Always Enough

A stick, a jar, seven baths, and a love too big to grasp

SPEAKER	Matt Ryniker
DATE	Sunday, November 13, 2022
PASSAGES	Exodus 17:1-7; 2 Kings 4:1-7; 2 Kings 5:1-14; Ephesians 3:14-21
MESSAGE	Begins at 1:21:47 in the service

THE BIG IDEA

Two words kept coming to Matt in prayer: *always enough*. When God invites us to take ground in our lives — over addiction, fear, bitterness, broken relationships — we fight from his favour, not for it, and we can trust that he is enough. He may ask for something that sounds silly or humbling, but his power is unlimited, and obedience is a love language to him.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Spiritual warfare means partnering with God for his kingdom to take territory in our lives — Christ's likeness, freedom from addiction, hope for marriages, boldness, forgiveness.
- We fight from God's favour, not for it. Believing his love is itself a way to honour him.
- "Earth isn't heaven's sweatshop." God created us to love us, and he is attacking us with his goodness.
- God has always been enough: a couple in their nineties, a slave who ruled, a shepherd boy against a giant.
- Moses struck a rock, a widow poured oil into borrowed jars, and Naaman dipped seven times. Each act looked foolish, and God met each one with power.
- Naaman's healing cost nothing but pride. God's power often comes in humble, stumbling-block ways, as in Christ crucified.

- Paul prays for power simply to grasp the love of Christ, and that power remains in the church today.

▶ 1:21:47

Earlier that morning Hope had dedicated the Lerma and Mates families and their babies, Alethea and Thomas. Then Matt explained that he had planned a different sermon months in advance — but falling ill the previous Sunday, he spent the week cancelling meetings and praying, and sensed that what he wanted to share was not what God wanted to share.

Joyous warfare

▶ 1:22:21

Two words kept coming to mind: *always enough*. They connect to something he had raised for weeks, at the risk of "becoming annoying": that Hope should embrace a kind of spiritual aggression, "to not hide but to take ground with the Lord." The war is not against you or me but against the darkness that seeks to destroy us.

▶ 1:23:42

By spiritual warfare he means partnering with God for his kingdom to take territory in our lives, for his glory and our benefit. Not money or fancy cars, but Christ's likeness: freedom from addiction, hope for marriages and families, boldness for the fearful, forgiveness for the bitter, the joy of the Holy Spirit. God is pursuing us aggressively for our good, to give us "the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit" (Isaiah 61:3). "It is the fire of Christ's love that is the fuel for our fight."

From his favour, not for it

▶ 1:25:04

"I am sincerely convinced that many of us need to be reminded that we fight from his favour, not for it." Many of us want to be good Christians and pour ourselves into praying for others and doing things for the Lord. But God is love; the gospel's power is that he does not count our sins against us (2 Corinthians 5:19) and raised Jesus for our salvation. "It would be really cool, and actually a way to honour him, if we just believed it."

▶ 1:26:15

So he asked everyone to stand for a time of receiving ministry from the Holy Spirit — no praying for anyone else, just letting God speak his love. He prayed that the love of Christ would blaze within them

and that the Lord would rebuke the enemy's lies, then asked each person to put a hand on their own heart and confess that they gladly receive his love.

▶ 1:29:48

Parents know: at Christmas or a birthday, you do not want a macaroni picture in return; you love to give and to see their joy. "Earth isn't heaven's sweatshop." He created us to love him, but we love because he first loved us (1 John 4:19), and one of his greatest joys is that he created us to love us. "He's chasing us with his goodness. He's attacking us with his love and affection," rescuing captives who often do not know how badly they want it.

▶ 1:31:16

He had asked the church to let the Lord highlight an area to take ground, or to pick the biggest area of failure. "I want us to experience joyous spiritual warfare," characterised by the oil of gladness. But for some, the big things seem unbelievable.

He has always been enough

▶ 1:32:09

What if God's plan required a couple in their nineties to have a baby (Genesis 21:1–7), a slave to rule a nation (Genesis 41:39–41), the sun to stand still (Joshua 10:12–14), or a boy to beat a seasoned giant (1 Samuel 17:48–50)? He has always been enough — enough to overcome our fear and doubt, and enough to carry us through the embarrassment of first steps, like calling the person God shows you that you have been avoiding.

A stick and a rock

▶ 1:32:43

> "The people grumbled against Moses and said, 'Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?' So Moses cried to the LORD, 'What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me.' And the LORD said to Moses, '...Take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people will drink.'"
>
> EXODUS 17:1–7 ↗

▶ 1:33:14

Some of us think about our walk with Christ the same way: *why did you redeem me from darkness just to leave me stuck here?* The place was named Massah and Meribah because they asked, "Is the LORD among us or not?" God wants us confident that he is with us. He led them into the wilderness, then gave them what they needed.

▶ 1:34:47

Imagine local media interviewing Moses on his way: *What's your plan, sir?* "I'm going to hit it with a stick." *And how do you feel that's going to work?* "God told me to do it." God met him in that awkward place. "Sometimes he'll ask us to do something that sounds silly, but we do it anyway because he's leading us. Obedience is like a love language to him."

A jar of oil

▶ 1:35:24

> "And Elisha said to her, 'What shall I do for you? Tell me; what have you in the house?' And she said, 'Your servant has nothing in the house except a jar of oil.' Then he said, 'Go outside, borrow vessels from all your neighbors, empty vessels and not too few. Then go in and shut the door behind yourself and your sons and pour into all these vessels.'"
>
> 2 KINGS 4:1–7 ↗

▶ 1:37:10

The creditor was coming to take her sons as slaves. God could have made money appear, but through the prophet he asked her to take a leap of faith. "What are you doing with all these vessels?" "I'm going to fill them all up with oil — from this little flask in my kitchen." It would have seemed silly. The oil flowed until the last jar was full.

▶ 1:37:51

How much more, when an area of our heart is riddled with fear, might he ask us to step out — and we think, *I don't want to talk to that guy, I'll look silly*. "But he'll meet you there."

Seven baths

▶ 1:38:38

Naaman, commander of Syria's army, a mighty man of valour, was a leper. A captive Israelite girl serving his wife spoke of the prophet in Samaria, so he went with silver, gold and changes of clothing,

and a letter that sent Israel's king into a panic: "Am I God, to kill and to make alive?" Elisha sent word: let him come, "that he may know that there is a prophet in Israel."

▶ 1:39:47

> "And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, 'Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored, and you shall be clean.' But Naaman was angry and went away, saying, 'Behold, I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call upon the name of the LORD his God, and wave his hand over the place and cure the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?'"
>
> 2 KINGS 5:1–14 ↗

▶ 1:40:55

Elisha did not even come out — "I like him." His servants reasoned with him — "if it is a great word, will you not do it?" — and he dipped seven times, and his flesh became like a little child's. We imagine God's favour requires talents of silver or some big hullabaloo. Naaman was asked simply to dip. "That's almost offensive." It was free, and it sounded dumb: your river is dinky.

▶ 1:42:22

It reminded Matt of the deep wells of salvation we draw from: Christ hanging naked and shamed on a cross, spat upon, dressed up to be mocked. *You want me to bring my real sin and darkness to him?* "Yeah. There is great power in the Lord, but he doesn't necessarily operate the way our important men here on earth operate. He's humble." Naaman's healing cost him only some pride — and the Lord gave him people to say, *just do it*.

▶ 1:43:38

Matt pictured the press again: *What are you doing in Israel, sir?* "I'm going to take seven baths." *Leprosy doesn't wash off.* "I know, you don't have to tell me."

Pinpoint an area for surrender

▶ 1:44:17

So back to the challenge: pinpoint an area for surrender, "not with heaviness but with eager anticipation that the Lord would move." He might ask for something humbling or something that sounds dumb. We already know God placed the gospel not in lofty philosophy or great deeds but in the stumbling block of Christ crucified (1 Corinthians 1:23–25).

▶ 1:45:39

God could have poofed the water into being, or led Israel somewhere that was never a wilderness — "he could have led them to the Golden Corral." He led them into a wilderness and then provided, because he is their source and always enough. None of this is condemnation. "God wants the prize of communion with us; he wants it more than we do. He longs for great victory in our lives even more than we do. He hopes when we've lost hope."

▶ 1:46:18

"There's no version of Christianity that does not require supernatural power." Even confessing that Jesus is Lord takes the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:3). We walk in "a naturally supernatural relationship with Christ" — for hope to the hopeless, sight to the blind, restored families. A broken relationship that looks hopeless is not. A vision of yourself as bold when you have always been cowardly is not madness. An addiction motivational videos could not touch — "he wants joy to dominate your life, and he wants you to know it was from him." Nothing is impossible with God (Luke 1:37).

Power to grasp his love

▶ 1:48:23

Where to start? Go to Jesus, the baptiser in the Holy Spirit, and ask for the transforming power of his love to burn within you. "I'm not talking about a Christianity that just gets you through your Tuesday."

▶ 1:48:55

> "That according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith — that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and 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 abundantly than all that we 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, forever and ever. Amen."
>
> EPHESIANS 3:14–21 ↗

▶ 1:50:03

Paul is on his knees praying for God's power to come on them so they could even comprehend Christ's love — "it's that big." Faith, Matt observed, is changing the way we think because he loves us more than we think. And that power did not come on the church just to get things going: "his power remains in the church."

▶ 1:51:06

He closed by having the congregation pray for one another in small groups through Paul's points: strength in the inner being; Christ dwelling in our hearts with increasing faith; power to grasp the love we are grounded in — "you got room in there for more"; growing knowledge of Christ's love; and being filled with all the fullness of God.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

SCRIPTURE IN THIS MESSAGE

- Isaiah 61:3
- 2 Corinthians 5:19
- 1 John 4:19
- Genesis 21:1–7
- Genesis 41:39–41
- Joshua 10:12–14
- 1 Samuel 17:48–50
- Exodus 17:1–7
- 2 Kings 4:1–7
- 2 Kings 5:1–14
- 1 Corinthians 1:23–25
- 1 Corinthians 12:3
- Luke 1:37
- Ephesians 3:14–21

FOR YOUR HOPE GROUP

1. Matt said we fight from God's favour, not for it. Where do you find yourself working for his approval rather than from it?
2. What area of your life do you sense God inviting you to take ground in, and what makes it feel too big?
3. Moses' staff, the widow's jar and Naaman's baths all looked foolish. When has obeying God felt awkward or humbling for you, and what happened?
4. Naaman nearly walked away because the cure was too simple and too humble. What pride might stand between you and what God wants to do?
5. Which of Paul's prayer points in Ephesians 3 will you pray for yourself and someone else this week?

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Matt Ryniker is Hope Chapel's senior pastor — his own description of the job — and reports to the church's governing board, who he cheerfully calls his boss. He and his wife Mandy have been held up from Hope's own pulpit as an example to the congregation. He spent a stretch of his working life as a public school teacher, and he still teaches the parent dedication classes where families commit to raising their children to follow Jesus — a theme that runs straight into this message.

Watch the full message:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DC2igcMZDJY&t=4907s

These notes summarise a message preached at Hope Chapel in Austin, Texas. They are a reader's aid, not a transcript — scripture references link to the full passage so you can read it in context.