

**February 2, 2020 ~ Ephesians 6:17-24,
The Weapon of God's People**

Last week we studied (**verse 14**) about the belt of Truth and the breastplate of righteousness, (**verse 15**) then about special footwear which protects our feet and our steps, for we have peace with God, through Christ.

Next (**verse 16**) we learned about the shield of faith, which enables us to extinguish all *the flaming arrows of the evil one, i.e.,* the attempts by Satan to deceive, discourage, and disable the believer from standing his ground in service to Christ.

Read **Ephesians 6:17...** We are instructed to take up the *helmet of salvation*, and finally *the sword of the Spirit [which is the Word of God]*.

The last piece of spiritual armor is *the sword of the Spirit [the Word of God]*. Christ gives us an example on how to use this special weapon.

See **Matthew 4:3-11**. Every time the Devil made an attack, Jesus blocked it with Scripture, eventually the Devil left Him, having been defeated by God's Word.

In Genesis God spoke everything into existence through His sovereign and eternal Word.

When Jesus returns at the end of the Tribulation, in **Revelation 19:13-16** it says, "His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven... .. were following Him on white horses. From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations... And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, 'KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.'"

2Timothy 2:15, "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth."

Every Christian has the Holy Spirit [Spirit of Truth], our divine teacher, but we must study and apply God's Word if we are to stand our ground against the enemies of God, the spiritual powers of the kingdom of darkness.

God's Word is not only our defensive weapon, so we can remain standing against all that the world, the flesh, and the devil may bring against us, but it is also our offensive weapon, with which we can strike down the spiritual enemies of God and claim victory over that which opposes God, because of Christ in us.

1John 4:4, "You are from God, little children, and have overcome them [all those who oppose God]; because greater is He [God's Spirit] who is in you than he [Satan] who is in the world."

Prayer is as essential as the other pieces of armor without which, we could not stand our ground.

Read **Ephesians 6:18...** Paul's instruction on spiritual armor is followed by a teaching on prayer, for prayer is the attitude a soldier [of Christ] must have as he readies and outfits himself for battle.

In his Book, *Pilgrim's Progress*, John Bunyan tells of the character Christian's weapon called prayer. When darkness and discouragement surrounded him, prayer enabled Christian to stand firm and ultimately to defeat the evil fiends in the valley of the shadow of death.

We can pray wherever we are, in whatever situation we find ourselves (see **Luke 21:34-36**). To pray at all times is to live continually conscious of God.

God's greatest desire and our greatest need is to be in constant fellowship with Him, and prayer is the means by which a believer comes into the presence of God and has fellowship with Him.

Praying in the Spirit is to pray in a manner that is consistent with the nature and the will of God, lining up our thoughts and desires with the Word of God. We must remain alert for we are in a spiritual battle against the Devil, the world, and the flesh; this battle must be spiritually fought, through prayer.

The focus here is on praying for our brothers and sisters in Christ, for it is believers to whom God has provided the armor Paul describes in **Ephesians 6:10-17**, and so it is believers who are commanded in (**verse 18**) to pray in the Spirit.

We are to pray specifically for one another, for our brothers and sisters in Christ who are serving the Lord in this battle against the flesh, the world and the Devil.

Read **Ephesians 6:19-20...** Paul pleads for the believers in Ephesus to pray not so that he can be freed from prison, but so that he will be bold and faithful to proclaim the gospel while in prison.

Self-sufficient persons don't pray to God. It is the humble believer who comes before God, those who are poor in spirit receive God's blessings (cf. **Matthew 5:3-10**, those who mourn, the meek, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, the pure in heart, peace makers; it is these who will be called the sons of God; and theirs is the kingdom of heaven forever).

Paul's motive for prayer is to further the gospel, encourage believers, and glorify God.

Read **Ephesians 6:21-22...** Tychicus, from the province of Asia (cf. **Acts 20:4**), was especially dear to Paul, who sent him to other Christian communities and individuals to encourage them on Paul's behalf (cf. **Colossians 4:7-8; 2Timothy 4:12; Titus 3:12**).

Paul knew the value of a personal word from someone who had been with him recently. Tychicus could bring comfort, in Christ, to many of those who had been

converts of, or had benefited from, the preaching, teaching, discipling and counseling ministry of Paul.

In May 2019 we began this study of the wealth we have been given in Christ, the manner in which we are to walk, and the warfare we can expect as God's children.

Ephesians 1:5-8, "He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight." **13-14**, "In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of *God's own* possession, to the praise of His glory."

Ephesians 2:8-10, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."

Ephesians 2:19, "So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household."

Ephesians 3:11-12, "*This was* in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him."

Ephesians 4:1-6, "Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. *There is* one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all. There is one body and one Spirit one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all." **32**, "Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you."

Ephesians 5:1-2, "Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma." **15-17**, "Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days

are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is." **21**,
"submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ."

Read **Ephesians 6:23-24...** Paul's benediction seems to reflect the major themes of this letter. Paul prays for peace, love, faith, and for the grace of God to be the experience and desire of all genuine believers.

Grace [the divine favor of God], God's Riches At Christ's Expense, for all those who responded to the eternal and unconditional love of God through Jesus Christ: God's Son, Lord and Savior.

The Grace of God should be evidenced in the life of every obedient 'born again' believer and follower of Jesus Christ. God's Grace provides, not only our forgiveness and eternal life, but also the armor and the weaponry we need to stand against God's enemies, using the Word of God [the Sword of the Spirit] to declare the revealed plan, purpose, and provision, of God, by which we are to live honorably and victoriously in this world, while we wait for Him to return and take us to be with Him in the new and never-ending world, where (**Revelation 21:4-5**), "there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away. And He who sits on the throne said, 'Behold, I am making all things new,'" (**Revelation 22:20-21**), "He who testifies to these things says, 'Yes, I am coming quickly.' Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen."

Pastor Mike

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