

Ephesians 6:10-20
Week 4

Introduction

- I. Theme of Ephesians: “Worthy of the calling”
 - A. Chapters 1-3: our calling in Christ, who we are in Christ
 - B. Chapters 4-6: walk worthy of the calling, living in light of who we are in Christ

- II. Theme of Eph 6:10-20: “Stand firm” in this spiritual battle by putting on the armor of God

The Passage

- I. The Helmet of Salvation (v. 17)
 - A. This helmet is only for those who have come to terms with their sin and placed their faith in Jesus Christ
 - B. We have the assurance of our salvation because salvation is God’s work and he will not fail in his work (see Phil 1:6, John 10:28).
 - 1. When you put on a helmet you feel safe, indestructible
 - 2. As God’s people we are safe and protected. No matter what Satan throws at us, and even if we lose small battles along the way, our salvation is safe and we are ultimately secure

- II. The Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God (v. 17)
 - A. There’s a close connection between the Holy Spirit and the Word of God
 - 1. The Holy Spirit originally inspired the Word of God, so that he is the author (see 2 Pt 1:21)
 - 2. The Holy Spirit now empowers the Word of God so that it bears fruit in our lives (see Hb 4:12)So, the Word of God is both “Spirit inspired” and “Spirit empowered”
 - B. We use this weapon by speaking God’s Word into a situation/trial
 - 1. See Jesus’ example in Matthew 4:1-10
In every temptation, he spoke the Word of God into the situation and drew strength and guidance from that
 - 2. Examples of how can we follow his example today
 - a. When tempted to look at something we shouldn’t we can speak God’s Word into the situation: “whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, think about such things.”
 - b. When tempted to resent our spouse, we can speak God’s Word: “love is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs”
 - c. When in the midst of a difficult trial, we can speak God’s Word: “Consider it all joy when you face trials of every kind because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.”
 - C. How can we develop a lifelong habit of meditating on God’s Word so that we can access it in the time of trial?
 - 1. It’s a lifelong process, but all we have to do is take little baby steps each day
 - 2. Daily Bible reading, Bible on CD, podcasts, worship songs, etc

III. Prayer (v. 18)

A. The Mentality of prayer:

1. "Be alert" = keep watch
2. We are to have a wartime mentality when it comes to prayer

B. The Spirit of prayer

1. "Pray in the Spirit"
2. Just as the Spirit inspires and empowers the Word, he also inspires and empowers our prayers (see Romans 8:26-27)
3. How can we practically pray in the Spirit?
 - a. Pray in dependence. Before we pray, stop and ask God to help us even in our praying.
 - b. Pray in connection with God's Word. Read the Word and the pray in light of what we read in the Word

C. The "Allness" of Prayer

1. Pray on all occasions
Prayer is not to be an occasional thing we do, but something we do all the time (at home, in the car, at work, etc)
2. Pray with all kinds of prayers and requests
There's a freedom to bring to God any kind of request. We can come to him with whatever is on our heart and ask for what we want. We don't have to be worried about always praying just the right prayer.
3. Always keep on praying
 - a. The word means "to persist obstinately in"
 - b. Jesus consistently encourages us to pray with perseverance
 - Keep Asking, keep seeking, keep knocking (Mt 7:7)
 - Woman who keeps asking a judge for justice (Lk 18)
 - Person who keeps knocking on his friend's door (Lk 11)
 - c. God in his sovereign wisdom has chosen to use our prayers as the very thing that moves his heart to respond and act in history, so that our prayers really do matter. And if we hadn't prayed, things would have been different.
 - d. Oswald Sanders: "The very fact that God lays a burden of prayer on our hearts and keeps us praying may itself be evidence that He intends to grant the answer."
4. All the saints
We are in this spiritual battle together, and we need each other's prayers

Conclusion

Do you have a wartime mentality or a peacetime mentality?

In peace time, the Word and Prayer don't make much sense (they don't always bring immediate gratification, and they don't always feel very productive), but in wartime, they are essential to life and protection.

Discussion Questions

1. Opening questions: What struck you most about the sermon/the passage? What surprised you? What confused you? What did you disagree with?
2. How have you developed a lifelong habit of meditating on God's Word? What specifically have been the most helpful practical ways for you to do that given your wiring and schedule?
3. What has been the greatest blessing for you in prayer, and what has been the greatest challenge?
4. The interplay between God's sovereignty and prayer was briefly mentioned on Sunday (see p. 2 of outline, section III, C, 3, c). How do you reconcile the idea that God is sovereignly working out his plan with the idea that our prayers really do matter and they really can have an impact?
5. As you think back over our series through Ephesians, what will you remember most? How has God spoken to you, and what do you want to hold onto in the coming months?