

Spiritual Warfare
Ephesians 6:10-20 Lesson 1
April 27, 2014

A. General Review

1. Previous chapters of Ephesians, Paul urges believers in several key areas:
 - a. To live as they have been called
 - b. Pursue the unity of the spirit provided through Christ and how to daily live out that unity
 - c. Be imitators of Christ
 - d. Walk as those who are wise
 - e. Be filled with the Spirit in living submissive lives:
 - i. Marriages, Families, Authorities
 - f. Spiritual warfare in the life of a believer**
2. Goal of being encouraged, led by the Spirit, wrestle against evil and draw close to Him

What do you think of when you hear “spiritual warfare”?

What kinds of things immediately enter your mind?

Do we tend to think in extremes – either downplaying or giving too much credit to evil?

B. Discussion and Application – Spiritual Warfare

Ephesians 6:10-20

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. 14 Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, 15 and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. 16 In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people. 19 Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

1. Our Need for God’s Strength, Verse 10

- a. His last exhortation is to be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.
- b. Throughout the bible, God is a God on strength and might
- c. The secret to facing any circumstance is doing all things through Him
- d. This context of strength is so that we can be “content” no matter the circumstance
- e. Find their strength in the Lord to stand in the midst of spiritual warfare

Philippians 4:10-13

10 I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. 11 I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. 12 I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. 13 I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

2. Our Need for God’s Armor, Verse 11

- a. “Put on the whole armor of God” so that we can stand against the schemes of the devil
- b. The armor God used as an analogy to symbolize the protection we need against the Enemy

- c. Psalm 5:11-12, David asks God to spread his protection over those who take refuge in Him
- d. Both David and Paul use an analogy for God's protection by praising God for blessing the righteous and covering him with favor as with a shield.
- e. Putting on armor and God covering us with a shield ought to shed light on the truth that God yearns to protect and help His children battle against the Deceiver and his schemes.

Psalm 5:11-12

11 But let all who take refuge in you be glad; let them ever sing for joy. Spread your protection over them that those who love your name may rejoice in you. 12 Surely, Lord, you bless the righteous; you surround them with your favor as with a shield.

3. Our Need for God's Understanding, Verse 12

- a. Our battle against evil is not against flesh and blood.
- b. We are not engaged solely a physical struggle against evil in our lives; not just an inward or individual problem; this point is critically important
- c. God's revelation is that our struggle is a spiritual battle originating from the spiritual realm.
- d. These battles can range from:
 - a. Standing firm against a world and culture increasingly hostile to God and His truth
 - b. Struggling on a daily basis with our own fleshly desires
 - c. Experiencing evil spiritual forces outside of our comprehension; you may not understand
 - d. Battles will take place within our marriages, our families, our friendships, and on a societal level; **you are not immune from any!**

A. Questions for Small Group Discussion

1. Why must we keep in mind that the battle being waged against us is not being fought by the people in our lives but rather by the enemy that is scheming against us?
2. How can understanding that there are spiritual forces at work against us positively impact our relationship with God and our relationships with other people?
3. In verse 10, how do we know that we will never be strong enough apart from God to live in a way that pleases Him?
 - a. Why will our personal strength always fail us when faced with temptation?
4. Where do we typically hear Philippians 4:13 quoted or see it mentioned? Does contentment usually come to mind on the strength provided?
5. For Verse 11:
 - a. Why do we know that we need God's armor (protection) against the Enemy? Why will we ultimately fail if we try to protect ourselves against his schemes?
 - b. What can we learn from the fact that Paul calls the devil's plans "schemes"? What should that communicate to us about how the devil plots against us?
6. What is the relationship between God's protection and our ability and desire to praise His name? Would we be able to praise God if His protection were not upon us? Why or why not?
7. Verse 12:
 - a. Why might the idea of engaging in struggles against evil **in the spiritual realm** be a difficult concept for us to understand? Why do most of us have a much easier time understanding things that happen in the physical realm?
 - b. How do the spiritual battles we sometimes face intertwine themselves with the physical, emotional, and even mental struggles we endure? How do we know that the spiritual realm is connected to these different parts of our lives?