

# Christian Warfare

## Lesson 20: The Armor of God, Part 12

The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, Eph 6.17. Last time we considered the weapon itself. Now let's consider *how we're to use it* in fighting our spiritual battles, by taking our lessons from Christ's use of it in Mt 4.1-11.

### Jesus' Third Temptation, vv.8-10

- I. Satan's third temptation was the strongest yet. The world was the bait and it was a temptation to idolatry.
  - A. This is where the First Adam failed, so it serves to reason that this is a good tactic to use on the Second Adam. This is where God's Israel failed, so it serves to reason that this is a good tactic to use on the Israel of one. This is where the great messianic ruler of Israel, Solomon, failed, so it serves to reason that this is a good tactic to use on the Messiah Himself.
  - B. But where they all failed, Christ will succeed and emerge unscathed as the true and faithful Israel of God, Isa 42.1, the true and faithful Son of God, Ps 2.7. Christ will overcome the serpent's temptations and bring His new people, His new race, back into Eden, into fellowship with God, Col 1.19-20.
- II. Satan used eye-gate as the entry point for his temptation, v.8.
  - A. We don't know what mountain it was, but some have suggested it was Mt. Nebo, from which God showed Moses all the land of Canaan that He'd promised to give Israel, Dt 34.1-4.
  - B. The devil knows what a window the eyes are to the heart.
    1. Eve's temptation began with looking on the forbidden fruit, Gen 3.6.
    2. Achan's temptation began with looking on the devoted things, Josh 7.20-21.
    3. David's temptation began with looking on Bathsheba, 2Sam 11.2-4.
- III. Satan was trying to undermine the Father's decree to the Son in Ps 2.7-9, which already promised the earth to Jesus upon His resurrection.
  - A. The world was promised to Jesus in the Covenant of Redemption. But it was conditioned upon His incarnation, humiliation, sacrifice, and death. It was the reward of His suffering.
  - B. Satan was offering Jesus the world without the suffering, the crown of dominion without the cross of surrender, the gain without the pain.
- IV. What makes Satan think that this temptation will work?
  - A. He doesn't own a single parcel of the world, Ps 24.1. He's the "god of this world" by usurpation, but not by proprietorship (2Cor 4.4; Jn 16.11). He's the god of this world by influence, but not by possession. It remains the Lord's, Gen 1.1; Dt 10.14.
  - B. Jesus already owns the world as Creator (Heb 1.2) and will shortly be seen to own it as Mediator (Mt 28.18).
  - C. The world is not all glory as he says it is, for without the Lord's blessing upon it, all its blessings become curses and crosses.
  - D. His real intention was to slyly divest Jesus of His proprietorship to the created world.
  - E. But the reason Satan hopes in this tactic is because it was such a temptation that ruined both him and all the angels who fell with him.
- V. Satan at last puts forth his temptation when he asks Jesus to bow before him in worship, v.9. His promise of the world's glories was conditioned upon Christ's bowing before him.
  - A. This reveals Satan's true colors. All his sweets are stationed *on the other side* of sin. All his promises are *conditioned upon* you violating your conscience. All his baits are *across* the threshold of transgression.

- B. But what we find everytime instead is that all his sweets are bitters; all his promises are curses; and all his baits are hooks, Pr 5.3-5, 7-14, 22-23; 7.21-27; 9.17; 20.17.

### Jesus' Resistance to It

- I. Our Lord used Scripture again. He wielded the sword of the Spirit with faith and precision to overcome another temptation.
  - A. Notice Jesus' resolution in each temptation, cf. Gen 39.9. There's no parley or negotiation, only bold, resolute resistance. He takes no time to converse with the serpent like Eve did in Eden. He makes no compromise with evil like Israel did in Canaan with their syncretism.
  - B. Notice as well that the scriptures used by Jesus to defeat his attacks are all drawn from Moses' commentary on Israel's failure during their wilderness testing, Dt 8.3; 6.16; 6.13. This is important because at His baptism He was declared by God to be the true Adam and true Israel, the Son of God toward which they both pointed; and now, by His obedience, the Father's declaration proves true.
  - C. Christ resisted the devil by restoring truth in the face of his lies. The Lord alone is GOD, Heb 1.1-2. The Lord alone is to be worshipped, Rev 19.10. And Satan will one day bow before Him, Phil 2.10-11.

### Applications

- I. Many have been led astray into sin by their eyes, Gen 3.6; 34.2; Josh 7.21; Jdg 14.1-2. Therefore make a covenant with your eyes not to look on vanity, Ps 101.2-3; 119.37; Job 31.1; Mt 6.22-23.
- II. If the world and its glories are Satan's favorite baits, then you must get your heart crucified to the world so that it won't lead you astray from God, Gal 6.14; Js 4.4.
- III. Satan promises what he can't give and hides hooks in everything he does give. So harden your heart against his lies and resolve to take nothing from his hands. Instead seek everything you need from God, Js 1.17; Phil 4.11-13; Col 2.9-10; Mt 5.6; Ps 4.7-8.
- IV. Consider what a bad bargain sin is, Mk 8.36-37. A man never got anything by sin but it cost him something far more precious. So be resolute and say no to temptation.
- V. The devil seeks to deceive you by the eyes of sense, so learn to live by faith upon the truth of Scripture and not by sight, 2Cor 4.18; Rom 1.17; 1Tim 4.8.
- VI. Comfort yourself that your Lord was tempted in every respect and can sympathize with you in *all* your temptations, Heb 4.15; 2.18
  - A. His three temptations (unbelief, presumption, and idolatry) serve as a summary of all your temptations, so take heart that He *is* able to help you in every temptation.
  - B. Therefore in *every* temptation you face, look to Jesus. Use His example to guide you in the use of the sword of the Spirit. Look for His sympathy to understand what you're going through and to forgive you when you fail. And look to His victory to enable you to withstand evil in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm in Him, Eph 6.10-13.