

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Fall Term of 2012**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
WHAT CHRIST IS TO THE BELIEVERS IN HIS PERSON**

Message Fifteen

The Whole Armor of God

Scripture Reading: Eph. 6:10-20

- I. If we would know how the church can be God's warrior to engage in spiritual warfare, we must know that in the universe there are three wills: the divine will, the satanic will, and the human will:**
- A. God's will is for us to enjoy Christ as everything (Heb. 10:5-10) by functioning in the Body life (Rom. 12:1-2; Phil. 1:19) for the reality and oneness of the Body of Christ (Eph. 1:5, 9, 11; 4:3-4; John 17:21).
 - B. Lucifer's pride in his high position and beauty gave rise to an evil intention, which became the satanic will—Ezek. 28:12-19; Isa. 14:12-15.
 - C. All warfare has its source in this conflict of wills; before the satanic will rose up to contradict the divine will, there was no war in the universe; the rebellion of Lucifer, the archangel of God, was the beginning of all the fighting that is now taking place among nations, in society, in the family, and within individuals—cf. Rev. 12:3-11; Gal. 5:17.
 - D. The tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil represent the divine will and the satanic will, respectively; the crucial issue was whether man would choose the divine will or the satanic will—Gen. 2:7-9.
 - E. Through repentance man can turn from the satanic will to the divine will, from Satan's side to God's side—Acts 11:18.
 - F. The Bible says that we must repent for the kingdom (Matt. 4:17); the kingdom of God is actually the exercise of the divine will; when sinners repent for the kingdom of God, they turn from the side of Satan to the side of God, which is the kingdom of God, the will of God.
- II. Ephesians 6:10-20 reveals that Christ is the constituents of God's armor:**
- A. "Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil"—vv. 10-11:
 - 1. The fact that we need to be empowered in the Lord indicates that we cannot fight the spiritual warfare in ourselves; we can fight only in the Lord and in the might of His strength.
 - 2. The whole armor of God is for the entire Body of Christ as the corporate warrior, not for any individual member of the Body; we must fight the spiritual warfare in the Body, not as individuals—vv. 10-13; James 4:7; cf. Phil. 1:19; Rom. 13:12-14; 16:20.
 - 3. In Ephesians 2 we sit with Christ in the heavenlies; in chapters 4 and 5 we walk in His Body on the earth; then in chapter 6 we stand in His power in the heavenlies.

4. To sit with Christ is to participate in all His accomplishments; to walk in His Body is to fulfill God's eternal purpose; and to stand in His power is to fight against God's enemy.
- B. "Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth"—6:14a:
1. *Truth* here refers to God in Christ as the reality in our living, that is, God realized and experienced by us in our living; this is actually Christ Himself lived out by us—4:15, 21, 24-25; John 14:6.
 2. The truth with which we are girded is actually the Christ whom we experience; because Paul's living was conformed to the pattern of Christ, he had the strength to face all opposition and adverse circumstances—Eph. 4:20; Phil. 1:19-21a.
- C. "Having put on the breastplate of righteousness"—Eph. 6:14b; 1 Cor. 1:30; Jer. 23:6:
1. Christ as the breastplate of righteousness covers our conscience, signified by the breast; in fighting against Satan, our accuser, we need a blood-purified conscience, a conscience void of offense—Heb. 9:14; 10:22; Acts 24:16.
 2. "They overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb" (Rev. 12:11); our response to Satan's accusations should be, "I overcome Satan, the accuser, not by my perfection and not even by a conscience void of offense but by the blood of the Lamb. I am defended against his accusations by the breastplate of righteousness."
- D. "Having shod your feet with the firm foundation of the gospel of peace"—Eph. 6:15:
1. Christ has made peace for us on the cross, both with God and with man, and this peace has become our gospel; the gospel of peace has been established as a firm foundation, as a readiness with which our feet may be shod—2:13-17.
 2. We fight the spiritual warfare by standing in peace; if we lose the peace between us and God or between us and other believers, we lose the standing to fight—Col. 3:15.
- E. "Besides all these, having taken up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming darts of the evil one"—Eph. 6:16; 2 Cor. 4:13; Heb. 12:2; cf. Phil. 2:13:
1. The flaming darts are Satan's temptations, proposals, doubts, questions, lies, and attacks; we need to take up the shield of faith to quench these flaming darts.
 2. We need to exercise our spirit of faith with our subdued and resurrected will to believe that the Lord's manifestation is to destroy the works of the devil—2 Cor. 4:13; 1 John 3:8; Matt. 16:22-23; Luke 4:39; Matt. 12:28; Luke 10:17, 19.
 3. We need to exercise our spirit of faith to believe that the Lord's death has destroyed Satan—Heb. 2:14; 1 Cor. 15:54-58; Gal. 2:20; Rom. 6:3-6.
 4. We need to exercise our spirit of faith to believe that the Lord's resurrection has put Satan to shame—Col. 2:12-15, 20; 3:1; John 14:30; Phil. 3:10; Isa. 61:10; Zech. 3:4-5.
 5. We need to exercise our spirit of faith to believe that the ascension of the Lord is far above Satan's power—Eph. 1:19-23; 2:6; 6:11, 13.
 6. We must have faith in God, who is real, living, present, and available—Mark 11:22; Rev. 1:18.
 7. We must have faith in God's heart; God's heart toward us is always good; He has no intention to punish us, to injure us, or to cause us to suffer loss—Rom. 8:28-39.
 8. We must have faith in God's faithfulness; God cannot lie but is always faithful to His word—1 Cor. 1:9; 1 John 1:9; Titus 1:2.
 9. We must have faith in God's ability—Eph. 3:20.

10. We must have faith in God's word; God is bound to fulfill all that He has spoken—cf. 1 Thes. 5:24; Eph. 6:17-18.
 11. We must have faith in God's will—1:5, 9, 11.
 12. We must have faith in God's sovereignty; under His sovereignty even our mistakes work for good—Rom. 9:19-29.
- F. "Receive the helmet of salvation"—Eph. 6:17a:
1. The helmet of salvation is for covering our mind, our mentality, against the negative thoughts shot in by the evil one; such a helmet, such a covering, is God's salvation.
 2. Satan injects threats, worries, anxieties, fear, and other weakening thoughts into our mind; God's salvation is the covering that we take up against all of these, and this salvation is the saving Christ whom we experience in our daily life—John 16:33.
- G. "Receive...the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God"—Eph. 6:17b:
1. Among the six items of God's armor, the sword of the Spirit is the only one for attacking the enemy; with the sword we cut the enemy to pieces.
 2. Christ as the Spirit and the word furnishes us with a sword as an offensive weapon to defeat and slay the enemy.
 3. When the *logos* (the constant word in the Bible) becomes the *rhema* (the present, instant, living speaking of the Spirit) to us, this *rhema* is the sword that cuts the enemy to pieces.
- H. "By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints"—v. 18:
1. Prayer may be considered the seventh item of the armor of God, because it is the means by which we apply the other items.
 2. Prayer is the unique way to apply Christ as the armor of God; it is prayer that makes the armor available to us in a practical way.
 3. We need to persevere in prayer because prayer involves a battle, a fight; two parties, God and Satan, are hostile to each other; the third party consists of God's chosen and redeemed people—Col. 4:2; Eph. 6:18; Matt. 26:41; cf. Eph. 5:14; Rom. 13:11-14.
 4. In order to fight on God's side against Satan, we need to persevere in prayer; this perseverance is needed because the course of the whole world is away from God—1 John 5:19; cf. John 14:30; 16:33.
 5. Before we try to persevere in prayer, we should first make a vow to the Lord concerning our prayer life; we need to say to Him, "Lord, I am desperate about this. I offer myself to You so that I may have a prayer life. Lord, keep me in the spirit of prayer. If I forget this or neglect this, I know that You will not forget it. Remind me again and again about prayer."
 6. Persevering in prayer has many benefits:
 - a. Prayer is the only way that we can set our mind on the things above—Col. 3:2; Heb. 7:25; 8:2; cf. Acts 6:4.
 - b. Prayer is the way to enter into the Holy of Holies and come forward to the throne of grace so that we can receive mercy and find grace to meet our timely need (Heb. 4:16); when we pray, approaching the throne of grace, grace will become a river flowing in us and supplying us—*Hymns*, #770.
 - c. The more we pray, the more we experience being one with the Lord and the more we enjoy His presence and have fellowship with Him; what a marvelous reward!