

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 11



Put on the full armor of God, so that... you may be able to stand your ground...

A SUPERNATURAL WARFARE

Scripture Texts: Ephesians 6:10-20; Romans 14:19-21

The Christian battle is not against men but against the sins and mistaken notions of men. Evil men in the world are but the victims of perverted ideas—the agents, either intentionally or unintentionally, of a vast empire controlled by Satan which plagues human life. The Bible very plainly teaches that angels have their adversaries in demons, and God has an arch enemy opposing His righteous purpose, namely Satan.

We must remember that our weapons are spiritual arms. We cannot fight temptations with swords of steel. The Sword of the Spirit is the Word of God, it is not our sword. It alone is sufficient for the saint's victory.

What an excellent figure of speech Paul employed in describing the Christian soldier. To him, every piece of the soldier's equipment corresponded to some spiritual power of which Paul knew by experience.

MEMORY VERSE: *Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*

—*Ephesians 6:11*

DAILY READINGS:

Mon.—**Proverbs 4:10-19** Contrast of the wise and wicked.

Tue.—**1 Thessalonians 5:12-22** A practical Christian climate.

Wed.—**1 John 2:18-29** Hold to true doctrine.

Thu.—**Romans 8:26-39** Persecution not separate from Christ.

Fri.—**1 Peter 1:13-25** Gird up the loins of your mind.

Devotional Reading: **1 Corinthians 9:15-27** Rights surrendered.

Our Enemy Forces Are Unseen

Ephesians 6:10-12 Finally . . . be strong in the Lord . . . Be empowered by the Spirit of the living God, be made powerful in the strength of His might—the supernatural power and strength. How? By putting **on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.** One of the ways the Bible uses to describe life is that life is a pilgrimage, and also that it is a battlefield. There is much teaching and a lot of worldly literature today which reflects the idea that life is a carefree adventure. We know this is not true. Christians are the happiest people in the world, but they are happy pilgrims, happy warriors. Every religious person puts on some of the armor of God. But the true Christian puts on the whole armor of God as we are admonished in God's Word. To him, this is a way of life. Its doctrines are very important. So is the type of conduct which grows out of these doctrines. **We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against . . . spiritual wickedness . . .** We fight an unseen enemy.

On our Mounts of Transfiguration, amid circumstances where we expect to find only God and His righteousness—in the heavenly places—we often encounter the spiritual host of wickedness.

The Christian's Equipment

Ephesians 6:13-17 We are wise to remember that all human problems are basically spiritual problems. Again, the Apostle emphasizes the necessity for taking the **WHOLE** armor of God. Do not take some of the Bible and cast the rest aside. Do not rush to God in an eager desire to be helpful along certain lines and then rush

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to the world and its pleasures seeking satisfaction at other times. The Christian's equipment is: (1) **THE GIRDLE**—A wide belt which was central in the whole attire of the soldier. Likewise, a strong conviction of Truth is central in the life of every valiant soldier of Christ. (2) **THE BREASTPLATE**—A protection of the soldier's vital organs. The saint must have a reputation and record of **righteousness** as a breastplate. The more we are known to be on the right side of the fence morally, the less will evil people seek us out and try to tempt us. (3) **SHOES**—Roman soldiers wore sandals bound by firm thongs, and the soles were studded with nails. Let the Gospel be to you, says Paul, what the firm sandal is to the Roman soldier.

Your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel . . . The word *preparation* is the translation of a Greek word which means establishment, or firm foundation. Have a hold on the Gospel which will really be to you a firm foundation. (4) **THE SHIELD OF FAITH**—By faith, the enemy is shut out from all directions in the battle. The shield of faith puts the enemy to flight. It opens the way for the supernatural strength of God to take us through. (5) **HELMET OF SALVATION**—Let your salvation be like a helmet on your head. There will be times when you will not feel that you are saved. But remember that one is not saved by feelings, but by faith, believing that Christ died for your sins as His part, and that your salvation was gained when you accepted Christ as your Savior. Go before the throne of grace in the name of Him Who sealed the covenant by His blood. Go before Him day-by-day, cast yourself upon Him for support and power. By obedience, we can be saved even if we do not feel it. Sin alone can separate one from God. (6) **THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT**—Remember that your arms are spiritual arms. We cannot fight temptations and unseen enemies with swords of steel. The Word of God is the Spirit's sword, not ours. It alone is sufficient for the saint's victory in this great battle of spiritual life or death.

Our Power Is in Prayer

Ephesians 6:18-20 Paul now changes the setting from soldier to saint, from battlefield to prayer chamber. As the natural army needs a supply line as a source of supply for its needs, so the soldier of Christ needs a supply line for all his needs. **Praying . . . in the Spirit, and watching . . . with all perseverance . . .** lest the wiles of the devil overwhelm you. Paul makes plain what Christ before him had made plain, namely, that there is no spiritual power without prayer. Prayer is the difference between our house being built upon the sand or upon the rock. Paul also tells us that our prayers will help others as well as ourselves. Supernatural prayer brings supernatural victory. Sometimes we are unable to help a person in any other way, but we can always pray for them. We tap resources of spiritual power which will be available to them and to us in the achieving of victory. Our Lord was a man of prayer; He needed prayer, and so do we.

The Secret of Survival

Romans 14:19-21 Let us . . . follow after the things which make for peace. Things which lift up our brother not put him down. Climate is an important factor for the farmer and the growing of crops. Climate is also important to those who would have their lives bring glory to God. The place for a saint is with the saints. The atmosphere he should seek is the atmosphere which will be conducive to his soul's growth. If you would fight a successful fight, do not warm yourself by the enemy's fire. Do not associate with the agnostics, the scoffers, and the other enemies of Christ.

Paul goes on to make us aware that we are our brother's keeper. The welfare of men's souls is the most important issue he maintained. The early church was largely made up of Jews who had been converted to Christianity. These people still had deep convictions about clean and unclean foods. On the other hand, Gentiles in the church had no convictions about these things, and there was contention between them about these things. Paul said to stop contending with each other about clean and unclean food. If something you are eating or doing is causing your brother to be weakened spiritually, Paul instructs you to abstain from that. Leave it to your pastor to straighten out their problems.

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