

October 3 Adult Spiritual Growth Class Synopsis

Unshakable Hope: Chapter 3: God will win the victory

Do you acknowledge the spiritual battle you are in?

Do you know what Jesus has done for you?

The Lord Almighty, the God of Jacob, is our refuge and strength, our ever-present help in trouble, and our mighty fortress (*Psalms 46:1,7*). He is a bulwark never failing. Our promise is that the God of Peace will soon crush Satan under your feet (*Romans 16:20*) – God will win the victory!

The Apostle Paul makes us aware that our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against rulers, against authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realm (*Ephesians 6:12*). We are to stay alert and stand firm in faith even as Satan (the devil, the divider, the deceiver, the schemer) prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour (*1 Peter 5:8-9*).

J.D. Greear writes that Satan's most effective weapon is to take our eyes off of what God has declared over us in the Gospel. Satan's primary temptation strategy is to try and make us forget what God has said about us and to evaluate our standing before God by some other criteria. This is shown in the story of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness shortly after God has proclaimed, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." (*Matthew 3:16*)

In the first temptation, the devil says, "If you are the son of God, command these stones to become bread." (*Matthew 4:3*) In other words, if you really are either royal or divine, prove it by using your power to your own benefit. In the next temptation, taking him to Jerusalem ("the holy city"), to the very highest point of the temple, the devil challenges Jesus to prove his identity: "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down." Using *Psalm 91:11-12*, the devil taunts Jesus that surely his angels will keep him from harm (*Matthew 4:5-6*). In the final temptation, the devil promises to give Jesus all the kingdoms of the world (as if they are his to give) if only Jesus will worship him.

In all three temptations, Jesus' responds with the Word of God. His identity as the Son of God is not shaken. Jesus rebuffs the devil with *Deuteronomy 8:3*, which is God's provision of Israel's needs in the 40 years in the wilderness: "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." Jesus rebuts the devil with *Deuteronomy 6:16*: "Do not put the Lord your God to the test." The context of the scripture is significant as Moses is reminding the people how they tested God at Massah, when God had already fed them with manna, and then they complained that God was planning to kill them with thirst (*Exodus 17:1-7*). Jesus finally orders Satan to leave, quoting *Deuteronomy 6:13*: "Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him". Jesus has come to proclaim and bring the reign of the one true God, to restore all creation with the ultimate victory over sin and death.

The Apostle Paul tells us that we are to be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power against the devil's schemes by putting on the full armor of God (*Ephesians 6:10-11*). We are to stand firm with the belt of truth buckled around our waist, always knowing God's truth in Christ Jesus from deception. We are to put on the breastplate of righteousness, protecting us from the attack of sin and remaining strong in the pursuit of holiness, always praying for purity and wholeness of heart. We are fitted with the

readiness that comes from the gospel of peace, knowing Christ as our Prince of Peace. We are to take up the shield of faith, which is anchored in God's Word and in no worldly circumstances, and which extinguishes all flaming arrows of harm of the evil one brings in the form of discouragement, despair and fear. We are given the helmet of salvation that protects our minds, fully immersed in and claiming God's Word, always knowing to whom we belong and that our standing is Christ Himself. We are to take the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, that strikes down all that would separate us from His great love and mercy. Lastly, we are told to pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, we are to be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. *(Ephesians 6:12-18)*

We can rest that God has won the victory. He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world (1 John 4:4). We are saved by God's amazing grace. God has put our sins and failures away forever, as far as the east is from the west and will never separate us from Him again *(Psalm 103:12)*. God has said to us in Christ, "You are My beloved child. In you I am well pleased"..."I will never leave or forsake you"..."surely goodness and mercy will follow you all the days of your life. You will dwell in the house, in My house, forever".

A song to reflect and pray on:

[A Mighty Fortress is Our God • T4G Live \[Official Lyric Video\] - YouTube \(Martin Luther\)](#)