

## Grace Note

The Bible uses military language to characterize the good fight of faith. The Holy Spirit issues “swords” and “shields” to us so we can fend off evil with the precepts he teaches us. But if our only view of the world is from up in a mighty fortress, we risk assuming the enemy is everywhere. We isolate ourselves and misread others who are just as scared as we are. We mark them for avoidance, demean them with labels, and keep them outside the walls. At this stage of my service to God, my deepest concern is for weak people who were driven away from Jesus by “strong” Christians who weaponized the faith.

Isaiah knew a thing or two about being a believer in a hostile environment. And he understood Jesus as well as anyone. He foretold how Jesus would deal with damaged people with keen awareness that we are all damaged people. “a bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice.” [\*English Standard Version\*](#).

Jesus set things right with steady, firm, and vulnerable love. He engaged people from a cross, not in combat. His marching orders to us also resound with words of compassion, patience, forgiveness, and peace. He wants us out of the fortress and in the world with his message of **reconciliation**. That’s a tough battle because the only way we can join it is by letting our guard down.

Thought Provoker  
Pastor Mike