



SPIRITUAL WARFARE

The Armor of God



SEPTEMBER 20, 2020 – JANUARY 17, 2021
HORIZON BAPTIST CHURCH
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OUTLINE

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Acts 19:8-19 – Demonic Activity in Ephesus (Acts 19:8-19)

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 - a. Stand against the wiles of the devil (6:11)
 - b. Stand against the spiritual wickedness in the world (6:12)
 - c. Stand against sin (6:13)
2. The Pieces of our Armor (6:14-18)
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 - c. The sandals of the gospel of peace (6:15)
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OVERVIEW OF THE ARMOR OF GOD

Ephesians 6:10-18

Introduction

In the first century, the whole Mediterranean world was at peace. It was a peace imposed and maintained by Roman armies. And the key to this Roman military achievement was the heavily armored Roman legionnaire. Infantrymen in the Roman legions were equipped with a standard suit of armor. Paul describes this armor in Ephesians 6, and draws an analogy between the pieces of the infantryman's armor and the spiritual armor God provides so that we can stand against demonic enemies that operate in the spiritual realm. The pieces of armor are going to correlate with the attacks of Satan.

Romans 13:12 – The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

1 Thessalonians 5:4-5 – 4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. 5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

Overarching theme –

- We are people of the day living in the night
- We are people of the light living in the darkness
- We are citizens of the kingdom of God living in the kingdom of Satan
- We are in enemy territory and we need to have on our armor

Illustration – capture the flag in enemy territory

Ephesians 1-3 – who we are in Christ

Ephesians 4-6 – how to live in Christ

- When Paul comes to the end of this epistle in which he calls us to walk in a certain way, he reminds us that we have a very, very aggressive and formidable enemy: Satan.

Schedule

9/20 – Overview of the Armor of God

9/27 – Demonic Activity in Ephesus

10/4-10/25 – Missions Month

11/1 – Standing Against the Wiles of the Devil

11/8 – Standing Against Spiritual Wickedness in the World

11/15 – Standing Against Satan and Sin

11/22 – The Belt of Truth

11/29 – The Breastplate of Righteousness

12/6 – The Sandals of the Gospel of Peace

12/13-12/20 – Guest Speaker
12/27 – The Shield of Faith
1/3 – The Helmet of Salvation
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1/17 – The Power of Prayer

Sermon

1.) THE PURPOSE OF OUR ARMOR

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

- Be strong in the Lord – the assumption here is that it's not going to be easy. It's going to take strength that you don't have.
 - This is not the time for weak Christians.
- And in the power of his might – We are to be strong in His mighty power, as in Ephesians 1:19 where Paul was referring to the mighty strength that God exhibited when He raised Christ from the dead. God makes that strength available to us.

Eph. 1:19 – And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

Eph. 3:16, 20-21 – That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; 20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, 21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

If we are going to live in enemy territory
If we are going to fight Satan
If we are going to live for God
...we need to tap into His power

How do you tap into that power? You put on the armor of God.

11 Put on the whole armour of God,

This is a one time action (we can tell from the verb tense). You put it on and keep it on. You never take it off. Why? Because you're always in the battle.

He mentions the armor here in verse 11, and he's going to describe the armor in verses 14-17.

Why do we need the armor? Why do we need to tap into God's strength? Because we are fighting a bloody war against an overpowering foe, and we are living in enemy territory.

A.) Stand Against the Wiles of the Devil

that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

- Stand against the wiles of the devil – the schemes of the devil
 - Illustration – wiley coyote
 - It comes from a verb meaning to stalk.
 - Illustration – the devil walks about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour
 - Satan is old and wise and has been finetuning his schemes for thousands of years since the creation of man.
 - He speaks the language of our fallen nature, and we are predisposed to listen in our flesh.
 - Illustration – Satan tempting Eve; he does so still today

B.) Stand Against Spiritual Wickedness in the World

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

- For we wrestle not against flesh and blood – our battle is not against people. It's not against atheists, politicians, actors, etc. Those people are far weaker than our actual enemy.
 - We must see beyond people.
 - People are pawns in a greater battle that we face.
- As believers we have a three fold enemy: the flesh, the devil, and the world.
 - The flesh is in us
 - The devil is outside of us
 - The world system is the means that the devil uses
- Principalities – word arche which literally means beginning and can be translated “chief ruler” or “magistrate”
 - High ranking governing authorities under Satan’s control
- Powers – the usual word for delegated authority, the liberty and right to exert power.
 - Illustration – deputies
 - The human race is being manipulated by vast numbers of Satan’s deputies who have great power. They encourage lust, greed, hate, fear, selfishness, and pride.
 - Romans 8:38 – neither angels, nor principalities, nor powers can separate us from the love of God
 - Eph. 1:20-21 – at the right hand of God, Christ is exalted far above all principalities and powers
 - Col. 2:13-15 - following his death and resurrection, Christ spoiled principalities and powers triumphing over them.
- Rulers of the darkness of this world – literally means the world rulers of this darkness

- This world system and its darkness is ruled by Satan's forces. Their supreme task is to blind people to the gospel
 - John 12:30-31 – Jesus calls Satan the prince of this world
 - John 14:29-30 – Jesus calls him the prince of the world again
 - Eph. 2:2 – Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:
 - No wonder ->
 - Illustration – evolution, atheism, agnosticism, homosexual agenda, transgender, pedophilia, etc.
 - Illustration – Satan has himself arm deep in this world (not big on conspiracy theories)
 - Pedophilia law
 - Cuties
 - Illustration – leaving California to go somewhere less wicked
 - This whole world is Satan's
 - You can't escape it
 - God doesn't say "hide". He says "stand".
 - The darker the night, the brighter light
 - We're on the front lines, and I wouldn't have it any other way
- Spiritual wickedness in high places – wicked spirits in the heavenlies.
 - The unseen world is swarming with hordes of Satan's forces.
 - You say, "Whoa that sounds serious!" ...It is. We are fighting a bloody war against a formidable foe, and we are living in enemy territory.

We must be vigilant. We must be on guard.

C.) Stand Against Satan and Sin

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

- The evil day – We are living in the evil day (eph. 5:16)
 - Ephesians 5:15-16 – 15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, 16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.
- And having done all to stand – We are to stand against the enemy. We are to stand fast against the manipulation of human life and society by principalities, powers, rulers of this world's darkness, and wicked spirits in high places.

Like Daniel in Babylon, and Joseph in Egypt, how can we stand our ground in a foreign, hostile environment? How can we stand against a system that's opposed to everything we believe? We have to be vigilant, and we have to put on and leave on the armor of God.

2.) THE PIECES OF OUR ARMOUR

A.) The Belt of Truth

14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth,

Satan will attack us with lies. He's the father of them. It's how he attacked Eve. How do you defend yourself against lies? You know the truth.

Illustration – google maps direction

- There's a million wrong ways to get somewhere. I don't need to know them.
- I just need to know the one right way to get there.

What the Roman legionnaire girded himself with was a sturdy, tightly wrapped leather girdle that reached from ribs to loins. Clinched tightly, the girdle provided essential support to his core. The Roman legionnaire, standing with fellow soldiers in tight formation against barbarians who threw themselves against the Roman lines, needed all the core support he could get.

The core of our being needs to be supported with truth. Be prepared to fight falsehood with truth.

B.) The Breastplate of Righteousness
and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

Satan will also attack by appealing to our old man, the flesh. He'll do anything he can to get us to fall into unrighteous living.

How do you defend yourself against the flesh? Against the old man? You walk by the Spirit. You put on the new man.

Galatians 5:16 – Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

Ephesians 4:22-24 – 22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Illustration – don't think about the donuts!

The Roman breastplate covered the thorax, a Greek term indicating the chest or trunk. As such the breastplate, the thoraka, protected the legionnaire's vitals. A thrust to the chest might penetrate the heart—a killing blow.

When we put on the breastplate of righteousness (the new man), we're protecting our heart from the temptations of the flesh.

Proverbs 4:24 – Keep thy heart with all diligence for out of it are the issues of life.

C.) The Sandals of the Gospel of Peace

15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

Satan will attack us by doing anything he can to get us going in the wrong direction.

- He directs us toward sin
- He directs us toward things that don't matter

How do you defend yourself against getting veered off track? How do you keep yourself from going in the wrong direction? You keep the good news of the gospel on your mind at all times. You're always ready to share it. You've constantly got your shoes tied, ready to go share the gospel.

Isaiah 52:7 – 7 How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

Romans 10:15 – 15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

Illustration – if you want to go for a run and not sit on the couch watching tv, what do you do? You put your running shoes on.

If you want to go share the gospel and not go do things you shouldn't, what do you do? You put your gospel shoes on and you keep them on.

Roman soldiers were fitted with special footgear. Civilians wore soft leather shoes called calcei. Indoors, both sexes wore slippers, called soleae. Roman soldiers, however, wore heavy military sandals called caliga, half boot and half sandal. Caliga were tied on with leather thongs wrapped halfway up the shin. The sole was made of several layers of leather three-quarters of an inch thick and studded with hobnails. They were an important element of the legionnaire's equipment. Roman soldiers fought side by side in tight formations. The sturdy, hobnailed boots enabled the legionnaire to dig his feet into the ground and hold his position next to his companions.

When we keep the gospel on the forefront of our minds at all times, it keeps us from getting off-track and going the wrong direction.

D.) The Shield of Faith

16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

Satan attacks us with trouble and persecution. He'll attack us with situations that can create doubt, worry, insecurity, and anxiety.

How do you defend yourself against these attacks from Satan? Faith. You stop making a present reality out of negative outcomes, and you trust in the promises of God. You allow your faith in God to shield you from those difficult situations destroying you spiritually.

Plumbata (belos) were short, pointed metal weapons that were hurled at an advancing enemy from a distance. The intent was that the hurled plumbata would disable as many legionnaires as possible and, it was hoped, break up the advancing formation.

When we face situations that creates anxiety, doubt or uncertainty, the chances are that Satan is throwing plumbata at us, hoping to incapacitate us.

When trouble and persecution come, we need to understand the wonderful resource that will extinguish those flaming arrows. We need to take hold of—and raise up—the shield of faith.

E.) The Helmet of Salvation

17 And take the helmet of salvation,

Satan attacks our minds with negative thoughts about our identity – who we are. He seeks to discourage us. He seeks to create internal doubt and anxiety.

How do defend your mind against those negative thoughts? You fill your mind with righteous thoughts – specifically pertaining to salvation.

When Satan attacks your identity, you think on who you are in Christ as a saved believer.

When Satan seeks to discourage you, you think on the hope of salvation. You fill your mind with those kinds of thoughts.

The last piece of armor the Roman legionnaire put on was his helmet. The original helmet, called a coolus, was like a metal skull cap made of iron covered with bronze. A decade or so before Paul wrote his letter to the Ephesians, the Roman helmet was redesigned, with a piece added to cover the back of the neck and hinged cheek-pieces added to protect the face. This helmet, called a galea, provided complete protection for the head.

1 Thessalonians 5:7-8 – 7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. 8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

Isaiah 59:16-17 – 16 And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him. 17 For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of

salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak.

What protects our minds from Satan's schemes is the hope in and an understanding of salvation.

F.) The Sword of the Spirit
and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

This is an offensive weapon. The soldier's sword would be connected to his belt. The Sword of the Spirit is attached to the belt of truth.

On the belt it was common for a Roman soldier to have a strap. It would come down connect to the belt, go over his shoulder and connect in the back. He would attach his sword to it so that later on we'll see the Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God is attached to the Belt of Truth. In other words, truth is revealed in the Word. You have the truth as it were. You take it out to fight the battle, right, so that the Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God is attached to the Belt of Truth.

Napoleon – the best form of defense is attack

The Word of God is a weapon powerful beyond comprehension.

Quote it.
Pray it.
Read it.
Memorize it.

Heb. 4:12 – 12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Revelation 1:16 – And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

Revelation 2:16 – Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

Revelation 19:15 – And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

God's Word is powerful beyond comprehension, and you and I have access to it as a weapon.

G.) The Weapon of Prayer

18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

You will remember if you've read Pilgrim's Progress, the great classic allegory by John Bunyan, that the last piece of armor that Christian is given in that story is the weapon of all prayer – all prayer. It is given because it will stand him in good stead when all else fails. And with this weapon of all prayer, Christian is instructed that he will be able to prevail against all who come against him in the valley of the shadow. When he pours out his soul in prayer, he is most formidable.

When do we pray?

- Praying always – We're talking about a consciousness of God's presence at all times that leaves my heart open fully to Him. That's what this is all about. To be so God-conscious that you see and experience everything with reference to Him. You see all events in life as related to God.

What do we pray?

- With all prayer and supplications – with all prayer and petition. What does that mean? We pray all kinds of prayers – public, private, verbal, silent, loud, soft, deliberate, planned, unplanned, spontaneous, requests, thanks, confession, humiliation, praise, standing, kneeling, lying down, lifting up your hands, putting your hands down – you name it.

How do we pray?

- Watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication – lying sleepless
- We pray intensely, fervently, soberly. Constantly on guard.
- Watching sights the enemy. Praying fights the enemy.

Who do we pray for?

- For all saints – we don't just pray for ourselves. We pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Invitation

Are you living like you're in a warzone, or are you kind of just moseying through life?

Do you know the truth?

Are you putting on the new man?

Are you gospel focused?

Are you trusting in God's promises?

Are you resting in the hope of your salvation?

Are you in the Word of God?

Are you praying always, with all prayers, with all fervency, for all people?

DEMONIC ACTIVITY IN EPHEBUS

Acts 19:8-19

Sermon

The city of Ephesus had a population of some 350,000 people. Above all, Ephesus was famous for its temple of Diana (Artemis). It was one of the original seven wonders of the world. Ephesus was a large commercial port city in Asia Minor.

Paul journeys to Ephesus on his third missionary journey. He's there from AD 53-56 (roughly 3 years). He writes 1 Corinthians in the spring of AD 56, and then leaves Ephesus for Macedonia where he writes 2 Corinthians in Autumn.

1 Cor. 15:32 - "after the manner of man, I fought with beasts at Ephesus"

1 Corinthians 16:5-9 - 5 Now I will come unto you, when I shall pass through Macedonia: for I do pass through Macedonia. 6 And it may be that I will abide, yea, and winter with you, that ye may bring me on my journey whithersoever I go. 7 For I will not see you now by the way; but I trust to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit. 8 But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost. 9 **For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.**

His time in Ephesus is marked by incredible opportunities and fruit, but also by incredible opposition. The darker the night -> the brighter the light.

Events in Ephesus

- Paul converts and baptizes disciples of John
- Paul preaches in the synagogue and later in the school of Tyrannus
- Paul does miracles
- The seven sons of Sceva fail an exorcism
- Many turn to Christ and repent of their evil deeds
- There is a riot in the city caused by Demetrius and the craftsmen in the city over the worship of Diana and the shrines pertaining to her
- Paul leaves Ephesus.

Later on in his third missionary journey, Paul is in a city called Miletus. He calls for the Ephesian elders to come to him to say goodbye, encourage them, and pray with them.

After Paul's third missionary journey, Paul is arrested in Jerusalem but appeals to Caesar. Eventually, he reaches Rome and is under house arrest at Rome while awaiting his trial in the early AD 60s. He writes Ephesians while in house arrest at Rome, and he would also write Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon during this point in time.

In order to have a better understanding of Paul's prescription for spiritual warfare for the church at Ephesus, we need to understand who the church at Ephesus was, and what the city of Ephesus was like.

For that, let's turn in our Bibles to Acts 19:8-19. This passage is going to give us some very important context for understanding Ephesians 6.

1.) PAUL PREACHED THE GOSPEL

Acts 19:8-10 -

8 And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.

9 But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

10 And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

8 And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.

- He went into the synagogue - Paul would go into the synagogues on the Sabbath and preach the kingdom of God from the Old Testament Scriptures.
 - Acts 17:2 - And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, (Thessalonica)
 - Acts 18:4 - And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. (Corinth)
- Spake boldly for the space of three months - speaking freely and confidently for roughly 12 sabbaths
- Disputing - carries the idea of dialogue. He wouldn't just preach, but answer questions and have conversations.
- Persuading things concerning the kingdom of God - what does it mean that he persuaded things concerning the kingdom of God?
 - Acts 28:23 - And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening.
 - His conversations probably looked a lot like the book of Hebrews.

9 But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

- Divers - some

- Were hardened - hardened by the Word; the gospel is divisive; over the course of 3 months, some hearts were hardened
- Believed not - they disbelieved; they rebelled against the gospel
- spoke evil - cursed and reviled
- That way - The Way was an early title for Christianity (Acts 9:2; 19:23; 24:14, 22)
 - Acts 9:2 - And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.
 - Acts 22:4 - And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.
 - Acts 24:14 - But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets:
- Before the multitude - Those who were hardened and didn't believe began a public, negative campaign against Paul and his teaching
- He departed from them and separated the disciples disputing daily in the school of Tyrannus - understanding that there was nothing more to gain from preaching in the synagogue, Paul took his converts away separately to the school (lecture hall) of Tyrannus where he would preach and teach every day.
 - Tyrannus might have owned the lecture hall, or he may have been a teacher there. Either way, the Ephesian man allowed Paul to use the lecture hall for his public preaching and teaching.

10 And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

- And this continued by the space of two years - Paul would work as a tentmaker. Paul would teach and preach in the lecture hall. Paul would spend the evenings doing more ministry. In Acts 20:31 we read that Paul worked day and night preaching the gospel.
- So that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks - through his converts and disciples, Paul spread the gospel to all of Asia without ever leaving Ephesus
 - Paul preached the word, established converts, let them spread the gospel.

2.) GOD CONFIRMED PAUL'S MESSAGE

Acts 19:11-12 -

11 And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul:

12 So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.

11 And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul:

God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul - God was performing not ordinary miracles through Paul

Why do we see such an outpouring of miracles in the early church? As the New Testament was not yet completed, God used signs and wonders to confirm and authenticate the teaching of Paul and the apostles.

- 2 Cor. 12:12 - miracles are called the signs of the apostles
- Acts 2:22 - God verified Jesus' message by the signs and miracles that He did
- Acts 14:3 - God granted the apostles signs and wonders to be done by their hands to verify the message they preached
- Hebrews 2:3-4 - 3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; 4 God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?
- The purpose of the outpouring of miracles was to confirm the apostle's message. The question is, "Has this purpose been completed?"
 - Yes. The New Testament has been completed. God confirmed the message (past tense).
 - Hebrews 2:3-4 - God confirmed (past tense) the message with signs and wonders.
 - Does that mean that God doesn't do miracles today? No. of course He does. What it means is that the miraculous gifts that God gave to the apostles are not operational in the church today.
 - Faith healing
 - Raising the dead
 - Speaking in tongues
- Yet in this passage, God does for Paul exactly what He had done for the other apostles in the early church. He confirms his message with miracles.

12 So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.

So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons - the handkerchiefs (sweatbands) and aprons would have been part of Paul's attire that he wore during his tentmaking endeavors

And the diseases departed from them.

and the evil spirits went out of them - unbelievers that were possessed by demons were freed

God confirmed Paul's message with miracles.

Jesus had complete power over demons, and He delegated some of His power over demons to some of His followers.

- Luke 10:17 - Jesus sends out 70 disciples to proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom and they return exclaiming that even the devils are subject to them in Jesus name.
- Matt. 10:8 - the 12 were given power over demons

- Acts 5:16 - apostles healed those who were sick with or afflicted by unclean spirits
- Acts 8:7 - with regards to Philip says, "For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed."
- Acts 16:18 - Paul cast an evil spirit out of a girl in Philippi
- Such miraculous powers over demons was unique to a few individuals during the apostolic age, being one of the "signs and wonders and miracles" that constituted the "signs of a true apostle" (2 Cor. 12:12)
 - By the time Hebrews was written, its author spoke of such miraculous signs in the past tense.
- Nowhere in the epistles is there any promise to Christians that they can deliver the unsaved from demons. Nor is there any command for believers to exorcise demons out of each other. Nowhere in Scripture are demons ever cast out of believers.

3.) SEVEN SONS ATTEMPTED AN EXORCISM

Acts 19:13-16 -

13 Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.

14 And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so.

15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?

16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

13 Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.

Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists - wandering or traveling Jews that would cast out demons (Exorcist - one who binds by an oath) (they would say particular incantations in an attempt to bind demons and cast them out of people)

Took upon them to call over them which evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We Adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth - these were not Christian Jews. This is evident from the fact that they only know Jesus as the one who Paul preaches. They did not know Jesus personally.

"Ancient magicians were syncretists and would borrow terms from any religion that sounded sufficiently strange to be deemed effective. These Jewish exorcists of Ephesus were only plying their trade. Paul's "spell" in Jesus' name seemed effective for him, so they gave it a try. (The New American Commentary: Acts [Nashville: Broadman, 1992], 403)"

They tried to use the name of Jesus as a magical charm, as an incantation that they could add to their repertoire. And it blew up in their face.

14 And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so.

And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priest - We don't know anything about this guy, and there is no record of a Jewish high priest named Sceva. He may have been the head of one of the twenty four courses that the priests were divided into.

These seven sons of Sceva attempt an exorcism using Jesus' name in an incantation.

15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?

The evil spirit answered and said - through the man he had possessed
Jesus I know - ginosko -> to know through personal experience; I know Jesus personally
Paul I know - epistamai -> to know as an acquaintance; I know of Paul

But who are ye - These exorcists had neither the right to use the name of Jesus nor the power to command the demon. Look at what happened.

16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

With the supernatural strength that sometimes accompanied demon possession (c.f. Mark 5:3-4), the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them and overcame them, and prevailed against them. They ran from the house naked and wounded.

This story vividly illustrates the danger for any who assume messianic or apostolic power over demons and Satan and thus carelessly meddle in the supernatural realm.

4.) MANY TURNED FROM WITCHCRAFT TO JESUS

Acts 19:17-19 -

17 And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

18 And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds.

19 Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.

17 And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

This was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus - The story of the exorcists fate soon became widespread.

And fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified - the power of the name of Jesus became known. "Jesus I know". Jesus was not one to be trifled with, but to worship in reverence and respect. Jesus was seen as superior and more powerful than the failed pagan magic of those Jewish exorcists.

18 And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds.

- Many that believed - they turned to Jesus in faith, and what accompanied that faith? What was the fruit of that faith?
- Confessed and shewed their deeds - admitted and announced their practices.
 - The city of Ephesus was inundated with magic, witchcraft, incantations, spells.
 - Shewed their practices - probably refers to their secret magic spells, which were genuinely believed to be rendered useless if they were divulged.
 - They turned from their magic just as the Thessalonians had turned from their idols (1 Thess. 1:9).

19 Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.

- Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together and burned them before all men - They destroyed all their magic paraphernalia publicly
- And they counted the price of them and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver - The value of the magic books they destroyed was equivalent to 50,000 days' wages for an average laborer. This shows you how widespread the occult and the magic arts were in Ephesus.
 - Illustration - someone who makes 100k a year, makes \$400 a day
 - 50,000 days labor would be \$19,000,000
- When they got saved, what did they do? They burned their books. They didn't dabble in that stuff anymore. They severed all ties.
 - This convicted me this last week.
 - Illustration
 - Growing up my parents wouldn't let us watch stuff with magic and spells
 - Growing older - ah it's not that big a deal
 - Studying this passage - they burned the books; they severed all ties; they didn't dabble in that stuff anymore
 - Satan has sold witchcraft and magic to the masses today
 - We don't burn books. We buy them.
 - We don't separate. We dabble.
 - We think it's not a big deal. That's exactly what Satan does.

What's your point? 2 Things.

Imagine being saved in the church at Ephesus, and getting this letter from Paul and him ending it talking about spiritual warfare.

1.) When Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus about spiritual warfare, we must take note of what he did and did not tell them to do.

No - exorcism, dabbling, study the occult

Yes - righteousness, truth, faith, prayer, the Word

2.) This story of the seven sons of Sceva is an incredible example of what can happen when we step outside of God's authority and power in fighting Satan.

We can defeat Satan through the power of God when we fight Satan the way God tells us to.

But when we step outside of God's power for fighting Satan...

...when we dabble in the demonic, when we fill our minds with the occult, when we try to cast out demons, we are stepping outside of God's protection into an area we have no business being in.

Illustration - reading this book on spiritual warfare that is fixated on casting out demons

Invitation

Lord, help me to fight Satan the way you have called me to. Help me to put on the armor of God.

STANDING AGAINST THE WILES OF THE DEVIL

Eph. 6:11; 1 Peter 5:8-9

Review

Ephesians 6:10-18 -

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

We gave an overview on this passage of Scripture and spiritual warfare.

We gave an overview on the city of Ephesus and the church at Ephesus.

- Paul preached
- God confirmed the message (miracles, cast out demons)
- Failed exorcism by the seven sons of Sceva
 - Didn't know Jesus
 - Didn't have authority from Jesus
- Many turned from witchcraft to Jesus
 - Repented
 - Burned their magic paraphernalia publicly

The next three weeks we're going to take some time to see what we're really up against.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

- Wiles: tactics

1 Peter 5:8-9

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

1.) The Wiles of the Devil Examined

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

Be sober - have a presence of mind (this presence of mind leads to self control)

- This is opposition to absence of mind (that leads to someone being out of control)
- Illustration - physical sobriety as opposed to drunkenness and drugs
- 1 Peter 1:13 - Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;
 - That word literally means to tie up your robe in a belt, to pull in all the loose ends in your thinking, get your mind focused and under control.
- 1 Peter 4:7 - But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:5-6 - 5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. 6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

Be vigilant - stay awake, be alert, be watchful (these concepts are connected)

- This is the opposite of mindlessness.
 - Ancient Shamans
 - Eastern Religions
 - Eastern meditation
 - Christian meditation
 - Roman Catholicism
 - Feelings based
 - Spiritual
 - Losing one's self
 - Revelation from God
 - Charismatic
 - Speaking in tongues
 - New Age Movemnet
 - Lose myself in music and feel and experience God
 - Receive words of revelation from God
 - Sitting still and listening for God to talk to me

- This type of mindlessness is like walking through a spiritual battlefield with a blindfold on and your hands tied behind your back. You're asking for trouble.
- God never intended that His people would somehow connect up with Him or worship Him without the use of their minds and without basing that relationship upon a very clear and precise understanding of truth.
 - Psalm 32:8-9 - 8 I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. 9 Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.
 - Isaiah 1:18 - Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord...
 - God has never put a premium on mindlessness, just the opposite.
 - He calls us to be sober, vigilant, mindful, watchful
- Why?

Because your adversary the devil - He's not just God's adversary. He's your adversary. He's your enemy.

- Devil: a malicious enemy who slanders
- Prince of this world - called three times in John's gospel
- Prince of the power of the air - Ephesians 2

As a roaring lion - what does a lion do?

- It prowls and eats. It rips its prey to shreds. It's malicious and destructive.
- Lions do two things: they eat and the sleep.
 - Guess what? Satan doesn't sleep.
- Psalm 104:21 - the young lions roar after their prey
- Psalm 22:13 - they gaped upon me with their mouths as a ravening and roaring lion

Walketh about, seeking who he may devour - The object of his devastation is not unbelievers for obvious reasons. He already has them. He seeks to devour and destroy believers.

- He has thousands of years of practice.
- Illustration - imagine how wise and smart someone would be living through 60 lifetimes

Examples of the Wiles of the Devil

- Adam
- Job
- Peter

Genesis 3:1-8 - 1 Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? 2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. 4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. 6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. 7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. 8 And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.

- He questions God's Word (Vs. 1)
 - Did he really say that?
 - Illustration - attacks on the reliability of the Bible, inerrancy, inspiration
 - Application - You can't answer that question if you don't know the Word.
 - Did he really mean it that way?
 - Illustration - subjective interpretation of Scripture as opposed to a literal interpretation of Scripture
 - Application - We don't adjust our interpretation of Scripture to fit our lifestyle. We adjust our lifestyle to fit our interpretation of Scripture.
- He contradicts God's Word (vs. 2-4)
 - He's wrong.
 - Illustration - homosexuality, the value of a human life in the womb, transgenderism (you're a bigot if you disagree)
 - Application - If I find myself disagreeing with the Bible, the Bible is not the one that's wrong.
 - We cannot pick and choose the portions of Scripture that we like. It's all or nothing.
- He plants doubt about the goodness of God (vs. 5)
 - God doesn't really have your best interests in mind.
 - Illustration - drunkenness, drugs, partying, profanity, promiscuity (your God is just a kill joy)
 - Application - Sin takes you further than you want to go, keeps you longer than you want to stay, and costs you more than you want to pay.
- He appeals to our self (vs. 5)

- Isn't what you want what's most important?
 - Illustration - who cares what God says? You deserve this.
 - Application - my life's purpose is His glory.
- They failed (vs. 6-8)
 - Satan was just getting started.

Job 1:7 - And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

- What was he doing? Walking about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.

Job 1:6-21 - 6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them.

7 And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

8 And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

9 Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?

10 Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.

11 But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.

12 And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord.

13 And there was a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:

14 And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them:

15 And the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

16 While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

17 While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

18 While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:

19 And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

20 Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,

21 And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

22 In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

- With God's permission
 - He takes away the things we care about.
 - His money
 - Oxen
 - Donkeys
 - Sheep
 - Camels
 - The people he cared about the most
 - Family
 - Servants
 - Application - too many Christians believe in this health and wealth prosperity gospel
 - If all I had was Jesus, it would be far more than I ever deserved
 - This life is just a vapor with eternity on the horizon
 - In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly

Job 2:1-10 - 1 Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord.

2 And the Lord said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

3 And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.

4 And Satan answered the Lord, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.

5 But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.

6 And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.

7 So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown.

8 And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes.

9 Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.

10 But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

- With God's permission
 - He brings pain into our lives
 - Sores from head to toe
 - Constant immense pain
 - No sleep, no work, no rest, no pleasure (just pain)
 - Pain will either drive you to God or from Him.
 - Illustration - when the going gets tough, does this really matter to you?
 - Football workouts
 - First day with syllabi
 - Application - Jesus is not a part of my life. He's my life. He's my everything.

Luke 22:31-34 - 31 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: 32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. 33 And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. 34 And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

- Sift you as wheat
 - Winnowing fan would filter out the chaff and only the wheat would remain
 - Panning for gold - filter out the dirt to see if there's any gold
 - Shake you up and see if you're the real deal
 - You - plural referring to all of the disciples
- He plays on our fear
- Illustration
 - Will God really provide your needs?
 - How will that person respond if you try to share the gospel?
 - What if your faith costs you friendships, family, your job?
 - If I don't give into this peer pressure, what will people think of me?
- Application
 - Proverbs 29:25 - The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.
 - 2 Timothy 1:7 - For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

2.) The Wiles of the Devil Defeated

What do we do?

- Do we bind him with a certain phrase?
- Do we need to cast out demons?
- Do we need to study demonism?
- First off, we need to be sober and vigilant. Be mindful of potential temptation.
 - When?
 - Where?
 - How?
 - Why?
- Secondly, we need to resist him.

9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

Whom resist - stand up against

- Ephesians 6:11, 13 - Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.
- James 4:7 - Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.
- How do we do resist?

Stedfast in the faith - The faith is the Christian faith. It's the collection of Christian doctrine and teaching revealed in the Word of God.

- How do you resist the devil? You take this book and you read it and obey it.
- When you read the Word and obey it and live it out, you know what Satan does? He flees.
- We're not supposed to attack Satan. We're just supposed to stand firm.

Knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren in the world - Know that in the middle of this you're not alone. All of Christianity is going through this. We're all in the battle together.

Tonight we have seen the wiles of the devil explained and the wiles of the devil resisted.

Are you being sober and vigilant against the attacks of Satan?

Or are you just walking through life like a little kid wandering into the middle of the street?

Are you resisting Satan stedfast in the faith? Are you reading, applying, and obeying the Word of God?

STANDING AGAINST SPIRITUAL WICKEDNESS IN THE WORLD

Eph. 6:12; 1 John 2:15-17

Sermon

Three Week Expose on the enemy

Last week we talked about standing against the wiles of the devil.

Ephesians 6:11-12

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

The wiles of the devil -Satan's tactics that he uses against the believers; he walks about as a roaring lion (1 Peter 5:8-9)

Adam

- Questions God's word
- Contradicts God's word
- Questions the goodness of God
- Directs attention to self

Job

- Takes away the things we care about
- Brings pain into our lives

Peter

- Preys on our fear
- Proverbs 29:25 - the fear of man brings a snare (trap)

How do we respond?

Be sober (mindful) & vigilant (watchful)

Resist the devil steadfast in the faith (take the Word and read it, apply it, and obey it)

In the next verse, we see his armies who no doubt use similar type tactics.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

This verse suggest a definite army of demonic creatures that assist Satan in his attacks against believers.

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood - our main fight is not against people

Principalities - chief rulers in Satan's army

Powers - those with delegated power; deputies in Satan's army

Rulers of the darkness of this world - the world rulers of this darkness in Satan's army

John 12:30-31; 14:29-30 - Jesus calls Satan the prince of this world

Eph. 2:2 - calls Satan the prince of the power of the air

Colossians 1:12-13 - tells us that Christ hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

This world system and its darkness is ruled by Satan's forces. There is an undeniable influence here that we must be aware and cautious of. This world and its dogma and doctrines and ethics are not our friends.

Spiritual wickedness in high places - wicked spirits in the air

This passage depicts an army whose capital is here in this world. As such it is important that we stand not only against the wiles of the devil but against the spiritual wickedness in this world, against the system that Satan has built on this earth that is diametrically opposed to God.

As we study standing against the spiritual wickedness in the world, we're going to turn in our Bibles to 1 John 2.

1 John 2:15-17

15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

Tonight we're going to answer three questions regarding standing against the spiritual wickedness in the world?

1.) How should we respond to the world?

15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world - Don't love the world!

1 John 5:18-19

18 We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not. 19 And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.

- The world is a system of evil, a system of lies and deceptions and falsehoods and the evil conduct that goes with it. It lies in wickedness and is thus opposed to God in every way.

Galatians 1:4

4 Who (Jesus) gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:

Why shouldn't I love the world?

If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him - You cannot love the world and the Father at the same time.

- The world is a system of rebellion toward God, run by Satan, set up on earth as the enemy of the gospel of salvation. We can give no supreme affection to that and at the same time say we love God and love Jesus Christ. The two are mutually exclusive.

James 4:4 - Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

Illustration

- Your father (whom you love)
- Someone who hates your father, opposes your father, and is actively trying to murder your father
- Can you love your father and be best buddies with the person who is trying to murder your father? No.
- This world hates your Father. It wants nothing to do with Him. It wants him dead and gone.
 - If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

It does not mean that the world doesn't still allure us because it can. It is seductive. We reject its philosophy. We reject its religions. We reject all of the ideologies of the world and yet we're lured and seduced by some of its behavior. "What are you talking about?" Well, I'm talking about flirting with the world. You don't love it, you're not married to it, you've been separated from it, you've come into the family of God and yet it is alluring to you because of your fallenness.

That's what we have to be on guard against.

2.) What does the world consist of?

16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

The world is an external embodiment of sin (the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life). It seeks to draw us away from God appealing to us through sin (the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life). It is a system opposed to God.

For all that is in the world...is not of the Father, but is of the world - all that is in this anti God system is not from God, but worldly (it is opposed to God as His polar opposite)

What does the world do? It seduces people to sin. It lures them through the gateways to sin. What are those? The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

The lust of the flesh - man's sinful nature; the craving of the sinful heart; depravity in man's being; desire for any thought or action in opposition to God's law

Mark 7:18-23 - 18 And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him; 19 Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats? 20 And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. 21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, 22 Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: 23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

- Sin starts in the heart of man.
- We are drawn to sin because of the sinful flesh inside of us.

Illustration - you can't escape the flesh. living in a cave like a monk, you'd still be in the grip of sin (it's not outside; it's inside)

The world system is simply an external projection of the heart of man. That external system appeals to us by advertising to our flesh (the sinful desires of self).

We must be careful to guard our heart from that, and to kill those desires in the power of the Spirit.

The second that he mentions is the lust of the eyes. It's not just what you feel, it's not just those impulses and compulsions that you feel down inside toward self-fulfillment against the will of God, it's also what you see.

The lust of the eyes - This is that seductive vision that man sees something and because he sees it, it allures him and he want it, and it leads to covetousness and it leads to all kinds of other sins

The lust of flesh - sinful draw from the internal heart

The lust of the eyes - sinful draw of the outward (coveting what I don't have)

What God gave us to appreciate His beauty can become a point of terrible sinful pursuit.

Eve - saw the fruit of the tree that it was pleasant to the eyes (coveted it)

Achan - saw gold, silver, and a garment (coveted it)

David - saw Bathsheba (coveted it)

The lust of the eyes led each of them into sin.

The world advertises not only to our flesh, but to our eyes.

We need to guard our hearts and slay evil desires, but we also need to guard our eyes.

Psalm 119:37 - Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity

Job 31:1 - I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?

Colossians 3:5 - tells us to put to death covetousness

Application

- Guard your eyes against the television screen
- Billboards
- Phone
- Minds eye (thought life)

Folks we need to guard our heart, and we need to guard our eyes.

The pride of life - the self centered, me first mentality that underlies so much of society

It essentially says, "I'm the most important person on the planet and I'm going to get what I want, when I want it, how I want it."

The boastful pride of life is the desire to be better than everybody else. It seeks to exalt itself and its wants and desires above God's.

The world embodies this, and it advertises to our pride.

Illustration - Temptation of Eve

Genesis 3:6 - And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

- Last week we saw the tactics of Satan in verses 1-5
- This week we see the appeal to Eve
 - "The tree was good for food" - lust of the flesh; she had plenty of food. It was idea that there was some sort of satisfaction being held back from her
 - "pleasant to the eyes" - it excited her; it's beauty allured her
 - "tree to be desired to make one wise" - pride of life; to be like God

She fell into sin.

Illustration - Temptation of Jesus

- Jesus had been fasting 40 days; he's hungry
- Bodily Desires
 - Take these stones and turn them into bread
 - "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.
- Eyes
 - I'll give you all the kingdoms of the world if you just worship me
 - "Worship the Lord your God and serve Him only"
- Pride
 - Temple - dive of this 400 foot precipice and angels will gather around you and you'll float down like a feather and they'll all bow down and be preeminent
 - "Don't tempt the Lord your God"

What does the world consist of?

The world is an external system opposed against God. It is the embodiment of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. It seeks to draw us away from God by appealing to us through these venues.

3.) What happens to the world?

17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

It ends.

The world system is passing away and we are not.

And the world passeth away and the lust thereof - present tense

- The world is in a state of decay
- It's in self destruction mode

The world we're talking about is the systems of man. And what we're looking at here is the destruction of Satan, his casting into the lake of fire, the destruction of demons as they, too, are put into the place prepared for the devil and his angels where they'll burn forever in torment.

We're talking about all the human beings who have followed the world's system, all the people in false religion from all of human history, all of the anti-Christ, anti-God people, all those who live their lives within the framework of the world, under the power of Satan. They are all in a death spiral and they are catapulting at a rapid rate into eternal hell. That's what the Bible says in terms that are quite clear.

2 Thessalonians 1:8-9 - 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

But he that doeth the will of God abideth forever -

- Who is the one that does the will of God? Believers
- How long do believers live? Forever
- We're not going where the system is going. The system is going into death and we're going into life. The system is going into hell and we are going into heaven.

God has called us to stand against the spiritual wickedness in the world.

How do I do that?

- Guard your heart
- Guard your eyes
- Die to self (slay those evil desires)
- Fight temptation with Scripture

STANDING AGAINST SIN

Eph. 6:13; Romans 6:6-14

Our enemy

- Satan and his forces
- The world
- The flesh

Ephesians 6:11-13 -

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Ephesians 5:11-16

11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

12 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

13 But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Standing in the evil day - living righteously in the midst of an evil world; living like people of the day in the midst of the night; living like citizens of heaven while residing in the kingdom of darkness

Standing against the influence of the world
Standing against your own fleshly desires

Romans 6:6-14

Should those of us who are saved continue in sin because grace covers our sin?

God forbid. We are dead to sin. We are no longer under the dominion of sin. It is no longer our master. Christ is our master. We are in Christ now.

The moment we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, by a divine miracle, we are crucified with Him. We are buried with Him. We die in His death, and then we rise in newness of life. We're transformed, and that is Paul's developing theme in Romans 6, 7, and 8.

In Romans 6, Paul gives us a three step formula for standing against sin.

1.) Know

6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him - our old self died on that cross with Jesus. Who I was is dead.

- Colossians 3:9-10 - 9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; 10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:
- Galatians 2:20 - I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.
- My old man is dead and gone.
- Christ's death on the cross did not just provide deliverance from the penalty for sin in the future. It also provided deliverance from the power of sin in our lives in the present.

That the body of sin might be destroyed (of none effect, no longer in control), that henceforth we should not serve sin - Sin was our master. In our fallen humanity, we were chained to it with no hope of deliverance from its eternal penalty or its power in our lives. But death provides freedom from contracts and obligations and servitude. When we died to sin, the chains of bondage that bound us to sin were broken, and we no longer were enslaved to sin. We no longer had to serve it.

- We've been delivered from the power of sin, although we have not yet been delivered from the presence of sin

7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.

For he that is dead is freed from sin - Because we died to sin, we are free from the enslavement of sin. That doesn't mean that we won't still make mistakes and sin, but it means that we don't have to listen to what sin tells us to do.

Illustration - The person who after salvation returns again and again to sin is like the slave of a cruel master who after he has been freed, returns time and time again to the cruelty of his former master. Through Christ we can have newness of life here and now.

Illustration - people trying to fake their own death when they're in major debt or trouble. Why? Because no matter how powerful you are, you can't find or hurt or kill a dead man.

1 Peter 4:1 - Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;

8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

If we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him - if we are a Christian, then we are in Christ. We are identified with Christ. And just as Christ died to sin and rose from the dead victorious over sin, we to should be dead to sin and live victoriously in newness of life. The believer has died to his old life, and through Christ has been given the power to enjoy a new life victorious over sin.

9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him - When Jesus rose from the dead, he conquered death and will never die again. He holds the keys of hell and death.

Revelation 1:18 - I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God - He died once to sin, and now lives and reigns forever, and we too, if we are saved, died to sin once, and will live and reign with Christ forever and ever.

"I am not what I ought to be. I am not what I wish to be. I am not even what I hope to be. But by the cross of Christ, I am not what I was." - John Newton

Hebrews 9:27-28 - And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

Luke 20:38 - For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him.

Illustration - The tomb is really open, and we have really come out of the grave, and we can get off the grave clothes and get on with the victory.

Duty is founded on doctrine. Because this is true, this is how you are to behave.

- What do I need to know?
 - I am dead to sin (sin is not my master & who I was is dead and gone)
 - I am alive to God (Jesus is my master, and I am new creature in Him)

2.) Reckon

Illustration - when the Bible uses the word reckon here, it is not being used to mean I reckon or suppose.

- Southern words
 - Reckon
 - Yall
 - Catawampus
 - Doohickey
 - Mudding
 - Grits
 - Sugar
 - Sweet Tea
 - Biscuits and Gravy

Reckon - to take into one's account, to calculate, to estimate; to affirm

Know - deals with the mind, deals with knowledge

Reckon - deals with the heart, deals with faith (applying truth personally)

11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord - We need to believe that what God says about being dead to sin and alive to Him is really true in our own lives. I know in my mind that the believer is dead to sin, but I must also reckon or believe in my own heart that I am dead to sin.

What does that mean?

Believe personally

- I am dead to sin
 - Sin is not my master
 - I am not a slave to sin
 - My old man is dead and gone
- I am alive unto God
 - God is my master
 - I am a servant of God

- I am a new man

Ramification:

- We can be confident in the midst of temptation
 - 1 Cor. 10:13 - There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.
 - In the midst of temptation, I am not a slave to circumstances. I am not a slave to sin. I don't have to sin. I am not powerless. There is always a way of escape.

3.) Yield

Know - mind

Reckon - heart

Yield - will

12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

Therefore - based on what we know generically and believe personally (dead to sin & alive to God)

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof - Sin is no longer your master (don't let it reign!), but it's still around, and it's barking orders. We don't have to obey them, but sometimes we do.

- What he's saying is don't allow your former master to continue to rule over your life
- Illustration - sin's a bully that has no right to rule over you, but it talks a big game and acts as if it still is master
- Sin has no dominion. So don't let it act like it does.

Where does sin want to reign?

In your mortal body - I am a new creation in Christ, but I'm still living in this mortal, human, physical body.

- Where does sin want to reign? In my mortal body through my flesh.
 - Romans 7:22-24 - 22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

That ye should obey it in the lusts thereof - Sin speaks the language of our flesh, and it wants to rule our bodies through the flesh... and Paul says "Don't obey it and give in to the fleshly lusts that it appeals to."

- There's a day coming when we will leave this mortal body behind and receive a new glorified body. At that point of time, we will not only be delivered from the penalty of sin and the power of sin, but also the presence of sin.
 - Romans 8:20-23 - 20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, 21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. 23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.
 - 1 Cor 15:50-54 - 50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

There's coming a day when there will be no more sin, but we're not there yet. We are a new creature, but we still have a flesh that sin tries to rule us by appealing to. Don't let it. It has no jurisdiction.

Psalm 19:13 - Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.

Psalm 119:133 - Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.

13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

Neither yield ye your members - your body, your mortality, your humanness

as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: - don't let sin use your body as a weapon (tool) of unrighteousness unto sin

Illustration - sin is a king that wants to use you as a tool/weapon to promote and further its purposes in the world

But yield yourselves unto God...and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God - allow God to use your self, your body as a tool/weapon to promote and further his purposes in the world

Illustration - you're either going to be used for the will of God or the will of sin. Let God use you for His purposes!

As those that are alive from the dead - Remember who you are and live accordingly.

- You are a servant of God. You are a new creation. Allow God to use you for his purposes, not sin to use you for its purposes.

Romans 7:5 - For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.

Colossians 3:5 - 5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

James 4:1 - From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?

Romans 12:1 - I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

1 Peter 2:24 - Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

1 Peter 4:2 - That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

For sin shall not have dominion over you; - sin's tyranny over me is broken

Illustration

- Old master
- New master
- Both are pointing me in different directions
- Both have a purpose for my life
- One's leading to death. The other died in my place so I could have life.
- One is a cruel master. One is a good master.
- One was my master. One is my master.

For ye are not under the law - the law condemned me because of my sin. When I was a slave to sin, I was also constantly under the condemnation of bondage of the law.

But Now I am under grace

- God's grace has freed me from the penalty of sin and it has freed me from the power of sin, and one day when we are resurrected and receive our glorified bodies it will free us from the presence of sin as well.

Romans 7:4-6 - 4 Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. 5 For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. 6 But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

Romans 8:2 - For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

Galatians 5:18 - But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

3 Step Process to Standing against Sin:

Know
Reckon
Yield

How do I yield myself to God on a daily basis?

- Confess

- Be filled with the Spirit.

How do I keep from yielding myself to sin?

- Vigilance (1 pet 5:8)
 - About Satan
 - About your weaknesses
- Imagine the consequences (gal 6:7-9; eccl 8:11-13)
- Cry out to the Lord (ps 34:6)
 - This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.
- Take thoughts into captivity (2 cor 10:3-5)
 - Thoughts » desires » actions » habits » character » destiny
 - The easiest to battle is thoughts
 - In the first 4 seconds, test your thoughts by Philippians 4:8, and if it doesn't measure up, then cast out the thought and refuse to entertain it. If you don't, it will turn into lust.
- Omnipresence of God (gen 39:7-9)
 - You'd live a different life if God went with you everywhere.
- Run from temptation (2 tim 2:22)
 - Run from temptation.
 - Run to the scripture. (thy word have I hid in mine heart)
- Yield to the Spirit (rom 8:13)
 - For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.
 - We need his power

Know -> Reckon -> Yield

THE BELT OF TRUTH

Eph. 6:14; John 8:38-44

Ephesians 6:11-14a - 11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth,

The Problem (the enemies)

- Satan & his forces
- The world
- The flesh

The Solution

- Put on the whole armor of God (vs 11)
- Take unto you the whole armour of God (vs 13)

The Questions

- What does "the armor of God" mean?
- What does "the armor of God" consist of?

What does "the armor of God" mean?

The armor of God is God's armor.

- Hmm. I hadn't really thought about it that way, but what does that mean?

Psalm 109:17-19 - 17 As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him. 18 As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones. 19 Let it be unto him as the garment which covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually.

- David here is talking about the wicked.
- He uses clothing as a metaphor for his character.
 - One who has clothed himself with cursing is one who constantly curses.
 - Clothing is a metaphor for character.

Where are you going with this? Well turn over to Isaiah 11:5.

Isaiah 11:5 - 1 And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: 2 And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom

and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; 3 And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: 4 But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth: with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. 5 And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

- Talking about Jesus, it is said that righteousness and faithfulness would be the girdle/belt that he would wear.
- Jesus' clothing is used as a symbol of His character.
 - Just as the clothing of cursing symbolizes someone who curses, the belt of righteousness and faithfulness symbolize someone who is righteous and faithful.

Isaiah 59:14-17 - 14 And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. 15 Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the Lord saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment. 16 And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him. 17 For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak.

Here we see a definitive Old Testament reference to the armor of God/ God's armor.

- God's armor is used as a symbol of His character.
 - Breastplate of righteousness -> God is righteous
 - Helmet of salvation -> God brings salvation
 - Garment of vengeance -> God is vengeful
 - Cloak of zeal -> God is zealous
- The armor of God is God's armor. It's his attributes.
- When the Scripture tells us to put on the armor of God, it's telling us to live in accordance with certain aspects of the character of God.

How do I fight Satan, and his demons, and the world and my flesh?

Live like Jesus. Act like Christ. Live righteously. You don't concentrate on what Satan's doing. You focus on what God's called you to do.

What is the armor of God? It's God's armor. It's a symbol of His moral character.

What does the armor of God consist of?

What specific attributes of the character of God should we seek to emulate?

- God is vengeful, but I shouldn't be.
- God is all powerful. I can't be that.
- God is all knowing. I can't know everything.

Which attributes of the character of God should I seek to emulate? Ephesians 6 gives us a good summary (though not an exhaustive one).

Ephesians 6:14a - 14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth,

1 Thessalonians 5:5-8 - 5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. 6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. 7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. 8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

- The armor of God is protective gear that we wear on enemy territory for protection (as people of the day living in the night)

2 Corinthians 6:4-7 - 4 But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, 5 In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; 6 By pureness, by knowledge, by long suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, 7 By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,

- Armour - weapons
- The simple idea is, that they were completely armed. To be armed on the right hand and on the left is to be well armed, or entirely equipped.
- We demonstrate ourselves as God's servants by being armed with the weapons of righteousness.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 - 3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: 4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) 5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

- The weapons of spiritual warfare are not physical. They are spiritual.
- Through the power of God, they enable us to pull down spiritual strongholds in our lives, destroy arguments, cast down pride and systems and thoughts that exalt themselves against God, and capturing every thought and bringing it into the obedience of Christ.

Belt of Truth

Paul is going to use the typical armor of a Roman soldier to talk about the different character traits of God that we should emulate. He starts off with the girdle or belt of truth.

We can imagine the Roman legionnaire, strapping on a wide belt. We can almost see the sword and perhaps a knife hanging from it.

While “girding one’s loins” is a common expression in Scripture, it generally describes a Jewish man pulling his long garment through his legs and tucking it around his waist for greater freedom of motion as he worked.

What the Roman legionnaire girded himself with was a sturdy, tightly wrapped leather girdle. Clinched tightly, the girdle provided essential support to his core. The Roman legionnaire, standing with fellow soldiers in tight formation against barbarians who threw themselves against the Roman lines, needed all the core support he could get.

We need all the core support we can get if we are to stand firm against the spiritual forces of evil.

Now further on that same belt it was common for a Roman soldier to have a strap. It would come down connect to the belt, go over his shoulder and connect in the back. He would attach his sword to it so that later on we’ll see the Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God is attached to the Belt of Truth. In other words, truth is revealed in the Word. You have the truth as it were. You take it out to fight the battle, right, so that the Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God is attached to the Belt of Truth.

The question arises: what does the belt of truth refer to? Is it referring to being armed with truth, or is it referring to being truthful?

I believe that the answer is yes. We’ll talk more about being armed with truth when we get to the Sword of the Spirit (the Word of God), but for this evening I want to focus on being truthful.

Truthfulness

Turn to John 8:38-44.

In this passage we’re going to see that lies and falsehood are a distinct character trait of Satan and his followers. And by extension, we can establish that truthfulness and a commitment to truth are a distinct character trait of God and his followers.

John 8:38-44

38 I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.

- Here Jesus is talking to this crowd of Jews. He says that things He says are from His Father, but you have no interest in the things that come from my Father, who is God. You have an interest in the things that come from your father.

39 They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.

- They say, "Abraham is our father."
- Jesus says, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do what Abraham did."
 - Rejoice to see my day! (vs. 56)
 - Receive me. Believe in me.
- What he's implying here is that although they may be physical descendants of Abraham, they are not spiritual descendants of Abraham.

40 But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.

- Jesus says, "You want to kill me for telling you the truth from God. That's not what Abraham did. He received the truth that God revealed to Him by faith."

41 Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.

- Jesus says, "You do the deeds of your father, and your father is not Abraham or God."
- They say, "We are not idolaters or pagans. We worship the one true God. He is our Father."

42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

- Jesus says, "If God were your Father, you would love me and embrace me because He sent me."

43 Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.

- He continues, "Why don't you understand my speech? Because you can't bear to receive it."

44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

- You know what Satan does? He lies and he embraces lies.
- Two options
 - Saved or Lost
 - Heaven or Hell
 - Child of God or child of Satan
 - Both the wiccan and the well meaning unbeliever are children of the devil
- The outcome
 - What do kids do? They follow in the footsteps of their fathers.
 - You do what your father does

- What is Satan? He's a murderer and a liar.
- Lying is a defining character trait of Satan.
 - ...And abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

Satan and his forces and his world system are liars, living in a system of lies, and they are committed to falsehood.

How do we defend ourselves against that? How we safeguard ourselves against the lies of the devil and the world?

Ephesians 6:14 - Put on the belt of truth.

You arm yourself with truth.

- You get in the Word.
- You learn and know the truth.

You arm yourself with truthfulness.

- You're honest
- You're straight up
- You're not hypocritical
- You're not manipulative
- You tell the truth even when it's not convenient or easy
- You're careful to spread information if you're not sure if it's true or not

There is a connection between truth and truthfulness. People who love the truth are truthful. People who hate the truth are liars.

Application

Do you love the truth? Are you a truthful person?

THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Eph. 6:14; Eph. 4:17-24

Ephesians 6:11-14

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

Review

- Last week we began discussing the armor of God
- Question 1 - what does the armor of God mean?
 - The armor of God is God's armor.
 - It's a symbol of His moral character.
- Question 2 - what does the armor of God consist of?
 - The belt of truth
 - We need to be armed with truth (the Word)
 - We need to be armed with truthfulness
 - This week - the breastplate of righteousness

Isaiah 59:16-17 - 16 And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him. 17 For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak.

The Breastplate of Righteousness

The Roman breastplate covered the soldier's chest. As such the breastplate protected the legionnaire's vitals. A thrust to the chest might penetrate the heart—a killing blow.

In Paul's time, the typical Roman soldier's breastplate was a metal plate worn over a leather garment. Soldiers who could afford it might strap the breastplate on over a coat of mail that protected both the front and the back.

Paul's instruction regarding the breastplate in Ephesians 6 makes two things clear:

- 1.) The spiritual breastplate of the Christian is righteousness
- 2.) The breastplate of righteousness is something that I am personally responsible to put on

What does that mean?

- This is not in reference to imputed righteousness (saving righteousness)
 - Romans 4:1-5 - 1 What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? 2 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. 3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. 4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. 5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.
 - God has declared me righteous based on my faith in Christ. I can't do something that already has been done for me.
- This is in reference to righteous living
 - Ephesians 4:22-24 - 22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

To put on the breastplate of righteousness is to arm ourselves with righteous living.

How does the breastplate of righteous living protect us from Satan's temptations and schemes?

Satan's Scheme

We've already seen that part of Satan's plan of attack against believers is appealing to our flesh isn't it? He plays on our sinful desires and passions, seeking to lead us into unrighteous living.

The key to resisting unrighteous living is replacing it. You can't just put off the old. You have to put on the new. We can't just stop living unrighteously. We have to start living righteously.

Illustration - filling myself up with good food is the best defense I can have against filling myself up with bad food

Living righteously, living in accordance with my new nature, is the best defense I can have against Satan's attempts to lead me into unrighteous living.

We must act in identity with who we are, not who we were.

Paul actually develops this concept in the chapters preceding Ephesians 6. Turn in your Bible to Ephesians 4.

Sermon

Ephesians 4:17-24 talks about this concept of living in accordance with our new nature, our new identity as a Christian.

If I'm a new person on the inside, I need to start acting like it on the outside.

Illustration - freshening up a homeless man, but keeping him in his old clothes (get him some new clothes)

1.) Put off the Old

17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,

Testify in the Lord - this is coming from God

Other Gentiles - unbelievers (can refer to an ethnic group, but can also be used as a religious term for unbelievers)

Walk not as other Gentiles walk - do not behave like the pagans around you

- There ought to be a discernible difference in the way that we carry ourselves as believers
- The church and those within it ought not to blend in to the world
 - Our problem isn't getting the world to live like Christians. It's getting Christians to not live like the world.
- Illustration - baking pumpkin muffins for neighbors

In the vanity of their mind - wrong behavior starts with wrong thinking; sinful actions start with sinful thoughts (Proverbs 4:23)

Eph. 2:1-3 - And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

1 Peter 4:3 - For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries:

Romans 1:21 - Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

Having the understanding darkened - the lost just don't understand spiritual things

- Our society is so educated, and yet misses out on understanding the most important truths of the universe
- "Ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth"
- Illustration - the elites of society that mock Christianity and religion

Being alienated from the life of God - they're spiritually dead. They're separated from the life that is in God. The believer has newness of life. The lost have the oldness of death. Why are they alienated?

Through the ignorance that is in them - because they're spiritually ignorant. You cannot experience the newness of life from God if you don't know God personally.

Because of the blindness of their heart - the word blindness was used in medical terms for a kind of callus that formed around a broken bone, a callus that is even harder than the bone itself.

- The lost are alienated from God because of an ignorant mind and a hard heart. And being in such a state they walk and live in a way that is diametrically opposed to God.

Acts 26:18 - To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

Ephesians 2:12 - That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

Galatians 4:8 - Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.

Romans 1:21 - Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

Who being past feeling - their conscience is seared

1 Timothy 4:2 - Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

Illustration - dead spot on my knee

Have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness - sinful thoughts and sinful hearts lead to sinful actions

- Lasciviousness - shameful obscenity
- Work - business
 - The lost make a business out of uncleanness, and they run that business with all greediness
 - Illustration - Rated R Films (sell nudity, physical intimacy, profanity, obscenity)

Romans 1:24, 26 - Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:... For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

Why would you live like that? Don't live like that. That's not who you are.

2.) Put on the New

20 But ye have not so learned Christ;

But ye have not so learned Christ - you know better. You have learned Christ and the way of life prescribed by Him, and you know better.

21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

If so be that ye have heard him - seeing that you have heard him

And have been taught by him - taught by Christ through the Word of God and the Holy Spirit

As the truth is in Jesus - in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus Christ (the truth that Jesus taught and lived and was)

These lost people live lives separated from God consumed by the flesh because their mind is darkened and their heart is hardened... but you know better. You have heard Christ and been taught Christ and have learned Christ. You know the right thing to do...and what is that?

22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man - stop living in accordance with who you were. Our old self is crucified with Christ. Stop engaging in the sinful activities that characterized who you were.

Which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts - that old man is deteriorating as a result of deceitful desires

- Desires that promise happiness and fulfillment and just bring death and destruction
- Illustration - eating a massive ice cream sundae and then just feeling terrible afterwards

Colossians 2:11 - In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

Colossians 3:8-9 - 8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. 9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

Hebrews 12:1 - Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

1 Peter 2:1 - Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,

Ephesians 2:2-3 - 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

Romans 6:6 - Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

Stop engaging in activities that characterize who you were, and...

Be renewed in the spirit of your mind - as the mind understands the truths of God's Word (John 17:17), it is gradually transformed by the Holy Spirit, and this renewal leads to a changed life.

- Changed minds lead to changed actions
- Stop filling your mind with garbage and fill it with God's Word.

Romans 12:2 - And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Colossians 3:10 - And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

When you fill your mind with truth, it will change the way you think. And when you change the way you think, you'll change the way you live.

And that ye put on the new man - live in accordance with the new creation that you are in Christ

We are a new creation!

2 Cor. 5:17 - Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Galatians 6:15 - For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

Act accordingly!

Romans 6:4 - Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Colossians 3:10 - And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

Ephesians 6:11 - Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Ephesians 6:14 - Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

Which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness - the new creation that I am as a Christian is made to resemble God in righteousness and holiness.

To put on the breastplate of righteousness is to put on the new man. It's to live righteously. We protect ourselves from Satan's temptations to our flesh by living righteously, by doing what is right. What does that look like practically?

Ephesians 4:25-5:9

Truth vs Lying (vs. 25)

Righteous Anger vs Sinful Anger (vs. 26)

Working vs Stealing (vs. 28)

Encouraging Speech vs Filthy Speech (vs. 29)

Forgiving vs Remaining Bitter (vs. 31-32)

Kindness vs Wrath (vs. 31-32)

Compassion vs Anger (vs. 31-32)

Selfless Love vs Selfish Love (vs. 2-3)

Spirituality vs Sensuality (vs. 4-5)

Invitation

Are you living righteously?

Are you living in accordance with who you were or who you are?

Are you being renewed in the Spirit of your mind, or are you filling your mind with garbage?

THE SANDALS OF THE GOSPEL

Eph. 6:15; Romans 10:9-15

Ephesians 6:11-15

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

The Sandals of the Gospel of Peace

In the Bible, peace is not just absence of strife. The Hebrew word for peace, shalom, suggests far more than a truce between warring factions. Shalom indicates the harmony, health, and wholeness that are to mark a believer's relationship with God and with others. The richness of shalom infuses the New Testament concept of peace.

The gospel is closely connected with the concept of peace because the gospel brings peace. It brings peace with God, and it should lead to peace with man.

The sandals of the gospel of peace is in reference to a pair of the military sandals worn by Roman legionnaires. Paul reminds us that we are to advance "with our feet fitted with the readiness to share the gospel of peace" (6:15). Roman soldiers were fitted with special footgear. Civilians wore soft leather shoes. Indoors, both sexes wore slippers. Roman soldiers, however, wore heavy military sandals called caligae, half boot and half sandal. Caligae were tied on with leather thongs wrapped halfway up the shin. The sole was made of several layers of leather three-quarters of an inch thick and studded with hobnails. They were an important element of the legionnaire's equipment. Roman soldiers fought side by side in tight formations. The sturdy, hobnailed boots enabled the legionnaire to dig his feet into the ground and hold his position next to his companions.

Illustration - trying to play football without cleats

These sandals provided stability and sure footing for the task at hand.

For the Christian, to put on the sandals of the preparation of the gospel of peace is to live in a state of readiness to share the good news of the gospel. It's to live with a gospel consciousness.

Satan's Attacks

Satan seeks to divide us. He seeks to bring about disharmony and chaos. He seeks to destroy influence that we have with the lost around us.

Satan wants us to respond with bitterness and anger when we are wounded. Satan wants us to live on edge. Satan wants us to be in turmoil, suspicious of others' motives and quick to take offense. Satan wants us to remember and to nurse every hurt. How do we protect ourselves from Satan's temptations to divisiveness, disharmony, and chaos?

You put on the sandals of the gospel of peace. You live and walk and breathe ready to share the gospel, looking for opportunities to share the gospel. When you live that way, all the little things that people do that could bring disharmony, you know how you respond? You just shrug them off. Because that stuff doesn't matter the least bit in comparison to the gospel.

Primary Text

Isaiah 11:5 - loins girt about with truth

Isaiah 59:17 - breastplate of righteousness

Isaiah 52:7 - sandals of the gospel of peace

Isaiah 52:7 - How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

Romans 10:9-15

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus – here in reference to confessing or professing Jesus Christ as Lord, Master, God (Barnes, 1834).

- “The word translated as Lord to the Hellenistic Jewish mind conveyed the idea of Deity. What Paul is addressing is not so much the Lordship of Christ as the Deity of Christ.” (Sorenson, 2007)

And shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead – salvation for the believer is rooted in faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

- Head knowledge is not sufficient. The tense of the word believe indicates a one time occurrence. (Sorenson, 2007)

Thou shalt be saved – saved from sin and hell.

Matthew 10:32-33

Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

Luke 12:8

Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God:

John 9:22

These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

John 12:42-43

Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

Philippians 2:11

And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

John 20:26-29

And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

Acts 8:37

And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness – When we put our faith in Jesus Christ, we are declared righteous by God. We are forgiven.

And with the mouth confession is made unto salvation – It is from the heart one believes unto true righteousness, and it is with the mouth that confession of the same comes thereafter. (Sorenson, 2007)

There is a connection between faith and profession.

Professing Christ without faith in Him is empty.
The idea of having genuine faith without being willing to profess it is a foreign concept to New Testament Christianity. Profession is an evidence of faith.

We believe in the heart, receive God's righteousness, and then confess Christ openly and without shame. Faith brings boldness to the believer. (Wiersbe, 2008)

But make no mistake. It is faith and faith alone that brings forgiveness of sins.

John 1:12-13

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Galatians 2:16

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Philippians 3:9

And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

1 John 4:15

Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

This is a quotation from Isaiah 28:16 in the Septuagint.

Isaiah 28:16

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

- "Make haste" – run away; be ashamed (Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown, 1884)

Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed – If you have genuine faith in Christ, you will not be ashamed. If you really believe it in here, you will not deny it out there.

12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

Paul is now going to give commentary on the quotation from Isaiah 28:16. What's the first word from Isaiah 28:16? It's whosoever. Whosoever means anyone. (Barnes, 1834)

For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek – Anyone can put their faith in Christ. It makes no difference if they are Jewish or Greek or something else.

For the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. – The one and the same God is rich in mercy and forgiveness to all that call upon him, that cry out to him.

Psalms 86:5

For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.

Psalms 145:18

The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.

1 Corinthians 1:2

Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

This is a quotation from Joel 2:32.

Joel 2:32

And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.

For whosoever – that's anyone

Shall call upon the name of the Lord – appeal to God for salvation in genuine faith

Illustration – finding yourself in a hopeless situation that you can't fix and calling out to someone who can

- Breakdowns & Triple A (being broke down in my 1992 Nissan Maxima in the middle of an intersection in Orlando in the rain)

Shall be saved – saved from sin, saved from death, saved from hell

14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

Example – Jonah (Jew preaching salvation to the Gentiles)

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed – you can't appeal to someone that you don't trust in

Hebrews 11:6 - ...for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him

And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard – you can't trust in someone that you don't know about

And how shall they hear without a preacher – you can't know about someone unless someone tells you about them

Luke 24:46-47

And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Titus 1:3

But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour;

15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

And how shall they preach, except they be sent – you can't be told by someone unless someone is sent to tell you

As it is written – To highlight the importance of evangelism, Paul is going to summarize an Old Testament passage (Isaiah 52:7)

Isaiah 52:7

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

“Isaiah used this statement for a future event—the return of Christ and the establishing of His glorious kingdom. “Thy God reigneth!” (Read Isa. 52:7–10.) The messenger with the beautiful feet announced that God had defeated Israel’s enemies and that Messiah was reigning from Jerusalem. But Paul used the quotation in a present application: the messengers of the gospel taking the good news to Israel today. The “peace” spoken of is “peace with God” (Rom. 5:1) and the peace Christ has effected between Jews and Gentiles by forming the one body, the church (Eph. 2:13–17). The remedy for Israel’s rejection is in hearing the Word of the gospel and believing on Jesus Christ.” (Wiersbe, 2008, p. Location 1529)

- *The remedy for the whole world today is exactly the same: hearing the Word of God and believing on Christ.*

Illustration – Feet with sandals on dusty roads can be beautiful when they bring good news (gospel)

Matthew 28:18-20

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Acts 10:36

The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:)

Ephesians 2:17

And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

Invitation

Are you anticipating opportunities to share the gospel? Are you looking for opportunities? Is it on your mind? Or are other things of lesser importance?

When we have the gospel on our mind, it protects us from the distractions of lesser things that would seek to divide us and destroy our testimony.

THE SHIELD OF FAITH

Eph. 6:16; Psalm 56:1-13

Review

Spiritual warfare

- Fight by putting on the armor of God
- Fight by living out the attributes of God

The belt of truth – be truthful (protects us from falsehood)

The breastplate of righteousness – live righteously (protects us from unrighteousness)

The sandals of the gospel – share the good news (live with the gospel on your mind)
(protects us from getting off track)

The shield of faith

Sermon

Ephesians 6:16

Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

Psalm 56:3-4 - What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.

Proverbs 29:25 - The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.

Habakkuk 2:4 - 4 Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.

The Shield of Faith

Roman armies

- Close on enemy in dense, disciplined formations
- Side by side with shorts swords thrust behind a wall of shields

Enemies

- Enemies would hurl arrows at them as they advanced
- Arrows were called plumbata (closer to a dart or javelin)
- Short, pointed metal weapons that were hurled at advancing enemies from a distance
- Goal was to break up the advancing formation

Roman armies

- Defended themselves against plumbata through a shield called a scutum
- 2.5 feet by 4 ft
- Made of glued planks of wood covered by canvas and calf skin; rimmed with metal & had an iron boss in the center
- When engaged in close combat, soldiers would hold it in front of them
- When advancing in formation and being attacked by darts, soldiers would get into the turtle formation; protected them from the darts of their enemies

The darts were not primarily designed for killing, but rather incapacitating or breaking up an advancing formation. These darts were obstacles that the advancing army had to deal with before it could close in and do battle with the enemy.

Satan's Attacks

Darts

- Not designed for killing, but for breaking up an advancing formation
- Flaming darts of the wicked - obstacles of worry/anxiety that Satan throws at us to keep us from advancing

When trouble and persecution come, we need to understand the wonderful resource that will extinguish those flaming arrows. We need to take hold of—and raise up—the shield of faith.

Tonight, we're going to take a look at a Bible character doing just that: raising up the shield of faith.

Turn in your Bible to Psalm 56.

Sermon

Context of David's life

- Saul had been rejected as king over Israel by God
- Samuel had anointed David as the successor to Saul
- Saul was on a rampage trying to find David and kill him

1 Samuel 21:10-15

"The time when the Philistines captured him in Gath is recorded in 1 Samuel 21:10-15. It deals with the period between the visit to the tabernacle at Nob and David's arrival at Adullam. David was alone, desperate, afraid – and not thinking too clearly (Guzik, 2000)."

Overarching comparison

- David faced relentless attacks from his enemies seeking to incapacitate him
- David put his trust and faith in God. He raised up the shield of faith.

Psalm 56:1-13

1 Be merciful unto me, O God: for man would swallow me up; he fighting daily oppresseth me.

Be merciful unto me, O God – David could find no mercy with man and just like all of us, deserved no mercy from God. Yet he pleads with God for it out of a contrite heart (Benson, 1857).

For man would swallow me up – “the idea is, that people came upon him everywhere with open mouth, as if they would swallow him down whole (Barnes, 1834)”

Illustration – people that constantly are out to get you; 1 Peter 5:8

He fighting daily oppresseth me – it’s like everyone is out to get me every day. I’m being pressed from every angle.

Psalm 57:3 - He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up. Selah. God shall send forth his mercy and his truth.

2 Mine enemies would daily swallow me up: for they be many that fight against me, O thou most High.

Mine enemies – he had many of them

Would daily swallow me up – every day, they want to consume me

For they be many that fight against me, O thou most High – David had many enemies in both Israel and Gath, and he pleases to God for help (Gill, 1811)

Illustration – expected enemies (the lost) and unexpected enemies (believers)

Psalm 3:1 - LORD, how are they increased that trouble me! many are they that rise up against me.

Psalm 91:1 - He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

3 What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.

What time I am afraid – when, not if, I am afraid

Psalm 55:4-5 - My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me. Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me.

1 Samuel 30:6 - And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.

The Psalms are comforting because they are essentially the heart of David laid bare. We see his fear. We see his raw emotions. We see his struggles and connect with them because even today we deal with the same.

Illustration – there are all kinds of fears that we face

- Fear of failure
- Fear of people
- Fear of the worst circumstances
- Fear can incapacitate us
 - Illustration – playing chess & fearing losing to a kid who was much less skilled than I was

What’s the solution? How do we guard ourselves against fear, anxiety, incapacitating blows from the flaming darts of Satan?

I will trust in thee – the solution to fear is faith in God

Application – faith is not a lack of fear; it’s trust in the face of fear

Coming to God in prayer (Philippians 4:4-6) – be careful for nothing....

Remembering who God is

- He is in control
- He knows my situation
- He loves me as a child

4 In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.

In God – in reference to God and my aforementioned trust

I will praise his word – I will make His word and His promises/assurances the special object of my praise (Barnes, 1834)

When fear arose, David directed his attention from the objects of his fear to the Word of God. He came to God in prayer, but then he also went into the Word.

Psalm 19:7-8 - The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.

Illustration - Psalm 119

Application – where do I go when I feel surrounded by worry and fear and anxiety?

- Pour your heart out to God in prayer as David did (just tell God how you feel and where you're at)
- Get back into the word and find comfort in the promises of God.

Illustration – Peter sinking because his eyes came off Jesus and became fixated on the waves.

In God I have put my trust – when we trust in God's Word, we are exemplifying our trust in God. If I trust God, I will praise His word and trust in it.

I will not fear what flesh can do unto me – I refuse to live in fear of man when I can put my trust in God and His word to me. If God is for me, who can be against me?

Proverbs 29:25 - The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.

Psalms 46:1-2 - God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;

Psalms 118:6 - The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?

5 Every day they wrest my words: all their thoughts are against me for evil.

Every day they wrest my words – they constantly seek to twist my words “They misconstrue and pervert my most innocent expressions” (Benson, 1857)

Luke 11:54 - Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him.

Illustration – the media

All their thoughts are against me for evil – every thought they have towards me is a negative one; this is a wonderful picture of Satan

6 They gather themselves together, they hide themselves, they mark my steps, when they wait for my soul.

They gather themselves together – they secretly meet up looking for ways to harm me

They hide themselves, they mark my steps – they lay in wait to ambush him; they watch him and follow his goings (illustration – professional hitmen & private investigators) (Gill, 1811)

When they wait for my soul – they have been waiting for an opportunity to take my life (Kirkpatrick, 1906)

7 Shall they escape by iniquity? in thine anger cast down the people, O God.

Shall they escape by iniquity? – will they escape despite their iniquity? (Kirkpatrick, 1906)

In thine anger cast down the people, O God – humble these enemies by judging them, o God (Benson, 1857)

8 Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?

Thou tellest my wanderings – you keep an account of my wanderings (Barnes, 1834)

- to the cave of Adullam
- to Mizpeh
- to the forest of Hareth
- to Keilah
- to the wilderness of Ziph
- to the wilderness of Maon
- to En-gedi

Put thou my tears into thy bottle – don't let them fall to the ground. Don't forget them. Gather them up in a bottle and remember them. (Barnes, 1834)

Are they not in thy book? – David expresses confidence that his tears would not be forgotten by God but recorded in God's book of remembrance. (Barnes, 1834)

Psalm 39:12 - Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.

Psalm 139:16 - Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.

9 When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God is for me.

When I cry unto thee – in prayer

Then shall mine enemies turn back – the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. David expresses confidence in the efficacy of his prayers. (Gill, 1811)

James 5:16 – the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much

This I know; For God is for me – If God is for us, who can be against us? (Romans 8:31)

10 In God will I praise his word: in the Lord will I praise his word.

He repeats what he said in verse 4.

In God...in the Lord – The phrase is repeated a second time with the covenant name of God used the second time: Jehovah

Will I praise his word - I will make His word and His promises/assurances the special object of my praise (Barnes, 1834)

In prayer, he remembers the Word of God and the promises of God.

11 In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.

In God I have put my trust – in prayer, he remembers the God that is worthy of His trust. When we think on how big our God is, our problems naturally become smaller.

I will not be afraid what man can do unto me – I refuse to live in fear of man when I can put my trust in God and His word to me. If God is for me, who can be against me?

12 Thy vows are upon me, O God: I will render praises unto thee.

Thy vows are upon me, O God – David had made vows/promises to God that he was now under obligation to perform (Gill, 1811)

Illustration – if you deliver me, I will give you the glory

How will keep his vows?

I will render praises unto thee – I will faithfully perform my vows of praise to you (Barnes, 1834)

Psalm 66:13-14 - I will go into thy house with burnt offerings: I will pay thee my vows, Which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble.

Psalm 9:1-3 - I will praise thee, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works. I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High. When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence.

13 For thou hast delivered my soul from death: wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?

For thou hast delivered my soul from death – time and time again David had been delivered from death by God

In the midst of trying times, David looks back and remembers the times that God has delivered Him.

Wilt thou not deliver my feet from falling – won't you continue to deliver me in the future?

For what purpose?

That I may walk before God in the light of the living – David expresses his desire to live so that he might walk with God and honor Him in the future.

David wants to live so that he can be a part of God's story, not the other way around.

Psalm 17:5 - Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.

Genesis 17:1 - And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.

Job 33:30 - To bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.

Application

How does David put on the shield of faith in Psalm 56? How does he defend himself against fear and anxiety of the darts of the wicked?

- He comes to God in prayer and pours his heart out
- He embraces the Word of God and finds comfort in the promises of God
- He thinks on God, the object of his trust, and praises Him
- He thinks on God's deliverance of him in the past
- He directs his focus to walking with God in the future

THE HELMET OF SALVATION

Eph. 6:17; 1 Thess. 5:1-11

Introduction

Belt of Truth

Breastplate of Righteousness

Sandals of the Gospel

Shield of Faith

Ephesians 6:17 - 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Isaiah 59:17 - For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloke.

1 Thessalonians 5:8 - But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

Putting on the helmet of salvation -> living in confidence and hope of our salvation

“The remembrance and assurance of salvation is of great spiritual protection. How often Christians forget or take for granted their salvation. How many a Christian has gotten over being saved. They wander off into doubt, backsliding and worldliness.” (Sorenson, 2007)

The Helmet of Salvation

- Last piece of armor the legionnaire would put on
- Original helmet was called a coolus: metal skull cap made of iron covered with bronze
- Roman helmet was redesigned in the first century
 - o Piece added to cover the back of the neck
 - o Hinged cheek pieces added to protect the face
 - o This helmet was called a galea & provided complete protection for the head

The hope/confidence/assurance of our salvation protects our hearts and minds from Satan's schemes.

Satan's Attacks

Satan seeks to destroy us through doubt and fear and the side effects that they bring (backsliding, worldliness, complacency).

The idea is that we need to keep our eyes on the finish line, our deliverance in the future.

Sermon

This evening we're going to take a look at 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11.

Context

- 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 has just described the rapture of the church, and Paul encourages the church to encourage one another with these words
- What about those who die before the rapture? Will they miss it? No. They'll rise first.
- From the blessed event of the catching away of the church, Paul now turns to the event that follows it, the Day of the Lord. (MacArthur, 1 & 2 Thessalonians MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 2002)
 - o 2 Thessalonians 2:5 – Paul had spoken with the church at Thessalonica regarding the rapture and the Day of the Lord while he was with them
 - o 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2 – the church at Thessalonica was concerned that they had somehow missed the Rapture and were in the Day of the Lord (marked by a significant time of judgment on the world)
 - In verse 4 of this chapter, Paul reassured them that they would not experience the Day of the Lord (MacArthur, 1 & 2 Thessalonians MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 2002)

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

The underlying question Paul addresses in this verse is when will the day of the Lord come?

But of the times and seasons – the chronology and events of the end times (c.f. Acts 1:7 and Daniel 2:21) (MacArthur, 1990-1991)

Brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you – You have all the information that you need about it. You don't need to know the exact timing. Spiritual preparedness for the coming of Christ does not involve date setting, clock watching, or sign seeking, not for believers. We're not going to be here. (MacArthur, 1990-1991)

1 Thessalonians 4:9 - But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

2 Corinthians 9:1 - For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you:

1.) The Coming of the Day of the Lord

2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

Day of the Lord - The important biblical term the day of the Lord describes God's cataclysmic future judgment on the wicked. It is mentioned explicitly nineteen times

in the Old Testament (Isa. 2:12; 13:6, 9; Ezek. 13:5; 30:3; Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14; Amos 5:18 [2 times], 20; Obad. 15; Zeph. 1:7, 14 [2 times]; Zech. 14:1; Mal. 4:5) and four times in the New Testament (cf. Acts 2:20; 2 Thess. 2:2; 2 Peter 3:10), and is alluded to in other passages (cf. Rev. 6:17; 16:14). The Old Testament prophets envisioned historical days of the Lord that would preview the final, end times Day of the Lord. It will be the time when God pours out His fury on the wicked; in fact, Scripture three times calls the Day of the Lord the “day of vengeance” (Isa. 34:8; 61:2; 63:4). (MacArthur, 1 & 2 Thessalonians MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 2002)

- Unlike the Rapture, which will not be preceded by any signs, there will be several precursors that will signify the arrival of the end times Day of the Lord. They will not, however, reveal the specific time that it will come. (MacArthur, 1 & 2 Thessalonians MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 2002)

As a thief in the night – The Thessalonians knew that the Day of the Lord would arrive unexpectedly to the lost. No thief announces in advance when he plans to rob someone. It is unexpected. The thought is of suddenness and unexpectedness. It conveys the idea of imminency. Jesus alluded thereto during His earthly ministry, especially in the Olivet Discourse. (Matthew 25:42, 44, 50. See also 2 Peter 3:10). (Sorenson, 2007)

Illustration – the thieves from Home Alone

- Like the Day of the Lord, the exact time of the Second Coming will not be revealed, though there will be signs that Christ’s return is imminent (Matthew 24:4-33). (MacArthur, 1 & 2 Thessalonians MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 2002)
- The metaphor of a thief coming is never used to refer to the rapture of the church. It describes the coming of the Lord in judgment at the end of the 7 year tribulation period, and the judgment at the end of the thousand year kingdom of Christ on earth (2 Peter 3:10).

Matthew 24:42-44 - Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

Matthew 25:13 - Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

2 Peter 3:10 - But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

2 Thessalonians 2:2-4 - 2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

- Although the Day of the Lord comes unexpectedly, we know that it will be preceded by a falling away of the world from God and the rise of the antichrist, and other signs as well.
- And yet, despite these signs, the lost world will still be caught by surprise when the Day of the Lord comes.

Revelation 3:3 - Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

2.) The Character of the Day of the Lord

3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them – by using the term “them” (a reference to unbelievers), Paul reassured the Thessalonians that they will not face destruction. (MacArthur, 1 & 2 Thessalonians MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 2002)

As travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape – this sudden destruction will come as labor pains on an expectant mother: suddenly. (Sorenson, 2007)

And they shall not escape – divine judgment will fall on all the wicked unbelievers

Matthew 24:37-39 - But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

3.) The Christian and the Day of the Lord

4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

But ye brethren – This introduces a contrast with verse 3, where Paul used the pronouns “they” and “them” to refer to unbelievers who will not escape the Day of

the Lord. (MacArthur, 1 & 2 Thessalonians MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 2002)

Are not in darkness – believers will not experience the Day of the Lord because believers are not in darkness. We possess an entirely different nature than the lost. (MacArthur, 1 & 2 Thessalonians MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 2002)

That the day should overtake you as a thief – Since believers are not in darkness, they need not fear that the Day of the Lord would overtake them as a thief (as it will the lost). The Day of the Lord is for the people of the night. The people of the day ought not fear it.

Romans 13:11-13 - And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

Ye are all the children of the light and the children of the day – Once again, this refers to the nature of believers. They are not “in darkness” but rather children of the light and children of the day.

We are not of the night, nor of darkness - Light belongs to day, just as darkness belongs to night. Believers live in an entirely different sphere than those who will experience God’s wrath in the Day of the Lord. (MacArthur, 1 & 2 Thessalonians MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 2002)

Ephesians 5:8 - For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

4.) The Christian and the Darkness of Night

6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

Therefore - Seeing that the Lord’s return is near and the day of the Lord is at hand...

Let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober – let us be wide awake and focused

Ephesians 5:14 - Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

Matthew 24:42 - Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

Matthew 25:13 - Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

Luke 21:36 - Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

Revelation 16:15 - Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night – those who are spiritually asleep do so in the darkness of the night which the world is. Furthermore, even as people of the world frequently are drunk in the darkness of night, even so are they spiritually. They are asleep and unaware of what is to come. (Sorenson, 2007)

Romans 13:13 - Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

For the lost, there is an attack from God on the horizon. They will be judged, and they are drunk and asleep and totally unprepared for it. They have made God their enemy, and their enemy will soon destroy them.

And yet for the time being, we are living in enemy territory. We are people of the day living in the darkness, and the ruler of the darkness (Satan) walks about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. How do defend ourselves against him?

But let us, who are of the day, be sober – In contrast to the sleeping, drunken night people, who are about to be destroyed by their enemy, we need to be focused. Unlike the lost who are totally unprepared for the attack of their enemy, we need to be focused and on guard.

Putting on the breastplate of faith and love – Paul uses similar language here as he does in Ephesians 6 with the spiritual armor of God. Isn't it the breastplate of righteousness? The symbol of armor that Paul uses is less important than the character trait of God that it symbolizes. When Paul says to put on the breastplate of faith and love, he is saying to live by faith and live in love.

And for an helmet the hope of salvation – The thought is that the remembrance and assurance of salvation (heaven/glorification) is of great spiritual protection. How often Christians forget or take for granted their salvation. How many a Christian has gotten over being saved. (Sorenson, 2007)

Illustration

- We defend ourselves from the attacks of Satan by keeping our eyes on the finish line

- Believe in, have confidence in it, and keep your eyes on it
- Doing so protects us from getting veered off track by Satan

The salvation in view here is not the past aspect of salvation (justification), or its present aspect (sanctification), but rather its future aspect (glorification). Paul described that future aspect of salvation in Romans 13:11 when he wrote, “And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.” It is then that believers will receive the eagerly anticipated redemption of their bodies (Rom. 8:23), when the Lord Jesus Christ “will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory” (Phil. 3:21). Focusing on the eternal glory that awaits them (2 Tim. 2:10; 1 Peter 5:10) protects believers against temptation. (MacArthur, 1 & 2 Thessalonians MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 2002)

Romans 5:2-5 - By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Romans 8:24-25 - For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

Hebrews 10:35-36 - Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

1 Peter 1:3-5 - Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

1 Peter 1:13 - Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

5.) The Christian and the Comfort of Destiny

9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

For God hath not appointed us to wrath –Day people’s future destiny sets them apart from night people. Believers will not experience the wrath God will pour out on unbelievers in the day of the Lord and for eternity in hell. (MacArthur, 1 & 2 Thessalonians MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 2002)

But to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ – God has not appointed us unto wrath, but to obtain deliverance by our Lord Jesus Christ. (Sorenson, 2007)

1 Thessalonians 1:10 - And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

1 Thessalonians 3:3 - That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.

10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

Who died for us that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him – whether we are awake (alive in this life) or sleep (dead in Christ), in either case, Jesus died so that we will live together with Him. (Sorenson, 2007)

Matthew 20:28 - Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Romans 14:8-9 - For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

1 Thessalonians 4:13 - But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

1 Thessalonians 4:17 - Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

Wherefore, comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do – The greater truth from 4:13-5:11 is of encouragement for what lies ahead for God's people: (1) the rapture of the saints (2) eternal salvation (3) deliverance from the wrath of God poured out in the Day of the Lord (4) deliverance from the wrath of God poured out on the lost in eternity (Sorenson, 2007)

1 Thessalonians 4:18 - Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

1 Thessalonians 4:10 - And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;

Invitation

We are people of the day living in the night. We need not fear the wrath of God in the Day of the Lord because that judgment is not for us. We do need to be on guard while in the darkness of this world though. We need to put on the armor of God to protect us against Satan and his attacks.

The specific piece of the armor of God we've seen tonight is the hope/confidence in our salvation. It protects us from doubt. It protects us from fear. It protects us from getting off track and backsliding as Satan would have us to do.

How's your hope? How's your confidence? Do you have your eyes on the finish line, or have you gotten off focus recently? We need to put on the helmet of the hope of salvation.

THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

Eph. 6:17; Matthew 4:1-11

Introduction

Belt of Truth

Shield of Faith

Breastplate of Righteousness

Helmet of Salvation

Ephesians 6:17 – And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Hebrews 4:12 - For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Revelation 1:16 - And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

Revelation 2:16 - Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

Revelation 19:15 - And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

The Sword of the Spirit

The word sword is *machaira* which refers to a small sword or a short sword (12-18 inches long). This would have been different than *rhomphaia*, which was the long sword that would be yielded with two hands. The Roman soldier carried the short sword with him at all times. The sword is the only item that Paul mentions that can be used both defensively and offensively. I think in the immediate context, Paul is focusing more on the defensive usage of the Word of God. (MacArthur)

Satan's Attacks

Satan will come at you in all different ways.

- It's not a big deal to be texting this person.
- It's just a small lie. It's justified.
- No one will ever know.
- It's okay to look at that. Everyone does.
- It's just a little drunkenness.
- You need to know the Scriptures.

The Bible is the sword of the Spirit. Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. But using it isn't as simple as just owning a Bible. Using the sword of the spirit is knowing the Scripture and being able to use the truth of the Scripture in a given situation. (MacArthur)

Illustration – having a Bible and not knowing how to use it is like owning a gun and not knowing how to use it

You need to know the Scripture if you are to defend yourself from Satan's attacks.

Psalm 119:11 - Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

Psalm 119:101-105 - 101 I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word. 102 I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught me. 103 How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth! 104 Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way. 105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

What does it look like practically to parry the attacks of Satan with the Word of God?

The best example we can find in Scripture is Jesus' temptation in the wilderness.

Sermon

Jesus was tempted so that every creature in heaven, on earth, and under the earth might know that Jesus Christ is the Conqueror. He exposed Satan and his tactics, and He defeated Satan. Because of His victory, we can have victory over the tempter. (Wiersbe, 1980, p. 38)

Matthew 4:1-11

1.) THE SETTING

1 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred.

Into the wilderness –

- This occurred right after Jesus' baptism by John
- The wilderness of Judea is a hot, barren, and desolate area
- extends west from the Dead Sea almost to Jerusalem
- it is some thirty-five miles long and fifteen miles wide

- Nowhere in Palestine could Jesus have been more isolated or in less comfort. He was hungry, tired, dirty, isolated, and suffering. (MacArthur, Matthew 1-7 MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 1985)
 - o The first Adam fell in the perfection of the Garden of Eden. The second Adam resisted in the misery of the Judean wilderness.
 - o Application – that’s when Satan typically has his best success in coming after us: when we’re isolated and suffering

To be tempted of the devil – Jesus is our ultimate example in life. Just as we face the temptation of a roaring lion, so did He.

Hebrews 4:15-16 - For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights – We are not told what he did, but no doubt He spent much of time alone in prayer with His Father. He was physically weak, but He was spiritually strong.

The temptations of Satan were designed to weaken and destroy the Messiah in an important part of His mission.

Temptation 1 – step outside God’s will for personal gain

Temptation 2 – test God and His Word

Temptation 3 – step outside God’s will for a shortcut to satisfaction that avoids suffering (MacArthur, Matthew 1-7 MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 1985)

2.) TEMPTATION 1 – step outside God’s will for personal gain

3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

If – assumes that Jesus is the Son of God

If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread – Since you are God’s only begotten Son, why doesn’t he feed you? How could he send you into this horrid wilderness? You don’t deserve this. Use your divine powers to feed yourself.

- o Jesus could have turned the stones into bread, but He would have been exercising His power outside of the Father’s will, and He came to obey the Father (John 5:30; 6:38). (Wiersbe, 1980, p. 39)
 - We see from the gospels that God’s plan was that Jesus set His power aside in humiliation and use it only when the Father willed.

(MacArthur, Matthew 1-7 MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 1985)

- This first temptation in the wilderness implied essentially the same mocking taunt that the crowds made at the crucifixion: “If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross” (Matt. 27:40; cf. w. 42-43). (MacArthur, Matthew 1-7 MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 1985)
 - It’s not God’s will that I come down from this cross
 - It’s not God’s will that I turn these stones into bread

Luke 22:31-32 - And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

1 Thessalonians 3:5 - For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.

Matthew 3:17 - And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God – My satisfaction is to know the Word of God and obey it.

- In Deuteronomy 8:3, Israel was suffering in the wilderness, and Moses was telling them to find their sustenance in God and His Word.
- In quoting Deuteronomy 8:3 to Satan, Jesus declared that we are better off to obey and depend on God, waiting on His provision, than to grab satisfaction for ourselves outside of His will when and as we think we need it. (MacArthur, Matthew 1-7 MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 1985)
- Application – the same is true for us in our times of dissatisfaction.
 - We must be wary of growing impatient with God’s timing and forcing open a door that God has not opened yet
 - We do that because we’re not content. We must be content in God and be willing to wait on his timing.
 - Spouse Door
 - Finances Door
 - Home Door
 - Career Door

Satan says – step outside God’s will and have some satisfaction

Jesus says – it is written, my satisfaction is in God and His Word

Deuteronomy 8:3 - And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.

John 4:32-34 - 32 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. 33 Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat? 34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

3.) TEMPTATION 2 – put God and His Word to the test

5 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,

Setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple- The pinnacle must have been a part of the temple reconstruction ordered by Herod the Great. It was most likely on the east side of the temple overlooking the Kidron Valley. The pinnacle may have been the roof that extended out over Herod's portico Josephus reports that the drop to the valley floor was nearly 500 feet. (Wiersbe, 1980, p. 39) (MacArthur, Matthew 1-7 MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 1985)

Isaiah 52:1 - Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.

2 Chronicles 3:4 - And the porch that was in the front of the house, the length of it was according to the breadth of the house, twenty cubits, and the height was an hundred and twenty: and he overlaid it within with pure gold.

6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

In this temptation, Satan attempts to pervert the Word of God. So you believe the Word of God huh? Well doesn't it say...

If thou be the Son of God cast thyself down: for it is written... - Satan quoted Psalm 91:11-12. Isn't there a promise in the Old Testament that the angels will protect you? If you really believe that God cares for you, then jump and see if He will protect you. Why don't you put His Word to the test? (Wiersbe, 1980, p. 39)

- If you won't use your divine power to help yourself, let your Father use His divine power to help you. (MacArthur, Matthew 1-7 MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 1985)

2 Corinthians 11:14 - And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

Psalms 91:11-12 - For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God – Jesus replied by quoting Deuteronomy 6:16. We tempt God when we put ourselves into circumstances that presume on Him or that force Him to work miracles on our behalf.

- When we take risks simply to fulfill our own ambitions or to put God to the test, He gives no promise on which we can rest. (MacArthur, Matthew 1-7 MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 1985)

Illustration – gambling all our money away and calling on God to provide our needs; jumping off a cliff and asking God to save my life; making foolish investments or lavish expenditures and blaming God when it all falls apart.

Satan says – you believe God’s Word, how about this promise? Put it to the test

Jesus says – it is written, you don’t test God

Exodus 17:2 - Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the LORD?

Exodus 17:7 - And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not?

Deuteronomy 6:16 - Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God, as ye tempted him in Massah.

Acts 5:9 - Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out.

1 Corinthians 10:9 - Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.

4.) TEMPTATION 3 – step outside God’s will for a shortcut to pleasure that avoids suffering

8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;

Satan had first suggested what Jesus ought to do for Himself. Next he suggested what the Father ought to do for Jesus. Now he suggests what Satan could do for

Jesus—in exchange for what Jesus could do for him. (MacArthur, Matthew 1-7 MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 1985)

Matthew 16:26 - For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Revelation 11:15 - And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me - All the kingdoms that will one day be yours, you can have now. Why should you have to wait for what is rightfully yours? Just worship me. (MacArthur) Jesus knew that he would suffer and die before He entered into His glory. He knew the cross awaited. If He bowed down and worshipped Satan just once, He could enjoy all the glory without enduring the suffering. (Wiersbe, 1980, p. 39)

- Satan offered Jesus a shortcut to pleasure (that avoided suffering)
 - No pain, no gain
 - Satan promises all gain, no pain
 - Satan delivers all pain, no gain
- Application – that’s exactly what Satan does today
 - Why would you endure hardships for the pleasures of God’s will when you can have my pleasures right now
 - He seeks to entice believers to sacrifice future joy on the altar of immediate pleasure
 - Sin looks good, but it takes you further than you want to go, keeps you longer than you want to stay, and costs you more than you want to pay.
 - Illustration – carnival game with the red squares was a short cut to getting a playstation; cover the spot



- There is no shortcut to the will of God

10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Get thee hence – Satan’s offer was so outrageous that he tells him to “Get out of here”

Jesus will inherit the kingdom in God’s time, and we will inherit the kingdom with Him (Matt. 5:5; 25:34; Rom. 8:17; James 2:5). In the eternal, heavenly state all the universe will be ours! Who would want to sacrifice that for the deceptive, disappointing, and short-lived imitations Satan offers? (MacArthur, Matthew 1-7 MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 1985)

Satan says – Step outside God’s will for a shortcut to satisfaction that avoids suffering (all you have to do is worship me)

Jesus says – get out of here. Only God is worthy of my worship. God’s will is way better than yours. God delivers on His promises.

Matthew 16:23 - But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

James 4:7 - Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

1 Peter 5:9 - Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

Deuteronomy 6:13-14 - Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name. Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you;

11 Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

Satan slunk away, a defeated foe, but he did not cease to tempt Jesus. We could translate Luke 4:13, “And when the devil had ended every possible kind of temptation, he stood off from Him until a suitable season.” Through Peter, Satan again tempted Jesus to abandon the cross (Matt. 16:21–23). One victory never guarantees freedom from further temptation. If anything, each victory we experience only makes Satan try harder. (Wiersbe, 1980, pp. 40-41)

Luke 22:43 - And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

Application – Jesus used the Word of God to parry the attacks of Satan

Just as Satan tempted Jesus to distrust the care of the Father in his time of hardship, so he does too with us.

- He tempts us to grow dissatisfied/discontent

- He tempts us to seek satisfaction outside of the will of the Father

Just as Satan tempted Jesus to unnecessarily test God's promises, so he does too with us.

- He tempts us to take unnecessary risks because of impatience.
- He tempts us to speed up God's timeline.
- He tempts us to blame God when we our own fleshly plans fail.

Just as Satan tempted Jesus to take a shortcut to pleasure, so he does too with us.

- He tempts us to do as the prodigal son did, to throw away our inheritance for the momentary pleasures of sin.
- He tempts us to sacrifice the future on the altar of the immediate.

Application

Are you skilled in the usage of the Sword of the Spirit? It's not enough to have one. Do you read it? Do you know it? Can you use it?

THE POWER OF PRAYER

Eph. 6:18

Ephesians 6:18 - Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

Illustration – prayer is a lot harder for me than study or reading

Prayer is unnatural for us in the west for several different reasons:

- Undercurrent of naturalism
- Undercurrent of self sufficiency

We must not think that the natural world is all there is when it comes to spiritual warfare.

We must not think ourselves self sufficient when it comes to spiritual warfare.

I cannot defend myself against an enemy I do not believe in. I cannot defend myself against the enemy on my own.

Application

- We're at war with Satan, his forces, this depraved world system, and our flesh.
- We're living on enemy territory.
- I need to be on guard. I need to put on the armor of God, live out God's attributes.
 - o The best defense is a good offense.
 - o Illustration – at work, you don't spend the whole day thinking about the things you shouldn't do. You just do the things that you're supposed to do. You're focused.
- The pieces of spiritual armor
 - o The belt of truth – living truthfully
 - o The breastplate of righteousness – living righteously
 - o The sandals of the gospel – living evangelistically
 - o The shield of faith – living faithfully
 - o The helmet of salvation – living confidently
 - o The Sword of the Spirit – living scripturally

We must be careful of trying to put on the armor of God in our own strength, in self sufficiency.

- Verse 10 starts this passage saying, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."

- Verse 18 ends this passage saying, “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”
- You can’t put on the armor of God in your own power. It’s too heavy! It’s too hard. We can only do it through the strength of the Lord and the power of His might.
 - o How do we do that? Prayer.

When do we pray?

- Praying always – consciousness of God’s presence at all times in my life.
 - o leaving my heart always open to him
 - o navigating life with Him at my side
 - o leaning on him at all times for all things regardless of how significant or insignificant

What do we pray?

- With all prayer and supplications – we pray all kinds of prayers
 - o public, private, verbal, silent, loud, soft, deliberate, planned, unplanned, spontaneous, requests, thanks, confession, humiliation, praise, standing, kneeling, lying down, lifting up your hands, putting your hands down - you name it.

How do we pray?

- Watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication – like your life depended on it
 - o We pray intensely, fervently, soberly. We are constantly on guard.

Who do we pray for?

- For all saints – we don’t just pray for ourselves. We pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ.

And so we see tonight that the Apostle Paul ends our study of spiritual warfare the same way that he started it: by imploring us to not to rely on ourselves for the battle, but to find our sufficiency in God and in his strength through prayer.

Invitation

I want us to take a few minutes in prayer before we head into this business meeting.

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