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What Kingdom Citizens Do

Selected Scriptures

Prayer: *Father, we just again, we thank you for your grace, we thank you for your body of Christ. This morning, Lord, as we are gathered, I just want to think of Fred and I just, I thank you for him, I thank you for all of the effort that he puts in. Fred's got a struggle too, Fred deals with headaches all the time, he deals with migraines, he has issues with his neck. He doesn't tell anybody any of these things. And I just ask that you would be praying for him because he just kind of plows forward all the time. And I'm just grateful for him that he's on this vacation, he's able to get some rest, we hope. We just continue to pray for Ellen. We're so thankful that she's here, again praying for the strength that she needs to gather for this next round of chemo. Again we are just praying that you would give her just a straight sail through that whole process and that you would give her all of the healing that she needs as well. And Father, as we again open up your book, open you up your word, we pray for the presence of your Holy Spirit. Lord, guide us, guard us, be with us, give us the ability to make this of lasting value, we pray in Jesus' name.*

Amen.

Well last week, we began a series in which we were looking at the kingdom of God. And I said right from the start that if anyone wants to understand the kingdom of God, he has to start by first addressing the reality that exists above and beyond the reality that all of us experience in our everyday lives. Jesus Christ was indeed a king. He was the most powerful king who ever lived, but his kingdom wasn't of this world. On the eve of Jesus' execution he was asked by Pilate if he was actually the king of the Jews. And this was the answer that he gave in *John 18*. He said, "*My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world.*" His kingdom was an altogether different reality.

Now the cynic rolls his eyes at the thought of this so-called king. I mean here's a man who died a criminal's death, a man whose crown was thorns, whose royal robe was a piece of purple cloth placed on him to entertain his executioners. His final crowning achievement was to be stripped naked and spiked to a cross, publicly executed to satisfy the demands of a crowd that wanted him dead. Some kingdom. Some king. And yet 2,000 years after his death there's only one king who millions still worship as King of kings and Lord

of lords. I mean just think about this for a moment, think about the other kings that we are familiar with, there's Ramses, there's Nebuchadnezzar, there's Tutankhamen. These were all fabulously powerful kings who ruled their worlds and yet no one even imagines them having any continuing influence after they die. I mean every other king has died and disappeared with one simple exception. Much of the world acknowledges that every Easter. I mean there's a worldwide celebration of King Jesus over death itself. And you can deny his power, you can deny his authority, you can deny his kingdom but you cannot deny that over 2,000 years after his death, he is still the ruling monarch over billions of Christians. He claimed his kingdom would never end. And even though death has brought every other kingdom to a screeching halt, it has not done so with the Lord Jesus Christ. Even the cynic has to acknowledge that his influence is far greater today than it was on the day that he died. And why is that so? Well, Jesus said in *Matthew 11:12*: "*From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful man lay hold of it.*" Well that in itself is an incredibly aggressive statement. Jesus' kingdom has been forcibly advancing because something is forcefully trying to stop its advance. There's another kingdom that's at war with the kingdom of God, and it's a kingdom that was firmly in place when Jesus arrived. The kingdom started out as we've heard before as a rebellion that took place in heaven itself.

Revelation describes it. This is Revelation 12. It says: *Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world -- he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.*

So the serpent gets hurled to earth and he winds up in the Garden of Eden and the rest is history. You know, Satan lost the first round in heaven but he won a spectacular victory here on earth. I mean he got the very first man and woman to commit treason against their creator, he caused the whole of creation to figuratively and literally fall into his lap by virtue of Adam and Eve's rebellion. I mean that serpent that beguiled Eve was the very same serpent that Michael hurled out of heaven. And he ruled earth like the tyrant he is until one night in Bethlehem some 2,000 years ago, God himself arrived and he arrived to do battle. And again the whole thing reads like a fairy tale, but as I've said before, it reads like a fairy tale because it is one, not in the sense that it's a fantasy but in the sense that C.S. Lewis is pointing out, that many fairy tails have their basis in deep truth, deep truth that sophisticated 21st century unbelievers laugh at. I mean, you see,

there really was, there really was a good king. And there really was a wicked prince and he really had taken over the good king's kingdom and there really was a good king who came into this fallen kingdom to redeem it at the cost of his own life. I mean cynics call it a fairy tale, we call it the gospel. It's the good news. The good news of what? The good news of the kingdom of God. You see this wicked prince, he had enslaved the entire planet. I mean according to *1 John 5:10*, it says: "*The whole world is under the control of the evil one.*" And the good king came back. He came to this planet to win it back but he won it in a way that absolutely no one expected. I mean it wasn't chariots, it wasn't swords, it wasn't arrows, he won it with a cross. The wicked prince had caused the whole world to come under God's judgment and it was only God who could take that judgment away. I mean the good king won the world back by taking that judgment onto himself. I mean he was born in a stable to lead a life that none of us was capable of. You see, despite Don Lemon's protestations, it was a life of flawless perfection. And it was that sinlessness that qualified him to stand in our place and absorb our punishment. Our judgment became his judgment. His perfection through faith becomes ours. We get to own it. And that's not a fairy tale, that is deep reality.

Jesus was about to launch his attack on the ruler of this world.

Listen to Jesus's words describing his impending crucifixion in John 12. He says this: *"Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name."* Then a voice came from heaven: *"I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again."* The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, *"An angel has spoken to him."* Jesus answered, *"This voice has come for your sake, not mine. Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out."* See there really was an evil prince, an evil prince who was in this world and the judgment of this world to demand that we live up to God's perfection, that judgment was poured out on the King himself. I mean we don't often think of a cross as God's weapon of choice, but it was. You see in this fairy tale the good king ransoms his people and he rescues his people and he does it with a logic and a wisdom and a power far deeper than anything anyone has ever seen before. It is the supreme power in the universe, it's called the power of love. But you see the people didn't know about this because the people had been under the power of this evil prince and he had blinded all of them. *2 Corinthians 4* says: *The god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.* But even the evil prince didn't recognize the power of the cross. He didn't recognize it until it

was too late, and his fate was sealed. You see, what he thought was his triumph was actually his undoing. And again we have to listen to God's description of the cross as a weapon in *Colossians 2*, and he says this, he says: *And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.* You see this king of the universe who died the common death of a criminal, he had won the greatest victory ever by turning our way of living upside down. You see for Jesus, weakness was strength, losing was winning, death itself was life. Jesus Christ, having disarmed the powers and authorities, and that is really who the evil prince and his cohorts are, he made a public spectacle of them triumphing over them by that cross. Some kingdom. Some king.

Last time we spoke about knowing whether or not you're part of the kingdom. We spoke of the importance of childlike faith and obedience, how kingdom citizens, all of them have undergone this heart transplant that gives them this new power -- quote -- "*to walk in God's statutes and to be careful to obey his rules.*" Well today we want to take up how his children take up their roles as

children of the kingdom. Jesus describes that in *Matthew 16*, he says: *Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."* Now if that sounds like war talk, it's because as citizens of the kingdom of God, you are at war. The battle between the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness has been ongoing and you have been conscripted, in fact you've already been issued your primary weapon and that weapon is the cross. And Jesus Christ fully expects his subjects to follow in his footsteps. And so this morning we want to look at three questions about entering the battle that his citizens are in. First we want to ask what is our strategy; secondly, what are our weapons; and thirdly, what's the objective? What's the end game?

So first, what is our strategy? Well, our answer comes directly from Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus. In *Ephesus 3* Paul said: *To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan --* stop right there. There's a plan. God has a plan -- *what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things --* and here's the plan -- *so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and*

authorities in the heavenly places. This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord. I mean it's easy to get lost in that word soup right there, it's just easy to say where's that going? What is he saying? I mean do you know what it means when God says what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God? Well what God is telling us is that God through the church has put his manifold wisdom on display for the entire universe. And "manifold" simply means "many faceted." It's like the facets on a fine diamond. They all individually reflect the beauty of the stone itself. And what God is saying here is that every single one of us has a unique facet that uniquely displays the beauty of God's wisdom in a way that no one else can, and God wants this wisdom displayed not through power or through the press or through social media but through something as simple and as humble as a church. I mean that wisdom that God wants to put on display, he wants to put it on display to creatures that you and I know nothing about. He calls them the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realm. So we know that they are intently watching, they're searching for that manifold wisdom of God. And you know what that wisdom is? The wisdom is you and me. We represent the wisdom of God. See, it's God's intent that each of us uniquely display his wisdom within the simple context of the way we live out our daily lives. I mean if you only realize who it is that's watching you and what your purpose in living really is, it would

absolutely revolutionize your life. I mean we're not here to simply live out our lives with the same purposeless desperation that the world does. We have an ultimate purpose. Ephesians 2:10 says we are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus for a purpose. We are created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God prepared in advance for us to do. And you know what the purpose of those good works are? Well first of all it's to prove, to prove the manifold wisdom of God, to demonstrate to a world that's still held captive by this evil prince that God's way is infinitely superior to his. Jesus couldn't have made it more clear when he said this in *Matthew 5:16*, he said: *"Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."* I mean our lives should serve to point out the difference between the members of God's kingdom and the kingdom of this world because those two kingdoms are diametrically opposed. The prince of this world is the polar opposite of the grace and truth of the kingdom. And Jesus described him in *John 8*, he said: *"He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies."* Jesus is almost matter of fact about the basic realities of life in both kingdoms. Basically he's telling us that there's a bottom line here, he said lies come from Satan but grace and truth come from Jesus Christ. And guess who God calls on to deliver that

grace and truth to a world whose native tongue is a lie? It's you and me.

These two words should define the life of every single child of the kingdom: Grace and truth. It's what the good news is all about. And the problem is the prince of this world hates those two words and so does his kingdom. It rejects the truth, it rejects the light, it revels in the darkness. As *John 3* says: *"And this is the judgment: The light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God."* See, our lives are to be a plain demonstration of what has been done through God.

The second purpose of our good works goes back to Matthew 11:12. It is that minor parenthetical statement that Jesus made describing John the Baptist. He says: *"From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcibly advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it."* What Jesus is saying is that our life is the battlefield and our purpose is to fully and forcibly advance the kingdom. I mean if you've been a child of God longer than five minutes, you notice the kingdom this world, it's not

really your friend. Just last week I quoted *John 15* which has Jesus telling us: *"If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you."* You see, every time you manifest the wisdom of God and demonstrate his workmanship through the good deeds that he's prepared for you, you wind up advancing the kingdom and you wind up paying a price.

And that leads to my second question. The second question is: Okay, what are the weapons that we are supposed to fight with? Well, the evil prince has lies, he's got murder, he's got raw power at his disposal and he's quite willing to use them. I mean he was a murderer from the beginning and lying happens to be his native language, so how do you fight against that? Well God has an answer for that. Paul says in *2 Corinthians 10*: *For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ.* What Paul is saying is the battle actually starts, it starts in our minds, it starts in our attitude, it starts in our hearts. And Paul lays out the Christian's complete armor in *Ephesians 6*. This is what he says: *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, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.

Now literally dozens of books have been written about this one passage alone. I couldn't begin to unpack it in this message. But suffice it to say, there are two things to note here about the armor of God. Number one is that God has not left us to fend for ourselves. See the reason why the kingdom of God has been advancing for 2,000 years is that God has equipped us to fight his battles his way. The belt of truth and the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet

of salvation, all of them are defensive weapons. I mean they're designed to protect us. Their ultimate goal is to keep us from getting overwhelmed. Listen to how Paul puts it in verse 13, he says: *Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.* You have to admit standing firm is a pretty modest goal, but that's what defensive weapons are designed to do. Second point is that God has given us two primary offensive weapons. They're also found in that list. And they are, first of all, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And again we go back to Jesus's confrontation with Satan in the desert. Three times they do battle and three times Jesus brings out the big gun. What is the big gun? *"It is written,"* says Jesus. Three times, *"It is written," "It is written," "It is written."* Three times Jesus brings out the word of God directly to fight Satan himself. And then there's a second one, to pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayer and requests which is exactly what Jesus' life was all about. And so the offensive weapons are the word of God and prayer. These are the weapon that God gives us to advance his kingdom.

So the question that we have to ask ourselves is this: What am I doing with those weapons? Are we in the word? Are we in prayer? Those are the only two things in the entire world that the enemy

fears. He's got no fear for anything else. I once heard a pastor describe it by saying if you're in a dark alley and you're facing somebody who has five defensive weapons, you know, he's got a belt of truth, he's got a breastplate and a shield, a helmet, those weapons are no threat to you at all. I could go to take off my helmet and throw it at you, maybe try to trip you up with my belt. They're pretty ineffective offensive weapons. They were designed to protect us and not hurt him. But if in addition to those defensive weapons you happen to see a taser and a .38 on my side, then we would legitimately fear those two weapons because those are offensive weapons. The only two things that the enemy fears are the word of God and prayer. And so the devil does his level-headed best to eliminate both of those from our arsenal. If you only knew what you could do with those weapons, there would be a lot more people at our prayer meetings, I guarantee you.

So again, what is our strategy? It's Ephesians 3: *To bring to light for everyone that is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.* What are our weapons? The word of God and prayer. That brings up the third question. Well, okay, what is our objective? What are we aiming for? What's the end game? Well in order to explain that, I want to give you one of

those stories that Jesus told about what our goal is all about. It's a long story that Jesus told, it's a parable. I'll just read it to you. This is *Matthew 25*. He says: "*For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.'* His master said to him, '*Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'* And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, '*Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.'* His master said to him, '*Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'* He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, '*Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, so I was*

afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.' But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has more will be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"

This is an incredibly important parable because it describes the one criterion that Jesus or God will use to evaluate his children. And it cuts across every category of giftedness and talent. It levels the playing field so that every single member of the kingdom of God is on the same level field. God is not going to grade us on how much we've given or how much we've done or how many people we've led to Christ. He's not going to be asking us about the size or the quantity of our gifts, but he will ask us one very important question: Were you faithful? Were you faithful to the gifts you were given to advance the kingdom? I mean the two talent man gained two talents more. The five talent man gained five talents more and even though the five talent man gained more than twice the

two talent man, the Lord's response to both was the same: *"Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share in your master's happiness."* See, God isn't grading here on size or quantity or quality, he's grading on faithfulness. And you know what that means? It means that every one of us is going to be evaluated on an individual standard known only to two people, you and God, because only God knows the extent of the gifts that he's given to you. Only God is in a position to demand an accounting for the gifts and the talents that he's entrusted to you to advance his kingdom. And the good news is that everyone will be treated with absolute fairness. Because the criterion is the gifts that he's entrusted you with and your faithfulness in using them and that's what levels the playing field, so that in God's eyes there's really no difference between a Billy Graham and a Billy Smith. They will both be evaluated on their faithfulness. I mean Billy Graham was gifted by God to lead thousands to Christ and to share the gospel with the entire world and only God and Billy know how faithful he was and that's exactly how God evaluates him. It's strictly between Billy Graham and God. But it's also the same between Billy Smith and God. Let's say Billy Smith's gifts were very modest. Let's say that his thing was to keep the church lawn mowed, and he did it faithfully. Well then his reward will be great as well and God will tell him, "Billy, you've been faithful

with simple lawn mowing. I'll put you in charge of many things. Come and share in your master's happiness." I mean you get the implication of the objective here. In one simple word it's faithfulness. And it means that for all practical purposes God's going to judge you and me as if we are the only person in the universe, and only you and he knows our faithfulness.

You know, I once spoke with a believer whose gifts were very modest but whose faithfulness was great. She told me about a new job that she had just gotten in housekeeping. She said she primarily would be cleaning toilets, and she added -- quote -- "I'm gonna make them toilets shine." See, she understood that all things, including cleaning toilets, can be done for the glory of God. She got it. See in God's economy that attitude and that heart is as praiseworthy and as important as a Billy Graham rally. Her attitude advances the kingdom of God God's way. You know Francis Schaeffer once rightly said, "In God's committee there's no such thing as little people." The objective of faithfulness cuts all of us down to the exact same size with the exact same criterion for success. Are you faithful with the gifts God's given you?

See, everyone in this church has been uniquely gifted to advance the kingdom of God. Some of us have five talents, some of us have two talents, some of us have one, but no one, no one has none. And

God is unequivocal about his demand that those gifts be put to use in advancing his kingdom. *Luke 12:48* sums it up, he says:

"Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required. And from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more." Understand that God here is interested in quality, he's not interested in quantity. You know we evangelicals can oftentimes make the mistake of equating and advancing the kingdom with simple numbers, with getting more and more people saved, and I think that's a big mistake. As I said last week, our job is not to get people saved, it is to bring glory to God. It is God's job to get people saved through my faithful exercise of his gifts. There's a huge distinction there.

You know, I have to tell you most of the people that I share the gospel with, they reject it, oftentimes just out of hand. But that doesn't mean that the kingdom is not still advancing. As I said last week, *2 Corinthians* says: *For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things?* Well there's so much going on in this passage but God is clearly saying, what he's saying is that he makes the decision as to whether the aroma of Christ in our life is the stench of death to this one or the sweet savor of life to that one. What that also

says is that the kingdom agenda is vindicated no matter how people respond to the gospel. I mean those who accept the gospel vindicate God's mercy, those who reject the gospel vindicate his judgment, but in both cases the kingdom is advanced.

I said last week that the single operational word for Christians is obedience, and the first direct fruit of obedience is faithfulness, and it's the good news or the bad news depending on how you perceive it. You see, the one talent man received much less giftedness than the others, but the objective, objective of faithfulness never varied. I mean what do you suppose the master would have said if the one talent man came and said, "Here's your talent, I got you one talent more." I think it's pretty obvious that God would have rewarded his faithfulness and welcomed him to share in his master's happiness. But instead God had him thrown into outer darkness. It wasn't because of his performance, it was because of his faithlessness. Perhaps you think your gifts and talents are just too modest to worry about. Compared to others you might think it doesn't even seem worth cultivating. Perhaps you're tempted to bury that talent just because you think it's too modest. You're making a grave error. Again Jesus said in *Matthew 11:12*:
"From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it."
So how do they do that? Well, they understand the strategy, the

weapons, and the objectives of the kingdom. The strategy is to manifest God's wisdom and his workmanship, and we are his workmanship. That's who we are. We are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus to do good works which he has prepared for us in advance to do. The weapon is the cross that we take up daily as we die to what we want and allow his will to be manifested in us. And to do that we need to understand that the weapons that we fight with are not the weapons of this world, but the faithful exercise of the sword of the word of God in prayer. And finally our objective is simply to be faithful, faithful to our calling, faithful to our gifts, faithful to our talents. Our great blessing is in the knowledge each of us will stand alone to God to answer one question: Were you faithful to the gifts you were given? That will be either a blessing or curse depending on your faithfulness. We serve have a real king and a real kingdom and our master has the absolute right to demand an accounting. The good king really did defeat the evil prince of this world and he did it by dying. And we enter into his kingdom simply by confessing our sins, trusting him as our Lord and Savior, understanding that he left heaven itself to establish his kingdom here on earth in what was the ultimate of fairy tales, and he left it to us to forcibly advance his kingdom. And so my question to you this morning is: Are you ready to follow in his steps? Then pray like this: *Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be*

done, on earth as it is in heaven. Let's pray.

*Father, I thank you for your grace, I thank you for your kingdom.
Lord, I just acknowledge that most of us just walk through life in
a fog. We are so surrounded by this world, the evil prince has
done such an effective job of grabbing our attention and holding on
to it in little tiny bits and pieces so that we don't really have
the time to consider who we are and what we're here for. Lord, I
pray that your Holy Spirit would give us a wake-up call, that we
would recognize that we are at war, and that we are here to
forcibly advance your kingdom. And I pray that you would give each
and every one of us our marching orders and the ability to put them
into play. And I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.*