

Sun., Sept. Oct. 17

Memory Verse: “Let’s not get tired of doing good, because in time we’ll have a harvest if we don’t give up.” -Galatians 6:9

Message: “King of Kings: Fighting for the King”

Text: “Compete in the good fight of faith. Grab hold of eternal life—you were called to it, and you made a good confession of it in the presence of many witnesses.” -1 Timothy 6:12

Reading of Scripture: Ephesians 6:10-18

Sermon Scripture: 2 Timothy 2:1-4

Blurb: If Jesus is our King, that means we give Him our allegiance. We don’t live for ourselves, but for Him. This means that as disciples of Jesus, we serve as His soldiers. This Sunday we’ll learn how we are equipped and trained for fighting the good fight!

Videos:

Bumper Video

Video 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o1rsc9GzMW0> (0:00 - stopping at 1:05)
The Chronicles of Narnia - The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe Final Battle (Part 1)

Video 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o1rsc9GzMW0> (begin at 1:48 and end at 3:08)
The Chronicles of Narnia - The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe Final Battle (Part 1)

[Recorded Worship Beginning]

WELCOME -Pastor Andrew

MEMORY VERSE: -Pastor Andrew

“Let’s not get tired of doing good, because in time we’ll have a harvest if we don’t give up.”
-Galatians 6:9

WORSHIP MUSIC SET -Sanctify

His Mercy Is More

Onward Christian Soldiers

Worship prayer -Pastor Andrew

[Live Worship Beginning]

GATHERING SONG: *His Mercy Is More* -Sanctify

WELCOME -Pastor David

MEMORY VERSE: -Pastor David

“Let’s not get tired of doing good, because in time we’ll have a harvest if we don’t give up.”
-Galatians 6:9

WORSHIP MUSIC SET -Sanctify*Covenant Song**Raise a Hallelujah**Reckless Love*

Worship prayer -Pastor Andrew

[Both Recorded & Live Worship]**READING OF SCRIPTURE:** Ephesians 6:10-18 (CEB) -Reader:

In Ephesians 6, Paul reminds the followers of Jesus that they face a spiritual battle every day against evil, and so they must remember to put on the full armor of God. Ephesians 6:10-17,

10 Finally, be strengthened by the Lord and His powerful strength. 11 Put on God's armor so that you can make a stand against the tricks of the devil. 12 We aren't fighting against human enemies but against rulers, authorities, forces of cosmic darkness, and spiritual powers of evil in the heavens. 13 Therefore, pick up the full armor of God so that you can stand your ground on the evil day and after you have done everything possible to still stand. 14 So stand with the belt of truth around your waist, justice as your breastplate, 15 and put shoes on your feet so that you are ready to spread the good news of peace. 16 Above all, carry the shield of faith so that you can extinguish the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is God's word. 18 Offer prayers and petitions in the Spirit all the time. Stay alert by hanging in there and praying for all believers.

GROW MOMENT: Spiritual Assessment Video**PRAYERS** -Pastor Andrew**GENERATIONAL BRIDGE:** Lemuel the Lion -Pastor Andrew & Vicky Keintz**MESSAGE: King of Kings (Narnia) #6: "Fighting for the King"****BUMPER VIDEO****PP#1:** King of Kings: Fighting for the King

"Compete in the good fight of faith. Grab hold of eternal life—you were called to it, and you made a good confession of it in the presence of many witnesses." -1 Timothy 6:12

King of Kings: Fighting for the King. 1 Timothy 6:12, "Compete in the good fight of faith. Grab hold of eternal life—you were called to it, and you made a good confession of it in the presence of many witnesses."

PP#2: *Image off the cap of Jesus and the lion*

The past number of weeks, we've been discovering how our loving and self-sacrificing Savior, Jesus, is also King of kings and Lord of lords. The One we follow is our Teacher, Guide, Helper and Friend. But we've been wrestling with how He is also our Lord and King. And this is critically important, we've discovered, because only Almighty King Jesus is able to deliver us from the oppressive kings and rulers and powers that bind us and hold us down. Yet, as such a good King who gives Himself so completely for us, we willingly and eagerly follow Him and love Him back.

As we love a self-giving, almighty King, we become self aware—the Holy Spirit convicts us—of how we struggle to follow Jesus as our personal Lord and King!

You see, we tend to make our relationship with Jesus *about us*! We look for what Jesus can do for us, you know, to lead us, to guide us, to help us, to strengthen us, to bless us, to heal us, to not leave us, to carry us, to restore us, to make us whole, to give us life abundant and eternal. Two weeks ago we learned how King Jesus is dangerous, for He may even call us to experiences we would not choose: what is hard and difficult and painful. But even these, we learned, are for our own good. So, we frame our relationship with Jesus to be about what Jesus does for us. And all of this is very true, and crucial for how we can trust and love our Jesus!

But today we come to embrace that taking Jesus as our personal Lord and King fundamentally flips our relationship with Jesus. It is *not* primarily about what Jesus will do for us—even though He does do much!—but rather what WE will do for Jesus!

PP#3: *Image of people kneeling before a mighty king and queen.*

A king, fundamentally, is in charge. He has claim on the lives of his subjects. Now, when understood correctly—particularly when looking at Jesus—a king has the best interests of his subjects at heart. A king serves and sacrifices for his people. But the people's response to their king is to submit to his authority, to pledge loyalty and fidelity and service to their king. They promise to do things His way, and to honor him in all their actions. They pledge to give to him their resources, their time and their service. Under the leadership of their good king, the people promise to serve as his good soldiers—even give their all—to protect and preserve his plan for their kingdom.

So, this kind of changes how we see Jesus, doesn't it? I mean, we think a lot about the benefits of having Jesus as our King, but today we're digging deeper and uncovering the commitment and service that we, as loyal subjects of Jesus, give our King as His soldiers.

PP#4: *Image of Peter, Susan and Lucy, equipped with their weapons.*

In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the Pevensie children find themselves in the enchanted world of Narnia. It's a wondrous land, full of mythical creatures and beautiful things. But they find that they are also caught in the middle of a war: a struggle between the evil white witch and the good King Aslan. Now, at first, the children say that they don't want anything to do with the struggle. Just like back home, they want the war to be over and just to play everything safe. Susan and Peter tell the beavers, "Mum sent us away so we wouldn't get caught up in a war. I think you've made a mistake. We're not heroes. We're from Finchly! Thank you for your hospitality, but we really have to go. ... It's out of our hands. I'm sorry, it's time the four of us get home." They wanted to stay spectators in the bigger struggle, to be passive observers of the war raging around them. But then, they realize that their brother Edmund has been sucked up into the struggle. He's been duped into

believing the white witch, betrays the rest, and ends up prisoner. Now the children have a personal investment in the struggle and are forced to get involved. They need to go to King Aslan for help.

That's kind of like us. We see the war between good and evil raging in our world around us. And at some deep level we want to just remain passive observers. But we discover, when we are honest, that we have gotten sucked up into the struggle. We are held captive by dark forces. And we need to go to King Jesus for help.

So, the children join Aslan's forces, and Aslan helps recover their brother. But on the journey, his goodness also bestows on them gifts. This is the scene with Father Christmas. Peter gets a mighty sword. Susan gets a horn and bow and arrows. Lucy gets a healing balm and a dagger. And Father Christmas tells them that they are "tools, not toys."

"Tools, not toys." That's a key difference. Our relationship with Jesus is not one where we sit back like on Christmas and receive all kinds of presents, toys and pleasures and things that we *like* ("What Jesus does FOR US"). When we join Team Jesus, we are given tools, equipped with weapons and gifts for service, so that it can be about "what WE do for Jesus."

PP#5: The Baptismal Covenant I, *UM Hymnal*, page 33

Leader: On behalf of the church, I ask you: Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of the world, and repent of your sins?

Response: I do.

Leader: Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves?

Response: I do.

Leader: Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior, put your whole trust in His grace, and promise to serve Him as your Lord, in union with the church which Christ has opened to people of all ages, nation, and races?

Response: I do.

Now, we each have come to Jesus for help. In our need, we pledge our allegiance to Him and join His side. But we join not as spectators, but as soldiers. The baptism vows we take, as printed in our hymnals, when we declare our allegiance to Jesus, is in soldier terms. "Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world, and repent of your sins?" "Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves?" "Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior, put your whole trust in His grace, and promise to serve Him as your Lord ...?" We join the battle, actively on the side of King Jesus.

PP#6: Jesus "is the head. The whole body grows from Him, as it is joined and held together by all the supporting ligaments. The body makes itself grow in that it builds itself up with love as each one does its part." -Ephesians 4:16

Spiritual Gifts Inventory: <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/spiritual-gifts-inventory/en>

So, consider: what are the tools, the gifts, that your King has given to you? You have been given gifts, you know. Not just blessings *for you*, but blessings *for others*, as you serve in God's Kingdom. We call them "spiritual gifts." As Paul says in Ephesians 4:16, Jesus "is the head. The whole body grows from Him, as it is joined and held together by all the supporting ligaments. The body makes itself grow in that it builds itself up with love as each one does its part." You have a

special role, you are an important part in the body of Jesus. You hold a key position in God's army. What are the tools that you have been equipped with?

We all have the church, the Bible, and, most importantly, the indwelling Holy Spirit. And then, that indwelling Holy Spirit also gives each of us special gifts. These gifts are for blessing others. Sometime, when you have a minute, search for what's called a "Spiritual Gifts Inventory." Here's a link to one offered by the United Methodist Church. Give it a try and discover what your special spiritual "tools" are!

PP#7: *Image of the armor of God, modeled after Ephesians 6:10-17*

Now, the reality is that we live to serve our King Jesus every day. We fight the battle each day. This is what the reading from Ephesians 6 was about. Each day we must put on the armor of God, so that we can resist the evil one, to stand our ground. Our armor is the belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, feet of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God.

In the movie, each of the children gets full sets of armor. And they join the ranks with all the other faithful Narnians on Aslan's side. They take their tools, and their armor, and boldly go and face the white witch and all her evil forces. It comes to a final showdown, just like the Bible says it will for us at the end of times. We join with Jesus' army, and we come with Him when He makes His final assault against Satan and the forces of evil. I want to show you a clip from the movie as the two sides face off, preparing for battle. Notice the gifts and armor that the children have on, and as you do, think about the armor that God has given you.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o1rsc9GzMW0> (0:00 - stopping at 1:05)

The Chronicles of Narnia - The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe Final Battle (Part 1)

PP#8: King of Kings: Fighting for the King

1 So, my child, draw your strength from the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2 Take the things you heard me say in front of many other witnesses and pass them on to faithful people who are also capable of teaching others. (2 Timothy 2:1-2, CEB)

Turn with me to 2 Timothy 2. There will be a final battle some day, and we will serve on Jesus' side. But we also fight each and every day now. Every day we take on the forces of evil, in skirmishes and battles of all sizes. Like last week with Peter and the wolf, often our battles have a huge inner component. Sometimes they are with our neighbors, and friends. Sometimes it's with coworkers and strangers. Sometimes it's fighting poverty or natural disaster or racism or social justice. But each day the battle is real! It is today. When you open your eyes in the morning, give God thanks for the gift of that day, but then also put on your spiritual armor as you get dressed, because each day King Jesus gives us is a day we are called to fight in His service.

In 2 Timothy, Paul is writing to his younger colleague, Timothy, who is serving faithfully for Jesus in Ephesus. And Paul is encouraging him as a fellow soldier serving Jesus. In the first four verses of chapter 2, Paul gives Timothy three ways to continue fighting as one of Jesus' soldiers. Let's listen in so it can also guide our service to Jesus.

2 Timothy 2, starting with the first verse. "1 So, my child [Paul sees him as a son in Jesus], draw your strength from the grace that is in Christ Jesus. [See, Timothy has been equipped with tools, with armor, with gifts from King Jesus. Verse 2,] Take the things you heard me say in front

of many other witnesses and pass them on to faithful people who are also capable of teaching others.” Paul is telling Timothy to serve along with all the other disciples of Jesus there in Ephesus, and to continue to *train them and teach them* for Jesus’ service. And personally, I kind of see this as my role as your pastor. This is what we’re all about: making disciples who make disciples.

PP#9: King of Kings: Fighting for the King

1. Endurance

“Accept your share of suffering like a good soldier of Christ Jesus.” -2 Timothy 2:3

Then, in verse 3, Paul names it right out there: Timothy, you are a soldier of Jesus! Shoulder your inconveniences, your work, your hardships, your self-sacrificing, your suffering, like a good soldier does. He says, “Accept your share of suffering like a good soldier of Christ Jesus” (2:3).

Fighting for the King means endurance. Paul tells Timothy in 1 Timothy 6:12 to “Fight the good fight!” The fights we face do not end quickly. They continue far longer than we may anticipate. Paul tells Timothy that soldiers for Jesus go the distance, they hang in there, they keep going, they do not grow weary in doing good” (Galatians 6:9). Covid has been teaching us this, right? On and on! Same with many of the other struggles we face. We keep gearing up and getting back in there. Endurance. Evil does not go quietly. It resists with every last fiber. So we must as well. We resist *beyond* our own abilities, and we learn to rely on the gifts and indwelling of the Holy Spirit within us. Only then can we endure faithfully. Maturity and effective ministry requires steadfast endurance and abiding faith. And Paul is honest that Jesus’ soldiers will be targeted. We will suffer injury and wounds. We will be treated badly in the world. We will suffer. Paul himself was writing to Timothy from prison, telling him to keep suffering faithfully! The more faithful we are to Jesus, the more we will become a target of the enemy. Can he get you to break? Can he cause you to lash out in anger? Can he get you to respond in violence? Can he get you to give up and stay home?

Endure as a soldier—staying in the fight—not living like a civilian, who lets the soldiers take care of it while remaining passive observers. Every Christian is a soldier in the army of King Jesus. We fight on the Lord’s side, serving under Him, remaining focused to our task, obeying His orders instantly and seeking to please Him in all things.

PP#10: King of Kings: Fighting for the King

1. Endurance

2. Entanglements

“Nobody who serves in the military gets tied up with civilian matters, so that they can please the one who recruited them.” -2 Timothy 2:4

Now, to do that, faithful soldiers must live differently from the normal affairs of this world. Soldiers don’t have it all, can’t do what everyone else does, nor do they love this world. They pledge themselves to their king, and that means surrendering their personal control and selfish desires. Paul says to Timothy, “Nobody who serves in the military gets tied up [engangled] with the affairs of everyday life.” A soldier is not a free agent. This is the hard part of submitting to Jesus as our King. We don’t make our own decisions or use our time and resources in the ways we prefer. Our preferences are submitted to our desire to please our King...and there’s the 3rd takeaway here.

PP#11: King of Kings: Fighting for the King

1. Endurance
2. Entanglements
3. Desire

“Nobody who serves in the military gets tied up with civilian matters, so that they can please the one who recruited them.” -2 Timothy 2:4

A good soldier’s singular desire is to please their commanding officer. “Nobody who serves in the military gets tied up with civilian matters, so that they can please the one who recruited them.” Desiring to please means doing more than just the minimum requirement. As Paul says in Colossians 3:23, “do your work heartily, as for the Lord.” Godly soldiers do their best. What might it look like for you to use your spiritual gifts to *the best* of your ability? How would that take your discipleship up a notch?

You don’t just pack food packets, you pack with joy and grace. You don’t merely give, you give over and above. You don’t merely help, you disciple, demonstrate, invest yourself into others. Like you, Timothy has been rescued by Jesus, forgiven by Jesus, transformed by Jesus, and now belongs to Jesus. And like you, Timothy has a special place to be on duty, a strategic post in Jesus’ Kingdom.

God’s soldiers do live in the world, but we are *not entangled* in them. The word here means “to weave.” So, yes, we do get tangled up in the stuff of life, for life is messy. But we don’t spend all of our attention to weave our lives here on earth. We live and serve here lightly, because our higher commitment is to Jesus. We become entangled in life just enough so that we can take that mess to Jesus for Him to redeem. But we do not weave lives for earth, for we know this life is passing. It will not last. Instead we serve singlemindedly in the Kingdom that will last forever. We always serve Jesus, desiring to please Him above all else. Our desire is His desire!

I want to go back to that scene in the movie from the final battle. Just before the battle starts, Peter, now King of Narnia, is leading Aslan’s army. He turns to the commander, a centaur, and asked if he is with him in the fight. Listen to what the commander says.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o1rsc9GzMW0> (begin at 1:48 and end at 3:08)

The Chronicles of Narnia - The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe Final Battle (Part 1)

PP#12: The Baptismal Covenant I, *UM Hymnal*, page 33

Leader: On behalf of the church, I ask you: Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of the world, and repent of your sins?

Response: I do.

Leader: Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves?

Response: I do.

Leader: Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior, put your whole trust in His grace, and promise to serve Him as your Lord, in union with the church which Christ has opened to people of all ages, nation, and races?

Response: I do.

Are you with Jesus? To the death?

I invite you, if you are able and would like, to stand with me and reaffirm our baptismal vows

of allegiance to Jesus. We go back to the vows from the *United Methodist Hymnal*. Do you renew your pledge to Jesus as your King? If so, join with me:

Leader: On behalf of the church, I ask you: Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of the world, and repent of your sins?

Response: I do.

Leader: Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves?

Response: I do.

Leader: Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior, put your whole trust in His grace, and promise to serve Him as your Lord, in union with the church which Christ has opened to people of all ages, nation, and races?

Response: I do.

Then, for God's Kingdom, for King Jesus, we fight!
Amen!

[IN-PERSON WORSHIP ONLY] CLOSING SONG: *Onward Christian Soldiers* -Sanctify

OFFERING: -Pastor David

-Give of your monies to God's work through this church. You can give in person, mail it in, drop it off or, most conveniently, you can make an electronic transfer or a debit card payment on the church website or by using the "square" on the bulletin.

ANNOUNCEMENTS -Pastor David

Next Sunday's message: King of Kings: Reigning with the King

Wednesday night: Meal and Groups

Sign up for Craft Sale and Trunk-or-Treat

MEMORY VERSE -Pastor David

"Let's not get tired of doing good, because in time we'll have a harvest if we don't give up."

-Galatians 6:9

BENEDICTION -Pastor David