



LIVING GRACE
COMMUNITY CHURCH

“Walking in the Armor of God-Part 1”

Sermon Date: May 8th, 2022

Reflections on Sunday’s Sermon

Below is a reference to the section of the New City Catechism that we went over on Sunday:

The New City Catechism—Lord’s Day 19

Is There Any Way to Escape Punishment and Be Brought Back into God’s Favor?

Yes, to satisfy his justice, God himself, out of mere mercy, reconciles us to himself and delivers us from sin and from the punishment for sin, by a Redeemer.

Prayer

Before you begin the study, consider making this prayer your own (this prayer was taken from The Valley of Vision A Collection of Puritan Prayers and Devotions).

O Lord, I bless thee that the issue of the battle between thyself and Satan has never been uncertain and will end in victory. Calvary broke the dragon’s head, and I contend with a vanquished foe, who with all his subtlety and strength has already been overcome. When I feel the serpent at my heel may I remember Him whose heel was bruised, but who, when bruised, broke the devil’s head.

My soul with inward joy extols the mighty conqueror. Heal me of any wounds received in this great conflict; if I have gathered defilement, if my faith has suffered damage, if my hope is less than bright, if my love is not fervent, if some creature-comfort occupies my heart, if my soul sinks under pressure of the fight. O thou whose every promise is balm, every touch life, draw near to thy weary warrior, refresh me, that I may rise again to wage the strife, and never tire until my enemy is trodden down.

Give me such fellowship with thee that I may defy Satan, unbelief, the flesh, the world, with delight that comes not from a creature, and which a creature cannot mar. Give me a draught of the eternal fountain that lieth in thy immutable, everlasting love and decree. Then shall my hand never weaken, my feet never stumble, my sword never rest, my shield never rust, my helmet never shatter, my breastplate never fall, as my strength rests in the power of thy might.

Scripture

Ephesians 6:10-12 (ESV)

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

Handling the Word

1. Read the book of Ephesians and make note as to why you think Paul sums up his letter with, ‘finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might’ (v. 10). In other words, why do we need strength as saints (Ch. 4-6) and why must our strength come from God and not ourselves (Ch. 1-3)?

2. Let’s break down the passage:
 - Where is the saint to draw strength for the battle that is the Christian life (v. 10)?

 - In Christ, what has God given His people that they might stand against the plans of Satan (v. 11)?

 - What, or whom, lies behind our conflicts, struggles, and temptations that we have with others or in this world (v. 12)?

Understanding and Applying

1. In Paul calling us to ‘put on the whole armor of God’ we recognize that though the victory has been won (Col. 2:15), in this life the Christian is at war (v. 11). Why might we find it difficult to recognize that we are constantly at war and thus need God’s armor daily? Given the type of armor we are to put on and given who it is from (refer to the quote at the bottom of the study detailing the armor of God), why should we not fear the battles ahead?

2. The armor of God is required that we might ‘stand against the schemes of the devil’ (v. 11). By using the word ‘scheme’ Paul is suggesting that Satan is subtle and strategic. Therefore, “mundane life, not just mountaintop experience, is the sphere in which Satan appears” (Ferguson). How might Satan use ordinary life—service or leisure, home or work, monotony or change, peace or trials—to cleverly lead us into compromise and sin? Is there an area of your life where Satan might be slowly drawing your desires away from the truth, God’s people, or your responsibilities as a saint?

3. John Stott says that “a thorough knowledge of the enemy and a healthy respect for his prowess are a necessary preliminary to victory in war.” In your own words, describe Satan, his work, his tactics, and the extent of his efforts (Luke 22:31-32; 2 Cor. 11:14-15; Eph. 6:11-12; 1 Tim. 4:1; 1 Pet. 5:8; 1 Jn. 5:19).

4. It is worth mentioning that Paul calls *all* the saints at Ephesus to be strong and put on the whole armor of God (vv. 10-11). Though the saint enters into battle, we are not called to enter it alone. Have there been relationships at LG that have helped you resist or overcome the schemes of Satan? Please share. Are there areas of your life where you are trying to stand against Satan on your own and if so, why, and what might need to change?

5. In response to verse 12, John Stott remarks, “Does God intend his reconciled and redeemed people to live together in harmony and purity? Then the powers of hell will scatter among them the seeds of discord and sin.” Why do we need to be aware that spiritual forces *will* work towards discord and sin in our church and home? What weakness or desire of yours might Satan attempt to capitalize on in order to sow discord or sin in your church or home?

6. Rather than against flesh and blood, we wrestle ‘against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places’ (v. 12). Why do we need to be aware that our wrestling is not against man (fellow believers, family, co-workers, politicians, etc.) but against spiritual forces?

7. In reference to rulers, authorities, powers, and forces James M. Boice states, “the distinction is not between supposed levels of demonic authority but rather between the various areas of life over which they exert an evil influence.” For example, do you think the way our culture views pleasure, family, work, leisure, or even retirement is being manipulated by spiritual forces and thus, is inconsistent with truth? Have you been negatively influenced by the way our culture views any of these things?

8. Though battles lie ahead, in the end we will triumph over the schemes of Satan ‘by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of our testimony’ (Rev. 12:11). How does our text guide your prayers over your life and direct your praise towards God?

“I am sure even at this point that you can see that everything that is given to us to make our victory possible is from Christ. Is it truth (v. 14)? He is the truth; He is the one who said, “I am the way and the truth and the life (John 14:6) ...Is it righteousness (v. 14)? He is our righteousness. Paul writes, “Christ...has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness, and redemption” (1 Cor. 1:30). Is it the gospel (v. 15)? The gospel is the gospel of Christ (Mark 1:1). Is it faith (v. 16)? It is faith in Him (Gal. 2:20). Salvation (v. 17)? Christ is our salvation; He achieved it by his death on the cross (Acts 4:10-12). Even prayer is by the channel that He has opened up for us (Heb. 10:19-20).”

-James M. Boice