

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

A Message of Hope and Fulfillment For Those Longing For God

Dealing with the Devil

Ephesians 6: 10-20

Of the events and encounters of the first eight chapters of Luke's Gospel, another significant theme revolves around dealing with temptation and demonization. This is encountered early in the Gospel with the temptation experience of Jesus Himself in the wilderness. Many other encounters follow. The teachings of Jesus were *fleshed out* more fully in the later New Testament writings as the Church gained more experience and understanding. The focal passage for capturing the essence of this spiritual warfare is found in the last half of the letter to the Ephesians, especially 6:10-20.

I. The Ephesian context:

- A. Born out of idolatry and demonism
- B. Established with powerful deliverance
- C. Particularly susceptible to division and false teaching

II. The summary of the Ephesian admonition for spiritual purity

- A. Unity (4:1-8)
- B. Deception (doctrinally) (4:9-16)
- C. Carnal behavior (4:17-24)
- D. [Attitude toward sin] (4:25-27)**
- E. Diligent employment ((4:28)
- F. Godly speech (4:29)
- G. [Do not grieve the Holy Spirit] (4:30)**
- H. Generous forgiveness, not holding grudges, not *keeping lists* (4:31-32)
- I. Impurity, silly talk, coarse jesting--pleasing the Lord, filled with the Spirit (5:1-21)
- J. Christ-like marriage (5:22-33)
- K. Godly families (6:1-4)
- L. Christian work ethic (6:5-9)
- M. [Recognize spiritual warfare] (6:10-20)**

III. Spiritual Warfare is most often **NOT** in the form of dramatic and overt power encounters with demonic spirits and evil angelic beings; it occurs most often in the mundane experiences of everyday life where consistent pressure to rely on, or indulge, the carnal nature, or to doubt God, is almost imperceptible as the work of demonic spirits.

- A. In the midst of this list of admonitions by Paul, he breaks into three general guidelines:
 - 1. Cultivate a specific attitude toward sin that you never allow to diminish
 - 2. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit Who dwells in you at all times
 - 3. Understand the true nature of temptation and spiritual warfare
- B. Note how each piece of armor is designed to protect against each risk Paul has outlined in 4:1-6:10
 - 1. Helmet of Salvation—position in Christ and the blessing of His Mind
 - 2. Breastplate of Righteousness—our true status in the face of multiple accusations
 - 3. Girdle of Truth—to maintain doctrinal purity
 - 4. Shoes of the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace—keeps us on track and focuses our energy
 - 5. Shield of Faith—our confidence that God is Good and His Word is true, we are His
 - 6. Sword of the Spirit—accurate offensive application of the Word of God as skilled soldiers

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Ephesians 6: 10-20

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Can opposing demonic spirits project thoughts and accusations into our mind? Can they perceive our thoughts as we debate faith vs sin?
2. How does the shield of faith protect us against the fiery darts of opposing demonic spirits?
3. In what way does the girdle of truth bring discipline to our thinking and aid in the renewal of our mind (Rom 12:1-2)?
4. Why is it important to recognize that our warfare is not against flesh and blood (human beings—ourselves or others)?
5. When we lose this “heavenly realm” perspective and the supernatural context of our warfare, what is the likely outcome to our struggle? Why?
6. Why is it important to maintain an attitude toward all forms of sin that is passionately opposed and undiminished? Does this include “intellectual” sins such as false or tangential doctrines? Why or why not?

These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Ephesians 1: 19b-23

But you did not learn Christ in this way, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor, for we are members of one another. Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity.

Ephesians 4: 20-27

Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

James 4: 7-8

Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.

1 Peter 5: 8-9

NOTES
