



AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE REGARDING THE RIPPLE EFFECT...

Crossroads Church - 3 year campaign to end thirst

## SOAP READING—March 16, 2010

*Jonna Fantz—Engage Pastor*

**S:** Ephesians 6:10-18

**O:** The armor is so interesting here. God's righteousness is our body armor. I am protected in this battle with sin and evil by the fact that Jesus died on the cross and has given me right standing with God. Because I am not against God, I am protected by God. The truth of my right standing with God becomes a belt that keeps that armor in place. Elsewhere Paul calls Satan the accuser. So the truth and God's righteousness are fundamental to us being able to be strong in the Lord. Then we put on peace and they become our shoes. Peace is what moves us. Our faith and trust in God becomes a shield from evil that always wants to separate us from God. We are protected by our salvation. Then we are given a sword—the word of God which is the only offensive weapon in our arsenal. Paul's image here is that we are simply defending the ground that Jesus has already taken. In other places there are more "conquer the land" images. But in this passage, Paul seems to emphasize that we are defending our rightful territory. We are God's. We are no longer slaves to sin or injustice. Everywhere we go the kingdom of God is meant to be established. When we run into injustice like in South Minneapolis or in Swaziland, we are meant to see the kingdom of God at work.

**A:** As I think about this, our Ripple Effect campaign is really us just protecting what is Jesus'. We are standing firm in the lives of our friends, in the lives of the families in South Minneapolis, and in Mlosheni. We aren't taking new ground. We're simply saying that this is all Jesus'. These are Jesus' people and this is Jesus' land. The kingdom of God has claimed these places and these people and we will stand with Jesus for their sake. We are simply stepping into the work that God is already doing. That's helpful for me. I don't know how to change things in Mlosheni. I don't know how to change things in South. I don't know how to draw my friends to Jesus. But he does, and so I'm with him.

**P:** Mighty God, thank you through Jesus Christ you have already brought the kingdom of God to Mlosheni and South Minneapolis and to my friends. I want to defend your claim on their hearts and lives. Please let your kingdom be revealed in all the places the Ripple Effect is touching. Please let me be a part of it.