

# THE SPIRITUAL WARFARE AND PROTECTION OF THE BODY WITH CHRIST AS THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD

BY ED MARKS

Each chapter of the book of Ephesians unveils the mystery of the Body of Christ as the organism of the Triune God from a particular point of view. Ephesians 1 reveals that the Body of Christ is the issue of the dispensing of the Divine Trinity and the transmitting of the transcending Christ. Ephesians 2 reveals that the Body of Christ is the masterpiece of the Triune God as the new man. Ephesians 3 reveals that the Body of Christ is the fullness of the Triune God by our being supplied with the riches of Christ and by Christ's making His home in our hearts. Ephesians 4 reveals that the Body of Christ is the mingling of the processed Triune God with the regenerated believers and that this one Body is built up by the one ministry. Ephesians 5 reveals that the Body of Christ is composed of the children of light to be the bride of Christ for the satisfaction of Christ. Finally, Ephesians 6 reveals that the Body of Christ is the corporate warrior of the Triune God for the defeating of God's enemy. In this aspect of the Body of Christ, we are charged to put on Christ as the whole armor of God both for the protection of the Body and for the spiritual warfare of the Body (v. 11).

## The Three "Wills" in the Universe

If we are to engage in spiritual warfare with God's enemy, we must realize that there are three wills in this universe—the divine will, the satanic will, and the human will. God's will is for us to enjoy Christ as everything (Heb. 10:5-10; 1 Cor. 1:9) and function in the Body life (Rom. 12:1-2; Phil. 1:19) for the reality, oneness, and building up of the Body of Christ (Eph. 1:5, 9, 11; 4:3-4, 15-16; John 17:21). The first aspect of God's will is for us to enjoy Christ as everything. According to Hebrews 10:5-10, God's great will was for Christ to replace and be the reality of all the Old Testament sacrifices so that He could be everything to us. Thus, God's will is for us to enjoy Christ as everything.

Romans 12:1-2 tells us that the good, well pleasing and perfect will of God is for us to function in the Body life.

This is the second aspect of God's will. In these verses Paul exhorts us to present our bodies as a living sacrifice so that we may function as members of the Body of Christ. This is holy and well pleasing to God, and this is our reasonable service. Romans 12 concerns the Body life, and Ephesians speaks of the organic Body of Christ. Ephesians 1:5, 9, and 11 speak of the good pleasure of God's will, the mystery of God's will, and the counsel of God's will. God's will is also that we would have the reality, oneness, and building up of the Body of Christ (vv. 22-23; 4:3-4, 15-16; Matt. 16:18; John 17:21). This is the third aspect of God's will. God's desire is to recover Christ as everything to us, to recover us as functioning members of the Body of Christ, and to recover the reality, oneness, and building up of the Body of Christ.

The satanic will is versus the divine will, and Satan's strategy is opposed to the Lord's recovery of these three aspects of God's will. First, Satan's strategy is to bring in substitutes for Christ, which are versus the enjoyment of Christ as everything. Colossians shows that human philosophy came in as a substitute for Christ. Galatians reveals that the law was brought in as a substitute for Christ. In the book of Hebrews, Judaism became a substitute for Christ. In 1 Corinthians we see that gifts, signs, and human wisdom came in as substitutes for Christ. We need to reject any and all substitutes for Christ and simply enjoy Christ as everything.

Second, Satan's strategy, being opposed to God's will of having functioning members of the Body of Christ, is to bring in the clergy-laity system. In Revelation 2:6 the Lord spoke to the church in Ephesus, saying, "This you have, that you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate." On the one hand, we should love the Lord with the first love by giving Him the first place in all things (v. 4). On the other hand, we need to hate what He hates, which is the works of the Nicolaitans. The Greek word for *Nicolaitan* is composed of two words, one meaning "to be victorious over" and the other meaning "laity." Thus, to be a Nicolaitan is to be one who is

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"victorious over the laity." We do not want a de facto clergy-laity system, where only a few members function while the others do not. All the believers can fellowship directly with the Lord, sing to the Lord, pray to the Lord, and speak for the Lord. In the proper church life all the members of the Body are priests of God (1:6; 5:10; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9), and there is no mediatorial class.

Third, Satan's strategy is to divide the Body of Christ. Whenever things take place to divide us from another brother or sister, we should realize that this is part of Satan's strategy to divide the Body. In his larger scheme to divide the Body of Christ, Satan has produced sects, denominations, and divisions, which have destroyed the unique corporate expression of Christ. Christ is expressed corporately in oneness, which is the oneness of the Triune God in the Body of Christ. There is one Body, one Spirit, one Lord, and one God and Father (Eph. 4:4-6). The one Father is embodied in the one Lord, the one Lord is the one Spirit, and the one Spirit is the essence of the one Body. Satan's strategy is to spoil this divine and mystical oneness among the believers.

Satan used to be Lucifer, the highest archangel. The Scriptures unveil that 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). Ezekiel 28:12 says that he was "full of wisdom and perfect in beauty." Mary E. McDonough says,

The question may be asked, "How could this bright anointed cherub, created without iniquity and having no being to tempt him, become a sinner?" This is a mystery. It is *the* mystery. God has given us no explanation, but He simply states the fact. The approach to this condition, however, is shown us in Ezekiel 28:17: "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness." The bright anointed one contemplated *his beauty, his wisdom, his brightness*—the *gifts* of God—instead of God Himself. Alas, does this not show us that self-contemplation, even the contemplation of those gifts bestowed upon us by God, is dangerous? To contemplate the gift, rather than the Giver, is the road to downfall and ruin. (8)

**L**ucifer took his eyes away from the Giver and beheld the gifts that God gave him. Once we take our eyes away from the Giver and focus in self-contemplation on the gifts God has given us, we are on the road of pride, which is truly the road to downfall and ruin.

Ezekiel 28:15 and 16 say, "You were perfect in your ways from the day that you were created, until unrighteousness was found in you. By the abundance of your trading they filled your midst with violence, and you sinned." Here *you sinned* is significant. This is the first time sin came into the

universe and the first time these words were uttered in the universe. Lucifer was the first sinner. Then verse 17 says, "Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom by reason of your brightness. I cast you to the ground." Lucifer's heart was lifted up because of his beauty, he became proud, and he became God's enemy as the devil and Satan.

In Isaiah 14 we can clearly see that the satanic will is versus the divine will. Once Lucifer became proud because of his beauty, he wanted to dethrone God. Sin is lawlessness (1 John 3:4). Sin is a dethronement of God. When we dethrone God and put ourselves on the throne in our being, that is sin. Isaiah 14:12-14 says,

How you have fallen from heaven, / O Daystar, son of the dawn! / How you have been hewn down to earth, / You who made nations fall prostrate! / But you, you said in your heart: / I will ascend to heaven; / Above the stars of God / I will exalt my throne. / And I will sit upon the mount of assembly / In the uttermost parts of the north. / I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; / I will make myself like the Most High.

In these verses Lucifer declared five times, "I will." Since the number five signifies responsibility, his declaration indicates that he bears the full responsibility for his rebellion. His satanic "I will" opposes the divine will.

**A**ll 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. Galatians 5:17 says, "The flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these oppose each other that you would not do the things that you desire." This verse shows the war within us. The Spirit and the flesh are antagonistic toward each other. There is a war between the Spirit and the flesh within us so that we would not do the things that we desire. We must allow the Spirit to conquer us so that we would choose and perform God's will.

The overcomers use their human will to align themselves with the divine will to fight the spiritual warfare against the satanic will. We need to pray, "Lord, fight for us," and we need to follow Him in His fight against Satan. Revelation shows that the dragon, Satan, stood before God's people, symbolized by the woman, so that he might devour her child, which is the man-child (12:1-11). Satan hates the overcomers, signified by the man-child as the stronger part of God's people, and he wants to devour them. The overcomers fight against him in the Lord and in the Body by taking up Christ as the whole armor of God during their whole lives until they are raptured to

the throne. After they are raptured, there is war in heaven, and Satan is cast down from heaven (vv. 7, 9).

The overcomers who are a part of the man-child overcome Satan because of the blood of Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they love not their soul-life even unto death (v. 11). We do not overcome the enemy by our perfection or spirituality but because of the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony. We have the perfect blood of Christ to cleanse us and protect us, and the word of our testimony means that we declare the divine facts. One great fact that we should declare is “Jesus is Lord!” Satan hates it when we declare the divine facts. No matter how we feel or what our spiritual condition is, it is a fact that Jesus is Lord and that Jesus has won the victory over Satan. We are not fighting to gain a victory but to maintain our victory. Satan is already a defeated foe, for the Lord already defeated him on the cross (Heb. 2:14). Furthermore, by taking the perfect will of God for the course of our life, we are choosing not to love our soul-life even unto death.

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 is whether we choose the divine will or the satanic will (Gen. 2:7-9). *Hymns*, #880 says, “To the foe my word is always, ‘No,’ / To the Father it is ‘Yes.’” When we choose the divine will, we are choosing the tree of life instead of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The tree of life was placed in the garden of Eden and was pleasant to the sight and good for food. *Eden* means “pleasure.” This indicates that God wants us to be pleased with Him and to be satisfied with Him by enjoying Him as our spiritual food. If our heart is unhappy, we need to pray, “Lord, make my heart happy in You. Be my happiness, my enjoyment, my pleasure, my entertainment, and my amusement.” Moreover, if our heart is unhappy, there may be something between us and the Lord. Once we realize our sins and shortcomings in the light of the Lord’s presence, we should confess them to the Lord so that the blood of Christ can cleanse us from every sin (1 John 1:9). Then there can be a clear sky between us and the Lord, and He can become our pure enjoyment.

Through repentance we can turn from the satanic will to the divine will, from Satan’s side to God’s side. The

Lord granted to the Gentiles “repentance unto life” (Acts 11:18). *Repentance* means a change of mind, a turn from everything other than God to God Himself. Repentance results in life and in our enjoying Christ as the tree of life. Furthermore, 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.

#### Ephesians 6:10-20 Revealing That Christ Is the Whole Armor of God for the Spiritual Warfare and Protection of the Body

Ephesians 6:10 and 11 say, “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.” James 4:7 says, “Be subject therefore to God; but withstand the devil, and he will flee from you.”

This indicates that in spiritual warfare we need to be subject to God and to stand in the Lord. This will cause the devil to flee from us. The fact that we need to be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength indicates that we cannot fight the spiritual warfare in ourselves; we



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can fight only in the Lord with Him as our powerful strength.

It is an important principle to realize that Christ as the whole armor of God is for the entire Body of Christ as the corporate warrior of God, not for any individualistic member of the Body. The whole armor of God is for the entire Body of Christ, so we need to fight the spiritual warfare not as individuals but in the Body and for the Body. When we take our stand in the Body and do everything in the Body, through the Body, and for the Body, we enjoy all the items of Christ as the complete armor of God.

An isolated individual is...prone to be deceived, so we need the covering of the Body for this as well. We should consult constantly with our fellow believers. We must not only acknowledge the need for the Body in a general way, but we should also go to our brothers and sisters in a specific way and ask for help...

Soldiers hide in the trenches for their protection in physical warfare. They cannot expose their heads; to do so is

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dangerous. This is also true in spiritual warfare. No member should be alone, and no member should expose his head. We are merely members in the Body, and we need the protection of the brothers and sisters. When Moses lifted up his hands to pray for the Israelites, he needed the help of Aaron and Hur. With their help the Israelites prevailed over the Amalekites. If a man as strong as Moses needed the help of his brothers, how much more do we need the help of our brothers? Many people do things without consulting and praying with the brothers and sisters. They are ignorant of the protection of the Body, and the result is nothing but failure. We all must see the reality of the Body's protection, hide under its protection, and accept its safeguard. (Nee, *Mystery* 26-27)

Philippians 1:19 says, "I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ." *Salvation* here means to be sustained and strengthened to live Christ for His magnification. The words *your petition* indicate the supply of the Body of Christ. Paul knew that the saints' petitioning on his behalf would be a channel for him to receive the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Although Paul was in prison, his prison did not isolate him from the Body of Christ or cut him off from the supply of the Body of Christ. This shows that no matter what circumstance or situation we are in, we need to take our stand in the Body to enjoy the Body's protection and supply. We need to be in our spirit, and we need to do everything in the Body, through the Body, and for the Body. Romans 16:20 says, "Now the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you." God crushes Satan under the feet of the churches, which are the practical expression of the Body of Christ. Without the practical church life, the Body life, Satan can easily attack us in many ways, but in the corporate church life, we can experience the God of peace crushing Satan under the feet of the church. It is truly a mercy of the Lord to be able to experience the practical church life, the Body life, where everything of God's enemy is under our feet.

*Hymns*, #885 speaks of our need to fight the battle in the Body:

- 1 Fight the battle in the Body,  
Never fight it on your own;  
With the Body to the Head joined,  
Fight the battle on the throne.  
  
Fight the battle in the Body!  
By the virtue of the Head;  
Standing firmly with the Body,  
Into vict'ry you'll be led.
- 2 For the Body is God's armor,  
Not for anyone alone;

When you wrestle in the Body,  
All its benefits you own.

3 'Tis the Church on Christ established  
Satan shall not overpow'r;  
'Tis the Body built together  
Which resists the evil pow'r.

4 In the Body, by the Headship,  
Sitting in the heavenlies,  
Struggle with the wicked spirits  
And the principalities.

5 As a member of the Body,  
With the brethren stand for God;  
Praying always in the Spirit,  
Claim the vict'ry through the Blood.

6 In the heav'nlies more than conqu'ror,  
In the power of His might,  
As a soldier in the army,  
In the Lord the battle fight.

- 7 Keep on wrestling in the Body,  
Mighty vict'ry you will see,  
Bind and loose, God's will fulfilling,  
And the foes your food will be.

***"Stand Therefore, Having Girded Your Loins with Truth"***

Ephesians 6:14 says, "Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth." *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 of us (4:15, 21, 24-25; John 14:6). Thus, to gird our loins with truth is to strengthen our entire being with Christ Himself who is lived out by us.

Ephesians 4:20 and 21 say, "You did not so learn Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus." *Reality* can also be translated "truth." Hence, these verses show that we can learn Christ as the truth is in Jesus. To learn Christ is to learn Him experientially and subjectively, not merely objectively. To learn Christ is to know Him, to experience Him, and to enjoy Him. The truth that is in Jesus refers to the actual condition of the life of Jesus as portrayed in the four Gospels. In the four Gospels, Jesus did everything in God, with God, for God, and by God. God was in His living, and He was one with God. We are learning this Christ by following His pattern of having God in our living and of being one with God in all things. We aspire to do everything in God, with God, for God, and by God according to the actual condition of the life of Jesus as recorded in the four Gospels. When we have a living that is the reproduction of the living of Jesus, we are conformed to His image, and our whole being is strengthened with Him as the truth so that we may stand in His power to fight against God's enemy.

John 8:31-32 says, "Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free." If we want to be His disciples, we must abide in His word, continue in His word, and dwell in His word. The truth, the reality, which we know by abiding in His word sets us free from the bondage of sin. Verse 36 says, "If therefore the Son sets you free, you shall be free indeed." The Son is the truth as the One lived out of us to be expressed in our living as the truth in Jesus. 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 in the Lord and in the Body to face all opposition and adverse circumstances (Eph. 4:20-21; Phil. 1:19-21).

#### ***"Having Put On the Breastplate of Righteousness"***

Ephesians 6:14 says, "Having put on the breastplate of righteousness" (cf. 1 Cor. 1:30; Jer. 23:6). 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. When Paul was testifying before the Roman ruler, he could have said many things, but he chose to say, "I also exercise myself to always have a conscience without offense toward God and men" (Acts 24:16). To exercise ourselves to have a conscience without offense toward God and men is to exercise our spirit, for our conscience is a part of our spirit (Rom. 8:16; cf. 9:1). When there is nothing between us and God and between us and man, God has a free way to dispense Himself into us and to be our breastplate of righteousness.

**H**ebrews 9:14 says, "How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" How wonderful it is that we can have a blood-purified conscience! Hebrews 10:22 says, "Let us come forward to the Holy of Holies with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water." Having our hearts sprinkled with the blood of Christ from an evil conscience means that Christ becomes the goodness and purity of our conscience. To have our bodies washed with

pure water means to have our outward conduct washed with the water of His flowing presence in His life, His Spirit, and His Word.

**S**eeing that the blood of Christ has purified our conscience and that it has sprinkled us from an evil conscience, we need to realize that we overcome Satan, the accuser of the brothers, 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 but by the blood of the Lamb. I am defended against his accusations by Christ as my breastplate of righteousness." Overcomers are not perfect people. Overcomers know the value of the blood of Christ. However, even though we cannot know the value of Christ's blood to a full extent, we can pray, "Lord, apply the blood on my behalf according to Your evaluation of it." God's evaluation infinitely surpasses ours. Thank the

Lord that His blood cleanses us and protects us from Satan's accusations. First John 1:7 says, "If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from every sin." Here the Word of God clearly says, "Every sin." Every sin includes sins that you think can be forgiven and sins that you do not

think can be forgiven. The good news is that the blood of Jesus, the Son of God, cleanses us from every sin, and because of this blood, we can overcome Satan, the accuser.

**WITHOUT THE PRACTICAL CHURCH LIFE, SATAN CAN EASILY ATTACK US, BUT IN THE CORPORATE CHURCH LIFE, WE CAN EXPERIENCE THE GOD OF PEACE CRUSHING SATAN UNDER OUR FEET.**

#### ***"Having Shod Your Feet with the Firm Foundation of the Gospel of Peace"***

Ephesians 6:15 says, "Having shod your feet with the firm foundation of the gospel of peace." Christ has made peace for us on the cross, both with God and 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. Verses 13 through 17 of chapter 2 say,

Now in Christ Jesus you who were once far off have become near in the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, He who has made both one and has broken down the middle wall of partition, the enmity, abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, so making peace, and might reconcile both in one Body to

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God through the cross, having slain the enmity by it. And coming, He announced peace as the gospel to you who were far off, and peace to those who were near.

Christ is our peace. In His flesh on the cross He abolished the law of the commandments in ordinances. Ordinances are forms or ways of living and worship that divide mankind. He took all the ways of living and worship to the cross so that He could create the two, Jew and Gentiles, in Himself into one new man. We fight the spiritual warfare by standing in the peace that Christ made on the cross. If we lose the peace between us and God or between us and other believers, we lose the standing to fight. We must always keep the peace between us and God. There needs to be an inner peace within us. The mind set on the spirit is not only life but also peace (Rom. 8:6). We should have peace toward God and peace toward our fellow believers.

**C**olossians 3:15 says, "Let the peace of Christ arbitrate in your hearts, to which also you were called in one Body; and be thankful." The Greek word for *arbitrate* means "to umpire." In professional sports, there are umpires who referee the game. Technology is capable of providing an instant replay of a segment of the game to determine the offending party. Often we may want to provide an "instant replay" of how we were offended by others. At such times we need Christ to be the Umpire in our heart. If we would turn to Him, He would tell us to forgive the offending party and to forget the offense. For the peace of Christ to arbitrate in our heart means that it presides in our heart. It means that the peace of Christ is enthroned in our heart as a ruler and decider of everything. It is not a matter of right or wrong but of whether or not we have the peace of Christ.

### ***"Having Taken Up the Shield of Faith"***

Ephesians 6:16 says, "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." The flaming darts that are hurled by Satan at us are his temptations, proposals, doubts, questions, lies, attacks, threats, and fears. We need to take up the shield of faith to quench these flaming darts. Second Corinthians 4:13 says that we have a spirit of faith to believe in and speak God's word. This spirit of faith is our mingled spirit—the divine Spirit mingled with our human spirit to be one spirit (Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17). Faith is in our spirit, and doubts are in our mind. Whenever we exercise our spirit, we are exercising our faith, because our spirit is a spirit of faith. We need to exercise our spirit to speak forth the word of God. Regardless of our feeling, we should stand by faith in the divine facts.

Satan is a liar, a murderer, and a thief (John 8:44; 10:10).

Satan always questions God's word. When he spoke to Eve, he said, "Did God really say...?" (Gen. 3:1). His speaking to Eve was in the way of questioning God's word. A question mark is in the form of a serpent standing up. Satan is not only a liar but also a thief. He wants to steal our joy and our absoluteness toward God. Watchman Nee says,

Satan was a murderer from the beginning, in the same way that he was a liar from the beginning (John 8:44). We should withstand not only Satan's sickness but also his murdering. All thought of death is from Satan. Every notion of death as a means to escape from anything is from Satan. Satan made Job think of death. He did this not only to Job but also to every child of God. All notions of suicide, death wishes, and premature death are temptations from Satan. He tempts man to sin, and he also tempts man to die. Even thoughts of danger during one's travels are Satan's attacks. We must reject these thoughts whenever they come and not allow them to remain in us. (Collected Works 726)

**A**ll forms of fear come from Satan. God is not the source of fear. Fear is Satan's calling card. Luke 12:6 and 7 say, "Are not five sparrows sold for two assaria? And not one of them is forgotten before God. But even the hairs of your head have all been numbered. Do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows." Here the Lord said, "Do not be afraid." The enemy wants us to be afraid; he is the author of fear. In verse 32 the Lord said, "Do not be afraid, little flock, because your Father has been well pleased to give you the kingdom." We are the Lord's little flock, and His word to us is that we should not be afraid. He wants to give us the kingdom.

We must reject all forms of fear. Satan has to find a lodging ground before he can work on God's children. He cannot work where he has no ground to work. Therefore, his first attack is to gain a beachhead. He then attacks us from this beachhead. We should not give any ground to him. This is the way to victory. There is one area which can become Satan's greatest stronghold—fear. When Satan tries to put us through trials, the first thing he does is to put fear into us. An experienced sister once said, "Fear is Satan's calling card." Once you accept fear, Satan steps in. If you reject fear, he will not be able to come in.

All thoughts of fear are attacks from Satan. Whatever you are afraid of, you will surely experience. Job said, "For I dread something, and it comes upon me; / And what I fear comes to me" (Job 3:25). Job experienced everything that he feared. Satan's attack in the environment comes mostly in the form of fear. If you withstand the fear, the things that you fear will not come. But if you allow the fear to remain, you will give Satan the opportunity to do the very things that you fear.

Therefore, in order for God's children to withstand the work of Satan, the first thing they have to reject is fear. When Satan puts a fear in you for this or that thing, you must not give in to this fear. You should say, "I will never accept what the Lord has not measured to me!" Once a person is delivered from fear, he is delivered from Satan's realm. This is what Paul meant when he said, "Neither give place to the devil" (Eph. 4:27).

Why do we not need to fear? We do not fear "because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4). If we are fearful, it is because we are ignorant of this fact. (Nee, *Collected Works* 733)

*Exercising Our Spirit of Faith to Believe That the Lord's Manifestation Is to Destroy the Works of the Devil:* 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). "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8). We may also translate the last phrase as "He might undo the works of the devil." We can pray, "Lord, destroy the works of the devil in me. Lord, undo the works of the devil in me. Destroy his works wherever he has tried to gain ground or where You know that he has gained ground. Destroy all the works of the devil in my environment and wherever I am laboring for You."

*Exercising Our Spirit of Faith to Believe That the Lord's Death Has Destroyed Satan:* We need to exercise our spirit of faith to believe that the Lord's death has destroyed Satan. Hebrews 2:14 says, "Since therefore the children have shared in blood and flesh, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same, that through death He might destroy him who has the might of death, that is, the devil." The Lord's death was a devil-destroying death.

Satan having the might of death means that Satan's authority extends only to the point of death. Not only did Christ die for us, but we also died with Him. Since Satan's power extends only as far as death, he cannot touch us, because we have already died. We have been crucified with Christ, and we believe in the Lord's death for us. Galatians 2:20 says, "I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in

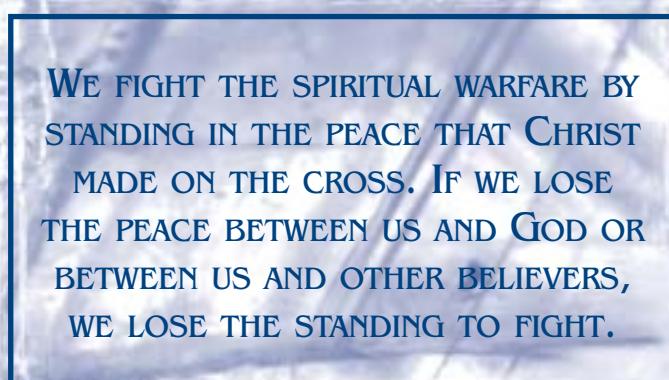
me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me." Our old man, the natural life in the soul, has been crucified with Him (Rom. 6:6). We stand on the fact that we have been crucified with Christ and that Satan's power and authority can go only as far as death. Because we have died with Christ, Satan cannot touch us.

*Exercising Our Spirit of Faith to Believe That the Lord's Resurrection Has Put Satan to Shame:* 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). Acts 2:24 says, "Whom God has raised up, having loosed the pangs of death, since it was not possible for Him to be held by it." It is not possible for Christ to be held by death. He is the resurrection (John 11:25), and resurrection is life that has passed through death. Death cannot hold the resurrection life. His resurrection life cannot be touched by death. Rather, it transcends death, goes beyond the boundary of death, comes out of death, and cannot be held by death. Thus, the Lord's resurrection puts Satan to shame. This is why we need, according to

Philippians 3:10, to

have the aspiration "to know Him and the power of His resurrection."

*Exercising Our Spirit of Faith to Believe That the Ascension of the Lord with His Power Is Far above Satan's Power:* We need to exercise our spirit of faith to believe that the ascension of the Lord with His power is far above Satan's power. In Ephesians 1:19-23 we see four aspects of Christ's power. First, God's great power raised Christ from the dead; this is His resurrecting power. Second, God's great power seated Christ at His right hand in the heavenlies; this is His ascending power. Third, God's great power subjected all things under His feet; this is His subjecting power. Fourth, God's great power caused Him to be Head over all things to the church; this is His heading-up power. This fourfold power is to the church, which is His Body, implying a divine transmission from Christ as the Head to His Body (vv. 22-23). As we open to the Lord, the resurrecting power, ascending power, subjecting power, and heading-up power are all being transmitted into us, into the church as Christ's Body. Furthermore, Ephesians 2:6 says that God "raised us up together with



**WE FIGHT THE SPIRITUAL WARFARE BY STANDING IN THE PEACE THAT CHRIST MADE ON THE CROSS. IF WE LOSE THE PEACE BETWEEN US AND GOD OR BETWEEN US AND OTHER BELIEVERS, WE LOSE THE STANDING TO FIGHT.**

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Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus." This is our position, the position of a Christian. We are raised up together with Christ and seated together with Him in the heavenlies, far above all the power of Satan.

*Having Faith in God:* We must have faith in God, who is real, living, present, and available. Mark 11:22 says, "Jesus answered and said to them, Have faith in God." In Revelation 1:18 the Lord as the living One said, "I became dead, and behold, I am living forever and ever; and I have the keys of death and of Hades."

*Having Faith in God's Heart:* We need to 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). Satan is not only our accuser, but he also accuses God to us. He may tell us that God wants to harm us. This is a lie. Only Satan wants to damage us. God's heart toward us is always good. This is why Romans 8:28 and 29 say,

We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers.

**G**od causes all people, things, and matters in our environment to work together for good. In this verse *good* refers to our being transformed and conformed to the image of Christ as the firstborn Son of God. "Blessed be the Lord, who day by day loads us with good; / God is our salvation. Selah" (Psa. 68:19). *Good* here is the Triune God Himself as our salvation. Day by day we are being loaded, filled, with Him as the only One who is good.

*Having Faith in God's Faithfulness:* We must have faith in God's faithfulness (1 Cor. 1:9; 1 John 1:9; Titus 1:2). God is always faithful to His word. First Corinthians 1:9 says, "God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."

*Having Faith in God's Ability:* We must have faith in God's ability. Ephesians 3:20 says, "To Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us." God carries out not only what we ask concerning the church but also what we think. This is according to His resurrecting, ascending, subjecting, and heading-up power that operates within us.

*Having Faith in God's Word:* We must have faith in God's word; God is bound to fulfill all that He has spoken. First Thessalonians 5:23 says, "The God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and

body be preserved complete, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." To be sanctified wholly means to be fully saturated with God's holy nature, until we are as holy as He is in our spirit, soul, and body. Then verse 24 says, "Faithful is He who calls you, who also will do it." This means that God is bound to fulfill all that He has spoken to fulfill His eternal economy in us.

*Having Faith in God's Will:* We must have faith in God's will (Eph. 1:5, 9, 11). He predestinated us unto sonship according to His will. He designated us as His inheritance according to His will. He is now "sonizing" us by depositing the riches of Christ, the Son, into us so that He can inherit us for the accomplishing of God's will.

*Having Faith in God's Sovereignty:* We must have faith in God's sovereignty. Under His sovereignty even our mistakes work for our good (Rom. 9:19-29). What a wonderful Lord we have! His shepherding care for us is incomprehensible. His sovereignty over our lives simply causes us to love Him more.

#### ***"Receive the Helmet of Salvation"***

Ephesians 6:17 says, "Receive the helmet of salvation." 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. We need to pray that the Lord would save us by our receiving Him as the helmet of salvation. Satan tries to inject 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).

#### ***"Receive...the Sword of the Spirit, Which Spirit Is the Word of God"***

Ephesians 6:17-18 says, "Receive...the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God, by means of all prayer and petition." Among the six items of God's armor, the sword of the Spirit is the only one used for attacking the enemy. With this sword we cut the enemy to pieces. *Word* here in Greek is *rhema*, not *logos*. *Logos* refers to the constant, written word, while *rhema* refers to the instant, present, living speaking of the Spirit that is applied to our situation. This is why we need to read the Word "by means of all prayer and petition." By pray-reading we convert the *logos* to *rhema*, the constant word to His instant, present, living word, which then becomes a sword to slay the enemy with his strategems.

**T**he killing power of God's living word is appropriated by us when we pray-read God's word. Things within us such as doubts, hatred, jealousy, pride, or selfishness

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can be killed by the sword of the Spirit as the instant living word of God.

Pray-reading is a practical way to kill the negative elements within us. The more we take the word of God by means of all prayer in spirit, the more the negative things within us will be put to death...When the negative things in us are killed through pray-reading, the Lord is victorious. Because He is victorious, we are victorious also. (Lee, *Ephesians* 821)

***"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"***

Ephesians 6:18 says, "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." The phrase *concerning all the saints* implies that we pray-read the Word not only to slay the enemy but also on behalf of all the saints. We pray for them in our pray-reading of God's Word. Prayer may be considered the seventh item of the armor of God, because it is the means by which we apply all the other items. Prayer is the unique way to apply the armor of God. It is prayer that makes the armor of God available to us in a practical way.

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). Colossians 4:2 says, "Persevere in prayer, watching in it with thanksgiving." Thanksgiving is a sign of a praying person. If we are not thankful persons, that is a sign that we are prayerless persons.

In Matthew 26:41 when the Lord was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, He told the disciples, "Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." Our spirit is willing to pray, but our flesh is weak; therefore, we need to stand with our willing spirit. When the Lord instructed His disciples to watch, He was telling them to wake up, to not sleep. After He found them sleeping, He said, "Were you not able to watch with Me for one hour?" (v. 40). The fact that the Lord told us to watch shows that we are all "sleepy" persons. We may be physically, psychologically, or spiritually asleep. We need to fight against this threefold sleep when we pray. To be asleep psychologically means that our mind, our attention, our hearing, and our realization are absent. To be asleep spiritually means that our inner perception is dormant. Being spiritually asleep is related to the intuition of our spirit. Our intuition has a direct sense of God and a direct knowledge from God. We need to fight against being dormant in the perception of our intuition.

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). First John 5:19 says, "We know that we are of God, and the whole world *lies* in the evil one." Note 3 in the Recovery Version on this verse says that *lies* means remaining "passively in the sphere of the evil one's influence, under the evil one's usurpation and manipulation." It goes on to say, "While the believers are living and moving actively by the life of God, the whole world (and especially the people of the world) is lying passively under the usurping and manipulating hand of Satan, the evil one." If we persevere in prayer, we will not be those who lie passively under Satan's usurpation and manipulation. 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." The Lord will be faithful to remind us if we pray this prayer.

Persevering in prayer has many benefits. 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). Prayer is the way to enter into the Holy of Holies and come forward to the throne of grace so that we may receive mercy and find grace for timely help (Heb. 4:16). When we pray, approaching the throne of grace, grace will become a river flowing in us and supplying us (*Hymns*, #770). 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! Thank and praise the Lord that we can put on Christ as the whole armor of God by prayer as we stand in the Body to enjoy the protection of the Body! **[AC]**

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