

Message: Christ, Our Sufficient Provision for Spiritual Warfare, Part 7

Text: Ephesians 6:10-17

Introduction

A. God commands and urges us through His Word in Ephesians 6:11 ...

Ephesians 6:11 **Put on the full armor of God**, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

B. Has God protected you this past week from being overcome by evil, by the evil one - Satan? Have we consciously sought His protection by consciously putting on His armor, His image, the image of His Son Jesus Christ?

Ephesians 4:24 **put on the new self**, which in *the likeness of* God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

Romans 13:12 ... **put on the armor of light**. ... ¹⁴ **put on the Lord Jesus Christ**

C. To date we have looked at several Christlike virtues which protect us like armor. Today and next week we plan to look at the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God - what we think, feel, and do about God's Word.

1. 6:14a truth - truthfulness, sincerity, wholeheartedness
2. 6:14b righteousness - the practice of moral goodness, uprightness
3. 6:15 peace - peaceableness, peacemaking
4. 6:16 faith - a wholehearted entrustment of our lives to all that Christ is.
5. 6:17a helmet of salvation - pressing on in hope of final salvation
6. 6:17b sword of the Spirit, the Word of God

D. How important was it that we spoke the Word of God to each other responsively, and had the Word of God read to us? Not only how important in general, but how important to you at that moment? It clearly matters much to the Christ who died for us, now risen, reigning, and returning for us what we believe about His Word, what we feel about His Word, and what we do about His Word, since He inspired Paul to write this command of Ephesians 6:17 ...

Ephesians 6:17 NAU) And **receive ... the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God**.

I. What Christ wants us to believe about His Word.

A. The Scriptures ultimately come from the mouth of the Lord - it is the word of God.

Ephesians 6:17 And receive ... the sword of the Spirit, which is **the word of God**.

2 Timothy 3:16 ... **All Scripture is inspired by God** (theopneustos = God breathed)

1. Therefore, God's Word reveals the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to us in significant ways far beyond what His creation can reveal to us. God's Word is His own self-disclosure to us of His own heart. Any deep delving into the Scriptures is not to become a mere academic exercise but a delightful exploration of wonder and awe into the infinite universe of God's heart and character. God's Word should make us curious, fascinate us.

John 5:39 "You search **the Scriptures** because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that **testify about Me**;

2. Therefore, the Word of our infinite, omniscient, omnipotent, changeless God is firmly established, unbreakable, inerrant, and totally reliable.

Psalm 119:89 **Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven.**

John 10:35 ... **the Scripture cannot be broken,**

B. God's Word is the Spirit's sword, by which He defends us and delivers us from evil.

Ephesians 6:11 Put on the full armor of God, **so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.** ...¹⁷ And receive ... **the sword of the Spirit,** which is the word of God.

1. The Spirit delivers us from evil and the evil one by the Word of God. God's Word is His primary means of grace to His elect.
 - a. The Spirit uses the Word of God in regenerating us, causing us to be born again, delivering us from Satan's domination and doom.

1 Peter 1:23 for **you have been born again** not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, *that is,* **through the living and enduring word of God.**

- b. The Spirit uses the Word of God to bring us to repentance and to create in us that faith in Jesus Christ by which we receive the gift of justification, the forgiveness of our sins, eternal life. Without God's Word, there would be no saving grace. It is God's primary means of conveying grace to our souls.

Acts 2:36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ-- this Jesus whom you crucified."³⁷ **Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart,** and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?"³⁸ Peter *said* to them, **"Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ** for the forgiveness of your sins ...⁴¹ So then, those who had **received his word** were baptized;

Romans 10:13 "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED."¹⁴ How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? **How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard?** And how will they hear without a preacher? ...¹⁷ So **faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.**

- c. The Spirit uses God's Word like a sword to put to death our deeds of the flesh, the sin that so easily entangles us. What does the Spirit use to slay the deeds of the flesh? A sword. What is His sword? The Word of God.

Romans 8:13 for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but **if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.**

2. The Spirit defends, protects, and keeps believers from evil and the evil one by God's Word.
 - a. By God's Word we put on all elements of God's armor, all the godly character traits of Christ.

Ephesians 4:15 but **speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ,**

- b. By God's Word we are kept from straying from the Lord.

Proverbs 6:23 For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching is light; and reproofs for discipline are the way of life²⁴ **to keep you from the evil woman,** from the smooth tongue of the adulteress.

Psalm 119:92 **If Your law had not been my delight, then I would have perished in my affliction.**¹⁰¹ I have restrained my feet from every evil way, that I may keep Your word.

(1) We don't need to disobey the Lord to save ourselves, but abide in His Word and trust Him to save us.

(2) Examples of Nehemiah and Christ

Nehemiah 6:10 When I entered the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, son of Mehetabel, who was confined at home, he said, "Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you, and they are coming to kill you at night."¹¹ But I said, "Should a man like me flee? And **could one such as I go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in.**"¹² **Then I perceived that surely God had not sent him,** but he uttered *his* prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.¹³ **He was hired for this reason, that I might become frightened and act accordingly and sin,** so that they might have an evil report in order that they could reproach me.

Numbers 3:10 "So you shall appoint Aaron and his sons that they may keep their priesthood, but **the layman who comes near shall be put to death.**"

Matthew 4:3 And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."⁴ But He answered and said, "**It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD (rhema) THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.'**"

II. What Christ wants us to feel about His Word.

A. By "feel" we are referring to an attitude, disposition based on conviction, belief versus mere baseless emotion. We can believe all the above about God's Word, yet take a rather ho-hum attitude toward it. E.g., I believe Maryland is the state with the highest median income (\$74,419), but have no feeling about that. How we feel about God's Word is critical to Christ, for His Word reveals and reflects Him!

B. Righteous attitudes and affections of the person who loves the Lord of the Word. Kevin DeYoung (Taking God at His Word) notes in the 119th psalm 3 ways God wants us to "feel" about His Word.

1. Love and Delight - If we truly love and delight in Christ, we will love and delight in His Word which describes and reveals Him. E.g., we will love the armor of God verses because they describe His own character/being.

Psalm 119:24 Your testimonies also are **my delight**;

Psalm 119:47 I shall **delight** in Your commandments, **which I love.**

2. Desire - If we truly desire Christ, we will **intensely** desire His Word by which we know Him.

Psalm 119:20 **My soul is crushed with longing after Your ordinances at all times.**

Psalm 119:131 I opened my mouth wide and panted, **for I longed for Your commandments.**

3. Dependence - If we truly trust in Christ, we will trust and rely on His Word.

Psalm 119:110 The wicked have laid a snare for me, **yet I have not gone astray from Your precepts.**

Psalm 119:153 Look upon my affliction and **rescue me, for I do not forget Your law.**

C. Pray to Christ for an enlarged heart toward His Word as a result of an enlarged love toward Him. As DeYoung says (p. 21), *What we believe and feel about the Word of God are absolutely crucial, if for no other reason than that they should mirror what we believe and feel about Jesus.*