

CHRISTIANS ON CAMPUS

Session 9 - Warfare to Deal with the Spiritual Enemy

Scripture Reading: Eph. 6:10-14

[Eph. 6:10](#) Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength.

[Eph. 6:11](#) Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil,

[Eph. 6:12](#) For our wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual [forces] of evil in the heavenlies.

[Eph. 6:13](#) 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.

[Eph. 6:14](#) Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth and having put on the breastplate of righteousness.

Today's Reading

The passage from 1:1 to 6:9 completes the revelation on the positive side concerning the church for the fulfilling of God's eternal purpose. Yet on the negative side, that is, for dealing with God's enemy, something still remains to be covered. In the first five chapters the church is portrayed in many ways, on the positive side, to fulfill God's eternal purpose. On the negative side, the church is seen in chapter six as a warrior to defeat God's enemy, the Devil. To do this, the church must put on the whole armor of God.

In the universe there are three wills: the divine will, the satanic will, and the human will. If we would know how the church can be God's warrior to engage in spiritual warfare, we must know these three wills, these three intentions. God's will, being self-existing, is eternal, uncreated. As created beings, the angels also have a will. One of these angels, an archangel, was appointed by God to rule the universe that existed before the creation of Adam. Because of his high position and his beauty, this archangel became proud. This pride gave rise to an evil intention, which became the satanic will. Therefore, in addition to God's intention, God's will, there is a second intention, a second will, for now the satanic will is set against God's will.

Although there were three wills, the controversy involved just two parties—God and Satan. The crucial issue was whether man would choose the divine will or the satanic will. If the human will stood with the divine will, then God's will would be accomplished. But if the human will took sides with the satanic will, Satan's will would be carried out, at least temporarily. As we all know, the human will took sides with the satanic will. This means that man chose to follow Satan and sided with the satanic will. Therefore, Satan was victorious temporarily.

However, through repentance man can turn from the satanic will to the divine will, from Satan's side to God's side. The first commandment in the gospel is to repent. The next two commandments are to believe and to be baptized. Any sinner who desires to be saved must obey these three commandments. He must repent to God, believe in the Lord Jesus, and be baptized in water. To repent is to have a turn from the satanic will to the divine will. Since birth our will has stood on the side of the satanic will. The reason for this is that we were in Adam when he chose Satan's will above God's will.

We have seen that as the new man the church should walk according to truth and by grace and that as the Bride the church should live in love and in light. However, not only must God's eternal purpose be fulfilled and the desire of Christ's heart be satisfied, but God's enemy must be defeated. For this, the church must be a warrior. Even in the Song of Songs we see that as the seeking one enjoys the Lord's presence, the fighting is going on. Therefore, we walk according to truth and by grace, we live in love and light, and we fight to subdue the satanic will. Our walk is for the fulfillment of God's purpose, our living is for the satisfaction of Christ, and our fighting is for the defeat of God's enemy. Hence, for these three things the church must be the new man, the Bride, and the warrior.

In addition to preserving our conscience, God has sovereignly preserved our will. If He had not done so, the preaching of the gospel could have no effect on people. We may mistakenly think that it is difficult to preach the gospel to one with a strong will. According to my experience, most of those who were saved through my gospel preaching were those with a strong will and a definite intention. Such a will is able to function positively in repentance. Repentance [531] requires the exercise of the will. In like manner, to be empowered also involves our will.

The charge to put on the whole armor of God is an imperative, a command. God has provided the armor for us, but He does not put it on for us. Rather, we ourselves must put on the armor God has provided. For this, we need to be empowered. Although God can empower us, we still must exercise our will to cooperate with Him. In the same principle, we must cooperate with God's command to put on the armor.

In verse 12 Paul also speaks of "the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies." The heavenlies here refer to the air (2:2). Satan and his spiritual forces of evil are in the air. But we are seated in the third heaven above them (2:6). In fighting a battle, the position above the enemy is strategic. [534] Satan and his evil forces are under us, and it is their fate to be defeated by us. We need to be reminded again and again that our warfare is not against human beings, but against the evil spirits, the spiritual powers in the heavenlies. The rebellious angels are the evil spirits in Satan's kingdom. Thus, the warfare between the church and Satan is a battle between us who love the Lord and who are in His church and the evil powers in the heavenlies. Apparently it is people of flesh and blood who damage the church. Actually it is Satan and his evil angels working behind them who cause the damage. Therefore, we must fight against these spiritual forces.