

THE CHRISTIAN'S ARMOR FOR SPIRITUAL WARFARE

INTRODUCTION

I. The NATURE OF THE BATTLE.

The Christian life is not a picnic but a warfare.

A. The foes to be met

1. The Devil as Generalissimo

2. The Allies under him.

- a. Principalities - fallen angelic or demonic rulers
- b. Powers - demonic authorities, cosmic powers
- c. World rulers - Earthly forces of evil; *savior-gods, mercury, zeus* potentates of the dark present world order.

d. Spiritual armies of wickedness - *all classes of hostile spirits whom the Christians battle*

B. Our contest is not merely against human enemies ("flesh and blood"), but against forces that are definitely organized against God.

1. Paul took the devil seriously as the commander of the forces against God.

2. We may attempt to banish the devil and his cohorts from society and even from theology, but he goes right on with his destructive work.

3. Depth psychology and modern day novelists support Paul in his description of the demonic forces in man and society.

4. Theologians are now beginning to take the devil and evil with a new seriousness. *We cannot deny the dreadful power of sin.*

II. THE RESOURCES FOR VICTORY:

A. The Power of Christ, 6:10

1. What the Christian needs, in preparing for conflict, is POWER.

2. The armor is of little avail unless there is power within the one using it.

3. This power is found in fellowship with the Lord and in answer to prayer.

4. "Be strong" is a passive verb meaning to be strengthened, to receive strength.

5. Christ has sufficient power for all Christians in their struggle with evil forces.

6. We cannot overcome the mighty, cunning forces of evil in our own strength; it takes the mighty strength of the Lord to re-inforce us to be able to withstand in the evil day.

B. THE CHRISTIAN ARMOR

1. In general

- a. Paul certainly knew the armor of a Roman soldier; he had been chained to one for about 3 years.
- b. This is our equipment for the spiritual warfare.
- c. Emphasis here is upon the COMPLETENESS of the armor to be put on, vs. 11.
 - (1). We get our word "panoply" from the Greek word "whole armor."
 - (2). What the Apostle urges is that ALL of it, the WHOLE armor, be put on.
 - (3). The Christian warrior should have complete equipment of that which has been provided him - undervaluing nothing, omitting nothing.
 - (4). How can he know at what unguarded point the subtle foe may aim his "fiery dart."?

2. Detailed Description of The Christian's Armor.

a. The Belt (girdle) of truth.

- (1). two fold purpose of Rom. soldier's belt: to hold his sword, and to keep his tunic and armor in place.
- (2). "Truth" - inner integrity, which holds all other qualities in their proper place.

b. Breastplate of Righteousness

- (1). Breastplate protects the vital parts of body.
- (2). Symbolizes the absolute necessity of righteous living in conduct.

c. Shoes - "feet shod with equipment of gospel of p."

- (1). "Equipment" - "!readiness" - for the conflict & readiness to preach the gospel of peace
- (2). The Christian is a man of peace. He fights spiritually, not physically. He fights to make peace between God & man & between man & his fellowman.

d. The Shield of Faith.

(1). Description

- ..Of metal or wood covered with leather to catch & quench flaming arrows.
- ..A large door-sized shield which curved around the body giving protection on three sides.
- ..Notice that no part of the armor protects the back parts!

This teaches us that there is no place for retreat in the Christian's battle against sin.

- (2). With faith the Christian can meet all the weapons of the devil and be triumphant over temptation.

e. The Helmet of Salvation

(1). Take it; receive it,

for it is the gift of God.

- (2). "Salvation" - a comprehensive term including the whole process of Christian experience.

- (3). In protection for the head, Paul could have been thinking of Satan's temptations to the mind, in terms of intellectual pride, doubts, or depression. The Helmet of salvation nerves the Christian for any conflict and makes him optimistic and conquering.

f. The Sword of the Spirit

- (1). The word of God.
- (2). The only piece of offensive armor.
- (3). The Christian should master the use of Bible.
- (4). "In opposition to all error, to all false philosophy, to all false principles in morals, to all suggestions of the devil, the sole, simple, & sufficient answer is in the Word of God."

g. Prayer - one of the greatest weapons of the Christian warfare.

- (1). Prayer is the means of communication through which the Christian soldier maintains contact with the supreme commander and with the rank and file.

(2). Every phase of prayer to be used:

Confession, adoration, thanksgiving,
petition, intercession.

(3). Prayer must be:

ceaseless - "at all times"

intensive - "in the spirit" (*Esprit de Corps*)

unselfish - "for all the saints"

*Watchings
Keeping
Alert*

"No soldier entering the battle prays
for himself alone,
but for all his fellow-soldiers also.
They form one army,
and the success of one is the success of all."

CONCLUSION:

The theme of Ephesians is the purpose of God
to reconcile all things in Christ.

The church is the instrument by which this goal
is to be achieved.

Each Christian is called to share in this
great enterprise.

Therefore, his conduct is to be in harmony
with this will and purpose of God
who aims to unite all things in Christ.

May God help us to find and fill our place
in this great purpose.

L2 John, An Khe, Vietnam - Feb. 68
Baptist Chapel - Thailand - Oct 77
WAC Chapel Ft. Polk - Nov 76 + Sep 78