thing about these things, I can't see any of you.

I don't even know where.

I mean, I know you're out there, but I turned 50 yesterday.

You know what my wife gave me?

She gave me these.

This was my 50th birthday gift right here.

Isn't that wonderful?

Oh, I said, gee, honey, you're so kind and loving to me.

No, she just gets tired of me not being able to see things, like my keys that are right in front of me, you know, things like that.

Go with me to Ephesians chapter 3.

Here we go, 14 through 21.

Oh, this is good stuff.

We're almost done.

Another two hours, we'll have these other two chapters done.

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened, here it is, with power through the Spirit in your inner being, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, that you being rooted and grounded in love may have the strength to comprehend with all the saints, here it is,

What is the breadth?

What is the length?

What is the height?

And what is the depth?

And to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now to him who is able to do far more than you will ever ask or think according to the power at work within us

To him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations.

It would do you well to read those verses every day.

That's what you have available to you.

Because that's who Christ is and what he has provided.

Isaiah chapter 46, you know this is probably one of my favorite Old Testament passages.

I talk about it a lot.

Isaiah chapter 46.

Let me read them to you real quickly.

We could read Job and a lot of other places today.

I don't have time.

But Isaiah 46, starting in verse 9.

For I am God.

There is no other.

I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning.

See, he can do that because of his manifold wisdom.

And from ancient times, things not yet done, saying that my counsel will stand and I, God says, I will accomplish all my purpose.

That's who you belong to.

Now let's go back and we'll wrap it up with this, okay?

Go back to Ephesians chapter one.

Probably my favorite section in the book of Ephesians for a reason.

In order for us to be able to understand what Paul is trying to tell the believers in Ephesus there in Ephesians chapter 6 when he says, finally, we have to read what Paul has already written.

Because it's the culmination of what Paul has already shared that helps them understand the wrap-up and how they're to do this and why they can do this and what God has provided for them and who they are in Christ.

It's significant because they need to know these things.

And Christian, before you walk out of here today, you need to know who you are in Christ Jesus and whose you are.

You must know this.

Here we go.

3 through 14, chapter 1.

My favorite section probably of all scripture.

Here it is.

You ready?

Pull on your boots.

It doesn't get any better than this.

Blessed be...

the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

If you have a pencil handy or a pen, you need to get busy in this section.

Who has blessed us in Christ.

Oh, this is a good thing to underline right here.

He has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing

Every one, not two or three, but every spiritual blessing in Christ, God has blessed you in Christ with every spiritual blessing in him.

In, here it is again, where?

In the heavenly places.

Why?

Because Christ is seated there.

Why is this so significant?

Why did he say this?

Because we understand now what it meant when Paul says that he has been seated above all rule, all power, all dominion, all authority, and his feet have been set above all those things in the heavenly places.

Paul says, you've got to understand something.

There is a battle going on.

And yes, the heavenly places are involved in it.

And those in which we wrestle against are in the heavenly places, manifesting themselves here in the earth.

That is true.

But Paul says, you though, Christian, have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

And he even puts it in here, in the heavenly places.

Your Redeemer is set above all those under whom

You're wrestling against.

They are under him.

That's where our authority is, Christian.

It's in Christ.

Then he continues and says this.

Even as he chose us in him, in Christ, this is the manifold wisdom of God.

Listen to this.

This isn't, in my opinion, simply just speaking about the fact that God could, yes, foreknowledge is an aspect of that, but there's more than this.

This simply means it's not just how it played out and God just spun the dice and guess what?

Lo and behold, you came to believe in Jesus just by some whim.

That's not what this is.

This is a sovereign creator.

This is a God of manifold wisdom.

This is a God that you can't come to the end of everything that he has already thought, known about, and developed.

That's why all eternity, we will spend eternity still learning of the manifold wisdom of God because he's infinite and eternal.

This isn't just the luck of the draw and God looked down the corridors of time, he spun the dice and lo and behold, you just came to know Jesus, one out of billions of people.

No, this is the manifold wisdom of God.

Speaking of something more than just how it played out, but how God intended it would play out and in fact, the very end of the means.

played out precisely how God had already determined it would plan out and it was established before the foundation of the world.

That's why these beings are blown away at the church because they're witnessing the manifold wisdom of God and they can't help but give glory to the God in whom they love and serve.

It's a mind blower.

Before, you can underline this, this is so good, even a crayon, scribble it in there.

The foundation before, before the foundation of the world.

God set this world on its foundation.

Before that even happened, God had already chose us in Christ.

Wow.

And this is also what he intended it would be.

That we should be holy and blameless before him.

Let me stop there quickly.

Okay.

When you come to faith in Christ...

You are not perfect.

Did you understand that?

If you think you are, give it a few minutes.

You're not.

To be holy and blameless before God would be to be blameless and to be holy.

There's nobody in this room who can do that.

There's no one on this planet who can do that.

You understand that.

We can't even love our neighbor as ourself.

We can't even love one another in the church.

We can't even do the basics, guys.

So what does this mean?

People look at that and go, well, I'm holy and I'm blameless.

No, you're not.

You're a sinner.

Who is holy and blameless?

Jesus is.

That was God's intent.

That you would be in Christ because the enemy already knows that no type of sin could ever be in the presence of God.

You and I never would make it, guys and girls.

Never happened in a billion years because we cannot do it.

So Jesus, in the manifold wisdom of God, Jesus Christ is God.

Before the world ever began, before the foundations were ever set in place, this is the manifold wisdom of God that you and I would be holy and blameless before him.

And the only way that is possible is through Jesus.

So that's why the enemy comes to you and he points out when you're not holy and you're not blameless.

And that's why he gave you a wife, to point out why you're not holy and you're not blameless.

Thank God for your wife.

She reminds you how you are not measuring up.

Is my wife here today?

I know she is.

Oh, lunch is going to be a rough one today.

Anybody have an invitation for me?

Just moving along.

Listen.

The reason is, guys, out of the manifold wisdom of God, that you are holy and blameless before God.

Why will you receive a crown of righteousness and have an inheritance of all things?

Why do you have every spiritual blessing in Christ?

It's not because you went through the religious system of the world and kept every T and dotted every I and did everything because you can't do it.

It's because Jesus Christ is and did everything.

That's why you and I are guaranteed to have salvation in Christ.

And he gave us a deposit called the Holy Spirit, who's the third person of the Godhead, to live in us as a deposit that guarantees the fulfillment of what yet is to come.

And that is the final part of my salvation and glorification.

Oh, this is so good.

In love.

In love.

He predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ.

According, here we go, this is it.

According to not your purpose, according to the purpose of his will.

To the praise, not of your works, to the praise of his glorious grace.

with which he has blessed us in who?

Christ, the beloved.

In Christ, we have redemption.

We have been legally purchased by Jesus Christ.

We are his.

through his blood, the forgiveness of our sins according to the riches of his grace, which he has lavished like your mama puts frosting on a cupcake, you know, like lavished you.

He's done it upon us with all, here it is again, wisdom, all wisdom, all insight, making known to us the mystery of his will according to his purpose, not my purpose, this is his purpose,

with which he set forth in Christ, here it is, as a plan.

This has always been God's plan.

How disappointing it must be for the third and Satan himself to have really seriously thought they could thwart the plan of Almighty God.

How foolish it is, person, to think that you can thwart the plan of God.

How foolish the atheist is to think that he can somehow say, God, you don't exist, and yet somehow he won't exist if they say it.

How stupid is that and moronic is it?

He is God.

And this is the purpose, the fullness of time, to unite all things in heaven.

In Christ, in heaven, and on the earth.

Here it is.

I'm almost finished, I promise.

In Christ, we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose, not your purpose, folks, according to the purpose of him who works all things according to what?

The counsel of your will.

Nope.

Counsel of his will.

Counsel of his will.

so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.

Praise of his glory.

In Christ, you also, when you heard what the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation and believed in him, you were sealed.

You were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit who is a guarantee.

You know what that word means, guarantee?

Guarantee.

Your guarantee of our inheritance for how long?

Until we screw up.

Excuse me, until we mess up.

No.

Until we acquire.

Until we acquire possession of it.

And all of this is to the praise of his glory.

Glory.

Do you understand now a little bit more about your position of where you are wrestling from and who you belong to and what you have access to and then how you can wrestle against the principalities and powers and how he has zero authority over any of you.

None.

None.

Now when we get to Ephesians chapter six, now that changes things.

No longer, Christian, are you entering into this struggle, this wrestling, in defeat.

You understand me.

I'm not saying that

You may be defeated if you allow those things to happen.

But you are victorious always and forevermore in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord God Almighty.

So when the enemy comes to you and tells you how unholy you are or how unrighteous you are, undeserving you are, the truth is, he's right.

But it's not got to do with me.

What about him?

You can't say that about my Jesus.

And I'm in him.

I have put on Christ.

And when the Father looks at you and me, he sees someone who is holy and someone who is blameless.

For he set forth out of his manifold wisdom that you and I would be holy and blameless in his sight in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Folks,

It don't matter.

It doesn't matter.

And many things don't matter.

This, Christian, this really matters.

I pray today that in my inability to communicate, God will somehow use the words of his powerful scriptures

to weld itself to your very soul.

Because we will rage and wage a battle against the enemy.

But you, dear Christian, you always wrestle from a position of victory in Christ.

And even if you lost one this week,

You are still victorious in Christ.

Does that make sense?

And the enemy can only keep you down if you let him.

All you need to do is pick this up and it'll raise you up, buddy.

Read Ephesians chapter 1 every morning before you get up.

I promise you, your day will change.

It may not be circumstances that all change, but this will change you.

Guaranteed.

Because it's truth.

Let's pray.

As always, when we close this, this time that we close is a very significant time.

The reason I say that is because the whole thing about the Word of God is it's living and it's active.

And as the Word of God goes into the hearts of people, it does something.

The Bible says that it penetrates the heart and the soul of man.

And it cuts and it penetrates

even to divining soul and spirit.

So if you're here this morning and the word of God has penetrated your soul today in faith, in salvation, if the Jesus Christ by his spirit has come to you and you have been made aware of who he is, and today you believe in Christ Jesus, that he is Lord of all, and you repent of sin, turn to Christ, you will, not maybe, you will be saved.

Over here in this lodge, we have our pastors there that will be there to pray with anyone who has any questions, concerns.

Maybe you've had a bad week.

Maybe you've lost a loved one.

Maybe you've got a bad report.

We're here to pray with you.

I don't know what God has done in preparation in your heart this week, but this message was for us today.

I just pray that you would be obedient to God as we dismiss.

As I pray and I close, when I finish, please listen to me.

Dismiss quietly to that out there

And let God continue to do the work in the hearts of his people that are still here remaining that need to pray.

Amen?

I love you guys in Christ.

You are victorious in Christ Jesus.

You are a victor in Christ.

You belong to the king of glory.

And he is seated above all things.

Don't you forget that.

Let's pray.

Jesus, we love you.

God, the manifold wisdom in which we've just read about is beyond our ability to comprehend.

And Lord, that through the church, the manifold wisdom of God is revealed.

In fact, even the principalities and powers are watching these things.

It's too hard to even understand or imagine, but God, this has been your plan and it's working out precisely the way in which you set for it to do before the foundation of the world.

If there's someone here this morning that does not know you, Jesus, or today they have met you today, oh God, please, that they would receive this salvation by faith.

Turn from the life of deadness and sin and cling to Jesus today.

For the rest of us, Lord, I know there's some here that have recently got some bad reports physically about medical conditions and some of you have lost loved ones even this week and some are struggling with the pinch of finances, Lord, and worried about kids going back to school and all the busyness of this life and just everything in general, Lord, is such a barrage of things.

Keeps us distracted from the truth.

The truth is, man, what an incredible

unbelievable gift it is to be in Jesus.

I pray that every one of us leaves here today in victory and that we this week live our life from that position.

Thank you, Jesus, we pray.

Amen.