

23-0716a Transcript

23-0716a - *Spiritual Warfare, Part 1, Jim Lokenbauer*

Bible Readers: Tom Freed and Roger Raines

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Spiritual Warfare, Part 1

Transcript (0:05 - 41:02)

Scripture Readings

1st Reader: Tom Freed

1 Peter 5:8,

(0:05) I'll be reading 1st Peter 5.8. 1st Peter 5.8.

(0:12) Be sober of spirit, be on alert. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. (0:20)

2nd Reader: Roger Raines

James 4:7,

(0:25) Good morning. I'll be reading from the book of James. (0:32) Chapter 4, verse 7. James 4, verse 7. (0:39) Submit therefore to God, resist the devil, and he will flee from you. (0:44) This concludes this reading. (0:46)

Transcript

Preacher: Jim Lokenbauer

(0:51) Good morning everybody. (0:54) Pleased to be here to bring another lesson from the word. (0:59) I'm not bringing you a lesson from the I Am series.

(1:04) I'm bringing you a lesson titled Spiritual Warfare. (1:10) And usually I design my lessons for myself. (1:14) And I know that we probably had at least one or two lessons in the not so distant past about this.

(1:24) But as the spirit moves us to get together and talk about subject matters in church, (1:35) we find often that guys will write about the same thing without even, you know, exchanging ideas. (1:44) They just are on the same page. (1:47) And I give glory to the spirit for that.

(1:50) So I felt, you know, the pressure in the world on me. (1:57) And I know you probably feel the

same thing. (2:01) Just how the whole country just seems to be racing in the complete opposite direction of heaven.

(2:10) And it's like there's so many in this country trying to make us a complete ungodly nation. (2:21) And so you just have this oppressive force all around. (2:30) And we shouldn't walk around like we're defeated or it's hopeless.

(2:35) Never. (2:36) And so that's why I'm on this subject matter. (2:45) Because God doesn't leave us alone.

(2:47) He gives us tools, so to speak, how to combat the evil that's in the world. (2:55) And to maintain, you know, the dignity that a Christian should have. (3:02) So we're all aware that there's a war going on.

(3:06) And the war that I'm talking about is not a conventional war like the one going on in Ukraine with Russia. (3:17) The one that the U.S. is fighting with our dollars, making us a proxy of fighting against Russia. (3:27) You can really get down when you think about the ramifications of that.

(3:32) Oh, are we entering World War III? (3:35) You know, why are so many innocents dying? (3:38) Because of the aggression of one despot, you know? (3:44) And it can get frustrating. (3:48) But this particular war can't be seen with human eyes or heard with human ears. (3:54) But it is all around us.

(3:55) You can see its effect everywhere and even feel that oppressive nature that it has upon us. (4:06) Wherever mankind is, there the battle is. (4:10) It has been going on for thousands of years, ever since man and woman walked together.

(4:17) So you probably have figured out that the war I'm talking about is the war of good versus evil. (4:25) Or more appropriately put, evil versus good. (4:32) Since good existed before evil, God created everything and said, it is good.

(4:39) One of the godly virtues is goodness. God is good. (4:43) So it's the evil one who's the aggressor, the evil one who attacks that which is good.

(4:54) So, the main characters in this battle, our hero, God, is the good. (5:04) And Satan, who is our malevolent antagonist, he is the evil in this story. (5:14) And due to this battle, we observe that humans are divided in most phases of life because of this battle of good and evil.

(5:26) So divide and conquer is one of the main methods employed by Satan in this battle. (5:33) And of course, as mentioned, we have sides of good and evil. (5:36) But those on the side of good, we see things through the Bible.

(5:44) We have a Christian worldview. (5:47) What we observe and do are behaviors modified by our standards. (5:53) The Bible, we have a Christian worldview.

(5:57) And those on the side of evil, I just like to lump them all into the worldview. (6:03) That includes world philosophies, world politics, worldly religions, modern science, pseudoscience, I should call it. (6:18) Anything that's in opposition to God and his word, we can put into the worldview.

(6:25) So in my last lesson, I had talked about two kingdoms that all humans are in. (6:32) We're

either in one or the other, whether that human is even aware of that or not. (6:38) There's the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan.

(6:42) Like the first humans, Adam and Eve, we start out sinless and innocent. (6:49) And if we were to die, we'd go to heaven. (6:52) So we're in God's kingdom when we start out.

(6:55) But when we reach the age of accountability and we have to make good choices in our lives not to sin, (7:04) well, when we do sin, we've chosen to follow Satan, just like the first couple. (7:10) They rejected God's word and found themselves in Satan's kingdom. (7:17) Same with us.

There's no difference. (7:19) And Satan will do everything in his power to keep you in his kingdom, (7:25) whether it's through ignorance, even knowing there's a kingdom, (7:32) or getting you to get involved in all kinds of ungodly activities and thoughts. (7:41) So the only way out of that kingdom is to have faith in God and his son.

(7:47) And you've got to renounce your citizenship, so to speak, (7:51) by obeying God and repenting of sin and turning to him for forgiveness. (7:57) And you've got to confess your belief in his son as being the son of God, (8:05) you know, the Christ, just like Peter did. (8:12) So when you do all that, you then again become a citizen of God's kingdom.

(8:18) And in this ancient war, there's an ongoing battle over our minds and our souls by the side of evil. (8:26) And it has more casualties than all of mankind's physical wars that have been fought from the beginning. (8:34) And Paul tells us, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

(8:40) And therefore, that gives the sin rate of success 99.9999% casualty rate. (8:50) And the only person who has ever survived not being blemished by sin is Christ, Jesus. (8:58) And as the second person of the Godhead, he has appeared to man in many of his various forms as the captain of the heavenly host.

(9:10) So we got to rally behind our great captain in order to fight this battle. (9:22) And because he can see the unseen world, he belongs in that unseen world that we can't see. (9:31) You know, if we try to fight this on our own, we're just beating our hands in the air, like shadow boxing, hitting at nothing.

(9:40) But with God, we can be effective in surviving this war. (9:49) And we got to do our part, which is to obey our great commander and carry out his orders. (9:57) So we're spiritual beings, both good and bad, in the unseen world.

(10:06) And in this war, you have two fronts, so to speak. (10:14) On one front, you have the battle to keep those who do not believe in God, unbelievers. (10:20) And on the other front, you have Satan attacking believers to give up on believing in God.

(10:29) And this war is going to continue until Christ's return, Judgment Day. (10:36) And the reason this battle continues on, even until today, is that it's God's will that it continues. (10:45) Why? Because God loves us, and he doesn't want anyone... (10:51) I see Carol flips, she knows what is coming next.

(10:55) Yes, exactly. 2 Peter chapter 3. (10:59) God doesn't want anyone to perish, but everyone to repent of the evil they're doing. (11:07) And so that's why things continue.

(11:12) God's given us a chance for us to repent and get in line with him, and us to tell others about Christ. (11:22) And warning them about the doom to come. (11:26) So he's giving us time to believe in his son, Jesus, so that we'll all be saved.

(11:31) And this battle goes on every day, and every human will buy their actions every day, (11:38) show that they're choosing to follow God, or choosing to follow Satan that day. (11:45) And that's why Jesus tells us to pick up our cross daily and follow him. (11:51) Sorry, I'm swallowing the microphone here.

Sorry for popping my peas. (11:57) Okay, so... Excuse me, I've got to wet my pipes. (12:10) Okay, so God has on occasion permitted human eyes to see these unseen beings.

(12:20) Human eyes have been eyewitnesses of the battle that goes on around us that we're normally not aware of. (12:29) And God deliberately recorded some of these accounts for us in the Bible. (12:36) And these stories give us a bigger picture of what goes on in the Bible and what goes on around us, (12:46) as what's happening in the physical and spiritual realms.

(12:52) So by reading these stories, hopefully they will increase our faith (12:56) by giving us hope that God will deliver us from our spiritual battles, (13:02) just like he delivered the people in the Old Testament and the Gospel era from their spiritual battles. (13:10) And so the first one that God records for us, where he lets us see that, (13:19) is where Israel is wandering, and they come to Jericho. (13:25) And Jericho, as you know, was built with impenetrable walls around it.

(13:34) And those walls, in a sense, represent how badly Satan wants to hold on to his ungodly people. (13:45) These are mine. You can't come in.

They belong to me. (13:49) So those walls were keeping people from knowing God. (13:56) And so Yahweh, in one of his many presences, as I've told you in past lessons or forums, (14:04) appeared to Joshua as the captain of the hosts of heaven.

(14:09) And I'll read for you from Joshua 5, verses 13 to 15. (14:43) And it says, (14:44) What does my Lord say to his servants? (14:48) The prince of Yahweh's army said to Joshua, (14:52) Take off your shoes, for the place on which you stand is holy. (14:57) And Joshua did so.

(14:59) And then in the very next chapter, the commander prince, who is Christ, (15:05) gave Joshua instructions, that is, how Israel was to carry out to bring down those walls of Jericho. (15:13) And so Joshua and Israel did as they were commanded. (15:17) They marched around the walls.

(15:20) And they blew the horn and they shouted as they were commanded. (15:26) And the unseen heavenly realm did the heavy lifting. (15:30) They blasted that wall to pieces.

(15:34) And that wall has been discovered in recent archaeological history. (15:39) And that wall was obliterated in pieces. (15:44) They found pieces of Jericho's fallen wall.

(15:49) So, modern archaeology helps prove this story is true. (15:57) It doesn't need it, as we believe by faith. (16:00) But it's out there.

(16:02) And people have found it. (16:05) So, King David, too, experienced firsthand how God's unseen help for his people gives them victory. (16:16) When facing the Philistines in battle, the heavenly hosts would be heard marching above them.

(16:25) So, in 2 Samuel, chapter 5, verses 22 and 24, it says, (16:32) when David inquired of Yahweh, that's the Lord, God, (16:40) he said, you shall not go up, circle around behind them and attack them in front of the mulberry trees. (16:49) When you hear the sounds of marching in the treetops of the mulberry trees, (16:54) then stir yourself up, for then Yahweh has gone out before you to strike the army of the Philistines. (17:04) So, Jesus, as the commander of the heavenly hosts, once again fought for God's people, (17:11) though unseen, in this case, was heard.

(17:15) So, the army of Israel heard, and David, heard angelic beings marching on the mulberry treetops. (17:25) And that was the sign for them, attack! (17:29) And again, the heavenly hosts did the heavy lifting and slew the Philistines. (17:38) So, there's another instance where God gives aid to his people, and this time it's during the age of the prophets.

(17:49) And it's when Elijah was the main prophet in the land. (17:55) And the king of Aram, which we know is the Syrian army, had his army lined up sneakily around Israel. (18:06) And Elijah the prophet and his servant observed this, and the servant was very afraid.

(18:15) And in 2 Kings 6, 15 and 17, it says, (18:19) Then Elijah's servant got up and wound out early the next morning an army with horses and chariots that surrounded the city. (18:27) Oh my Lord, what shall we do? the servant asked. (18:30) Don't be afraid, the prophet answered.

(18:32) Those who are with us are more than those who are with them. (18:38) And Elijah prayed, Oh Lord, open his eyes so that he may see. (18:42) And the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he looked, and he saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elijah.

(18:55) So, one moment, Elijah's servant only sees the king of Syria's army surrounding them. (19:01) And after Elijah prayed to God for the man's eyes to be able to see that unseen realm, (19:12) all confidence built the servant, and they realized the army of the Lord was with them. (19:24) Chariots of fire and horses, obviously with angelic beings on them.

(19:32) What an awesome and terrifying sight that must have been. (19:37) But notice that Elijah said, Don't be afraid, those who are with us are more than those who are with them. (19:45) What does that sound like? (19:48) And I see those lips moving again.

(19:50) Carol knows the answer. (19:52) Ten points for Carol. (19:54) From 1 John, chapter 4, verse 4. (19:59) You are of God, little children, and have overcome the world.

(20:03) Because greater is he who is in you than he who is in the world. (20:08) It's sort of the same comforting words that Elijah gave to his servant. (20:15) Don't worry, God's got you covered.

(20:17) He's there and will fight your battles for you. (20:22) So those who are with us refer to the heavenly army that his servant was permitted to see, (20:29) and those who are with them refer to the unseen forces of evil that were with the king of Syria's army. (20:39) So, I don't think the king of Syria realized that there were evil angels there ready to engage in battle.

(20:50) And I'm not sure, but I don't believe the servant was able to see those evil forces, (20:58) because the text only describes the angelic beings on the good side, so to speak. (21:05) So there is an unseen world that is battling over us and for us, and that's comforting to know. (21:14) So every time we read that God would fight for Israel, the unseen world is there fighting with Israel's army.

(21:26) In the Bible we also read how the spirit world influences human government (21:33) and

carry out God's will or oppose the will of governments. (21:40) And in Daniel chapter 10 and in chapter 12, we're shown that various countries have princes over them, (21:50) such as the prince of Babylon or the prince of Persia. (21:56) And these princes are actually angels assigned to those countries.

(22:05) So you wonder if there is a prince over America. I'm sure there is, though we're not told. (22:13) But opposing them are also dark forces of evil who are also called princes.

(22:19) And isn't Satan himself called the prince of the air in the Ephesian letter? (22:27) These princes are powerful angels, and we find out that Michael is the prince of Israel. (22:35) And Michael has also been called the archangel or one of the archangels. (22:41) We know Gabriel is one of the archangels who stand in the presence of God.

(22:47) So let's read Daniel 10 verses 2 through 14. (22:53) It says, at that time I, Daniel, had been mourning for three weeks. (22:58) I had eaten no rich food, no meat or wine had entered my mouth, (23:02) and I had not anointed myself at all for the full three weeks.

(23:07) On the 24th day of the first month, I was standing out on the bank of the great river, that is, the Tigris. (23:14) I looked up and saw a man clothed in linen, with a belt of gold from above around his waist. (23:21) His body was like burl, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, (23:28) his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, (23:33) and the sound of his words like the roar of a multitude.

(23:38) I, Daniel, alone saw the vision. (23:40) The people who were with me did not see the vision, (23:43) though a great trembling fell upon them, and they fled and hid themselves. (23:49) So I was left alone to see this great vision.

(23:52) My strength left me, and my complexion grew deathly pale, and I retained no strength. (24:00) Then I heard the sound of his words, and when I heard the sound of his words, (24:05) I fell into a trance, face to the ground. (24:09) But then a hand touched me and roused me to my hands and knees.

(24:14) He said to me, Daniel, greatly beloved, pay attention to the words I am going to speak to you. (24:20) Stand on your feet, for I have now been sent to you. (24:24) So while he was speaking this word to me, I stood up trembling.

(24:28) He said to me, Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your mind (24:34) to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your Lord, (24:39) your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words. (24:44) But the prince of the kingdom of Persia opposed me twenty-one days. (24:49) So Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, (24:53) and I left him there with the prince of the kingdom of Persia.

(24:57) And I have come to help you understand what is to happen to your people at the end of days. (25:04) For there is a further vision for those days. (25:08) And then later in the chapter, more is revealed as to what those roles are.

(25:14) And in Daniel 10, 20 to 21, he says, (25:19) Then he said, Do you know why I have come to you? (25:23) Now I will return to fight with the prince of Persia. (25:27) When I go out, behold, the prince of Greece will come. (25:30) But I will tell you that which is inscribed in the writing of truth.

(25:35) There is no one who holds with me against these except Michael, your angel prince. (25:43) Those roles that the princes were to carry out were the will of God, (25:49) and even had to fight to accomplish it. (25:54) There was to be a change in world powers at that time.

(25:58) If you remember Daniel's prophecy about the image that he saw with the gold head, (26:06) the silver torso, the bronze loin, and the iron legs with the iron and clay feet. (26:13) Well, those represented all the succeeding world kingdoms (26:18) that were to come into the world as the world powers. (26:23) And this is confirming that.

(26:26) And history confirms, and even through the word, (26:30) that that's how the succession of world kingdoms happened. (26:35) Before it happened, this was fourfold hundreds of years before it took place. (26:41) So the roles of these princes were to carry out God's will to make things happen (26:47) exactly as they played out.

(26:51) In chapter 12, it was revealed of Daniel, (26:54) it was revealed what was going to occur during the time of the early church. (27:01) In Daniel 12-1 it says, (27:03) At that time, Michael, who is the archangel, will stand up, (27:09) the great prince who stands for the children of your people, (27:13) and there will be a time of trouble such as never was seen since it was a nation, (27:19) even to that same time. (27:21) At that time, your people will be delivered, (27:24) everyone who is found written in the book.

(27:28) So Michael, the archangel, was busy behind the scenes (27:32) giving aid to God's people and carrying out God's will. (27:38) Yahweh had a special friendship with Moses, (27:43) and when Moses died, God himself buried Moses. (27:48) And in Deuteronomy 34, 5 and 6, it reads, (27:52) So Moses, the servant of Yahweh, died there in the land of Moab, (27:57) according to Yahweh's word.

(28:00) He buried him in the valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth Peor. (28:05) But no man knows where his tomb is to this day. (28:09) What an interesting thing.

(28:11) It didn't describe this incident that happened in the unseen world at that time. (28:19) Not until hundreds of years, centuries later, (28:24) as revealed by Jesus' brother, Jude. (28:27) In Jude 1, 9, it says, (28:30) But Michael, the archangel, when contending with the devil (28:35) and arguing about the body of Moses, (28:38) dared not bring an accusation against him, but said, (28:42) May the Lord rebuke you.

(28:46) So, apparently, for some nefarious purpose or reason, (28:51) Satan wanted the body of Moses after God had buried it. (28:56) But Michael, the archangel, was there to contend against him (29:01) and rebuked him in the name of the Lord. (29:06) Without calling him names or anything like that.

(29:09) Very different from Ernest Ainslie, (29:12) who every once in a blue moon I used to turn on to get a good laugh. (29:17) And I saw him strutting around one day before his flock, (29:22) calling the devil all kinds of names. (29:26) And this verse came to mind.

(29:28) It's like, there's hierarchy even amongst evil angels. (29:37) And there's protocol. (29:39) And you simply don't abuse another.

(29:43) And Michael gave us the perfect example. (29:47) He said, The Lord rebuke you. (29:50) It's with God's authority and with God's rebuke (29:53) that you get someone to straighten out.

(29:56) And there was Ernest Ainslie calling the devil all kinds of (30:02) just terrible things. (30:05) And maybe he deserves it. (30:07) But the thing is, not coming out of our mouths.

(30:11) You know, respect is due to even angelic beings. (30:20) Michael had it. (30:22) And Michael, being an archangel, (30:27) it was his job to kick Satan out of heaven.

(30:31) So he too is a powerful angel. (30:33) And yet he didn't rail against Satan like so many foolish humans do. (30:40) So anyhow, that aside.

(30:42) So we aren't told what Satan wanted to do with the body of Moses. (30:52) But the Hebrew writer tells us what an angel's job is. (30:57) Most angels are to help us.

(31:01) In Hebrews 1.14 it says, (31:04) Are not all angel spirits in the divine service (31:07) sent to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation? (31:15) Their job is to help us. (31:19) They fight the things we can't see. (31:24) Things that we don't have control over.

(31:26) What we're to do is to carry out what we're given through the word. (31:33) And God's going to cover us and take care of the rest. (31:37) We don't really need to know what battles are going on around us that we can't see.

(31:45) But just know that they're there. (31:48) Happening. (31:49) So angels carry out God's will.

(31:52) And they give us that unseen aid for every believing Christian. (31:59) And personally I'm kind of glad that God keeps that unseen world unseen from us. (32:06) Most human angelic encounters end up with humans, particularly men, being so terrified they take a dirt nap.

(32:18) They plant into the ground. They pass out from fright. (32:23) The Roman guard sent to watch over Christ's tomb as he lay in the grave.

(32:30) An angel appeared and the Roman guard were so terrified they took a dirt nap. (32:41) And those are supposed to be the roughest, toughest men of that age. (32:48) But nowhere do you see ever a woman who has encountered an angel pass out.

(32:53) Oh, they were frightened, but they didn't pass out. (32:56) Sorry guys, who's tougher? (32:59) So around the time of Christ, there were things permitted to happen in people's lives that exposed them to this angelic world that's unseen. (33:14) Think of the shepherds out in the field as they were tending their sheep.

(33:20) They appeared and announced the birth of Christ and sang hallelujahs. (33:24) That was an eye opener for humans. (33:28) Could you imagine? (33:30) They ran to see the new king that was to come, the Messiah.

(33:37) And they left praising God, having seen him. (33:41) But there were also things in and around the time of Christ that was very terrifying to people. (33:51) And I'm talking about the demon possession of human souls.

(33:56) And this is where the unseen world directly and physically collides with the human world. (34:04) And it's where demons forcibly, with permission, were allowed to enter humans. (34:14) They just can't willy-nilly do that today.

(34:18) But then it was for a purpose. (34:21) What was that purpose?

The purpose was so that God could show his power and authority over the side of evil. (34:37) And so, once Christ was ascended into heaven and gave his disciples, the apostles, the marching orders, the Great Commission, he also gave them authority over these beings. (34:53) The Holy Spirit enabled them to do the miraculous.

(34:57) And the casting out of demons was one of those miraculous things that they were able to do. (35:05) And we see plenty of examples where they cast out demons. (35:12) Demons had to listen.

(35:16) That's why I had the text read this morning, particularly the one that Roger read from James. (35:26) Resist the devil and he must what? (35:32) Flee from you. (35:34) Is the devil stronger than us? (35:37) Yes.

(35:38) And the devil destroys us, if he's allowed. (35:42) So there must be some unseen written word from God to Satan that if one of his children resists him, he's got to scam and get out of there. (36:01) That's the unseen world protecting us by order of God.

(36:07) That has to be obeyed. (36:11) God is in control. (36:14) So just remember that as you see these people nowadays willingly letting Satan into their lives.

(36:27) Are we going to see a new era of demon possession because of this? (36:32) I don't know. (36:34) But I do know this. (36:36) The day of miraculous is over.

(36:39) We've now got the written complete word of God to use as our authority. (36:51) And there's power in this word. (36:56) This word was delivered by the power of Holy Spirit.

(37:02) So these aren't just any old words of man. (37:07) This is the word of God. (37:10) This is our sword.

(37:13) The sword of the Spirit. (37:16) So God permitted those things to happen so that he could show his power and authority over them. (37:26) Apostle Paul tells us in Colossians 1 Corinthians chapter 13 that the day of miracles would be over.

(37:36) And Zechariah prophesied about it. (37:39) He foretold that the prophet and unclean spirit would be removed from the land in those days. (37:50) And that was in Zechariah chapter 13 verses 1 and 2. (37:55) So there was an expiration date for the period of miracles.

(38:00) But now we have the Christian era. (38:05) And so our greatest tool is the word of God. (38:10) The Bible.

(38:13) And so what can we do as believers to help us in our battle against evil? (38:21) The battle of the unseen forces of evil. (38:25) They want to get all of us in here to stop believing. (38:30) Are we letting them control part of our lives through disobedience to God's word? (38:43) Giving them victory? (38:46) If you're sinning, stop.

(38:50) Turn to God before it's too late. (38:57) We have to stand firm in our faith. (38:59) God told Mark to write these words.

(39:07) All will hate you because of me, Jesus. (39:12) But he who stands firm to the end will be saved. (39:16) What does that mean? (39:19) We have to keep our faith until either the end of our lives or until the end of the Christian era when Christ comes back.

(39:28) Either way, we have to keep our faith and we'll be saved. (39:34) Word of God. (39:36) You can take it to the bank.

(39:41) In John, his first letter, chapter 5 verse 4 says, (39:46) For everyone born of God overcomes the world. (39:50) This is the victory that has overcome the world. (39:53) Even our faith.

(39:56) Faith is the victory. (39:58) Don't give up your faith. (40:01) And God didn't abandon us to fend for ourselves.

(40:05) And this evening when I bring you the rest of this message, (40:09) I'm going to tell you about some special spiritual tools we have at our disposal known as the armor of God. (40:18) And so come back this evening and learn about those. (40:24) So at this time we're going to offer the invitation.

(40:28) And if you've given up your faith, I advise you don't. (40:34) It's weak. (40:35) We can pray for you, restore you.

(40:38) We've got that authority to do. (40:42) So God loves you. (40:43) Whatever you may need, come now at this time and we will attend to those needs.

(40:50) If you need to put God on in baptism, we'd be glad to help you there too. (40:59) So come forward as Wally leads us in prayer.