

## The Christian's Warfare

Ephesians 6:10-20

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. <sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup> Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. <sup>14</sup> Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, <sup>15</sup> and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; <sup>16</sup> above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. <sup>17</sup> And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; <sup>18</sup> praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints - <sup>19</sup> and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, <sup>20</sup> for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”

**In our last study of this epistle we looked at God's formula for happiness in our marriages and home life.** We talked about the Christian home as having these five ingredients: (1) a home with Christian parents; (2) a home with a vital connection with the church; (3) a home with biblical authority; (4) a home with an expressed love; (5) a home with discipline. All of this adds up to a home where Christ is the head.

This week, we will close out our study in the book of Ephesians by looking at the warfare of the child of God.

Look at verse 10, “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.” **It might seem strange for the Holy Spirit**

to suddenly turn from the discussion of the Spiritfilled life and the joys of the Christian home to the warning to stand fast in the Lord.

But let me stop to remind you that there is an enemy in the presence of God's people, and that enemy is Satan, as seen in Job 1:6-7, "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them. And the Lord said to Satan, From where do you come? So Satan answered the Lord and said, From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it." Listen to this warning given in 1 Peter 5:8, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."

**It seems to me that there is gross ignorance among believers concerning Satan's kingdom, and it would do most Christians a world of good to take time to study the devil and his demon kingdom.**

Because of his awareness of satanic opposition to believers, Paul gives us this advice in verses 11-12, "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."

The biblical description of evil spirits is marked by reserve, and is quite unlike that material that concerns Christ and the apostles. But the Word of God does not leave us in ignorance concerning the ways of Satan. Jesus has given us this insight in John 8:44, when He says Satan "was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it."

Notice that we have been admonished in verse 11 to "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." The Greek word "wiles" is basically the same word for

**“methods.”** The Bible never speaks of evil spirits and Satan in terms of being grotesque or weird, but on the contrary the Word of God makes it clear that demons are personal and powerful, as well as intelligent, wicked, and ever present.

**The "methods" of Satan are built around *deceit*.** Listen to the warning from Paul given in 2 Corinthians 11:13-15, “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.” Satan hides behind *religion, intellectualism, poetry, art, music, psychology, human understanding*, and even our *human "self."*

**The Bible teaches us that this world system is under the leadership of Satan and his army of demons.** They influence unredeemed men to adopt attitudes and perform deeds that will hinder God's work and harm God's people.

**Satan is powerful, but not the most powerful.** He is strong, but not the strongest. And because of Satan's power and strength, he seeks to do his dirty work and get the world to put the blame on God, and God's people. This truth is clearly seen in Job 1:16, where he uses his power to bring about lightning, or electrical storms, “While he was still speaking, another also came and said, The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them; and I alone have escaped to tell you!” This same truth is seen when Satan was able to bring about such disasters as wind storms, as seen in Job 1:19, “And suddenly a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people, and they are dead; and I alone have escaped to tell you!” We are able to see this same thing again, as Satan uses his power to cause sickness, as seen in Job 2:7, "So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.”

**The reason Satan wants God to get the blame for the mess the world is in, is because he is jealous of Jesus, and envious of His Lordship.** You see, in his original state the being that is now the devil was a superbly beautiful, angelic creature. Although he was next to God in power and wisdom, he was subordinate to God and therefore was jealous of God, and envious of God's throne. And because of his pride he felt that he could exalt himself above the throne of Almighty God, and become the ruler of the universe.

**As a result of this rebellion, Lucifer was cast out of his high and exalted position in God's heaven, and became the devil.** It was this thought that must have prompted Jesus to recall in Luke 10:18, "I beheld Satan as lighting fall from heaven." Satan not only lost his position in heaven, but the Scriptures testify to the fact that the Lordship of Jesus will be an eternal Lordship, as seen in Philippians 2:9-11, "Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Down through the ages jealousy has bred envy, and envy has bred hatred, and the result is organized sinfulness.

Look at verses 13-18, "Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints."

**The Word of God not only gives us the insight as to the methods of Satan, it gives us the formula for victory over the ways of Satan.** Notice the six steps to victory over Satan:

**First, we must know the source of our supplies.** Verse 10 says, "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might." We must never forget that we are what we are through the power of God, and the marvelous grace of Jesus Christ.

**Second, we must keep adequate protection.** Verse 11 says, "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." This is what Paul must have had in mind when he told us to "Put ye on the Lord Jesus."

**Third, we must know our enemy.** Verse 12 says, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, and against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." We must never fall for the "**diversion tactics**" of the devil. People are not your enemy.

**Four, we must check each piece of our armor.** Verse 13 says, "That you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand."

And this is our checklist:

- a. Loins girt about with the truth.
- b. On our chest the breastplate of righteousness.
- c. Our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.
- d. Carry the shield of faith, wherewith you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.
- e. Our head should have the helmet of salvation.
- f. We must carry the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God.

**Five, we must keep in constant touch with headquarters.** Verse 8a says, "...praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit." **Spiritual Christians pray in the Spirit.**

**Six, we must be alert at all times.** Verse 18b says, "...being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints." The Bible admonishes us to "walk circumspectly."

Let me close with this statement, we hear a lot about spiritual warfare, but it is my pleasure to remind you that 1 John 4:4 says, "Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world." And Romans 8:37 says, "...In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." **The key to our victory is in our relationship to Jesus Christ.**