

LESSON 29: EPHESIANS 6:10-24
JULY 12, 2017

OVERVIEW

- . Training for battle – Ephesians 6:10-11
- . Identifying the enemy – Ephesians 6:11-12
- . Using the armor – Ephesians 6:13-20

TRAINING FOR BATTLE – EPHESIANS 6:10-11

- . After talking about how we are to put our faith in to practice, Paul ends his letter with a call to arms
 - . Paul reminds us we are engaged in warfare against an invisible but powerful and persuasive adversary
 - . Some Christians do not like to think of themselves as engaged in any kind of warfare
 - . Others think all they have to do is turn their struggles over the God
 - . Scripture very clearly articulates that the forces of evil are out there, working actively to oppose God and wanting badly to have you in its grasp
- . Empowered by God, we are to fight resolutely the forces arrayed against us
 - . Because these forces are arrayed against God, they don't have our best interests at heart
- . This battle requires strength beyond our own
 - . Apart from God, we do not have the strength alone to defeat this enemy
 - . Through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, God has given us a power greater than the power of evil and with it, the ability to defeat evil
 - . Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power – Ephesians 6:10
 - . Prepare your minds for action – 1 Peter 1:13
 - . Be men of courage, be strong – 1 Corinthians 16:13
 - . There must be a determination to win that has its source in the full assurance that victory is possible
 - . Our heartfelt desire to align ourselves with the will of God is the first critical step, yet without our willingness to strengthen the body and mind, the battle will be futile
- . The Lord Jesus Christ in human flesh, by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, met God's enemy and ours and bore the full force of the conflict and won
 - . God affirmed by Christ's resurrection and ascension that he defeated the enemy at the cross

IDENTIFYING THE ENEMY - EPHESIANS 6:11-12

- . The devil – Ephesians 6:11
 - . The devil's origin is not explicitly stated in scripture
 - . Jesus said that he saw Satan fall like lightening from heaven – Luke 10:18
 - . Scripture infers that Satan fell under God's condemnation because of his ambition and evil pride – 1 Timothy 3:6
 - . Some scholars believe that Isaiah 14:12-14 and Ezekiel 28:12-15, although strictly addressed to kings of Tyre and Babylon, must apply to more than mere earthly kings and instead contain a revelation of Satan's origin
 - . According to these passages, the devil was raised by God to a place of supreme power in the universe among angelic beings
 - . Then his pride led him to exalt himself against God
 - . The result was that he was banished from the presence of God and drew with him in his fall a vast number of other spiritual beings called demons
- . The devil's domain
 - . God mysteriously allows Satan to continue to rule what scripture calls the kingdom of darkness, which is directly opposed to God's kingdom
 - . Satan exercises his evil authority in two different realms
 - . He is the head of a myriad of fallen spirits called his angels, demons, or evil spirits – Matthew 12:28, 25:41, Mark 1:34, Luke 4:36
 - . As a ruler of the kingdom of air (Ephesians 2:2), he skillfully directs these wicked beings worldwide
 - . He also exercises a powerful dominion over all lost humanity that are "under his power" – Acts 26:18
 - . "The whole world is under the control of the evil one"
- . The devil's purpose
 - . Satan wages an age-long worldwide war against God, God's purposes and God's people
 - . He is in open rebellion to God's person and God's laws
 - . He must have an implacable hatred against God and against all goodness
- . The devil's strategy is to seduce people by causing them to doubt God's love for them, the goodness of His will for them, and to incite rebellion against God
 - . He exercises influence in the realm of ideas, values and morality
 - . Deception is one of Satan's greatest tools
 - . He is the father of lies – John 8:44
 - . He transforms himself into an angel of light presenting false religious leaders as messengers of truth – 2 Corinthians 11:13-15
 - . His deceptions can be blinding causing people to not even see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ – 2 Corinthians 4:3-4

- . It is important to understand the devil's limitations
 - . Christ defeated him on the cross
 - . When God took away the hedge of protection, allowing Jesus to be fully human and giving Satan full power to tempt him, Jesus remained strong, powered by the Holy Spirit and broke the human bondage to sin
 - . That is what it means to say that Christ defeated Satan on the cross
 - . As believers in Christ, recipients of the Holy Spirit and members of the body of Christ, we too now have power over the sin in us
 - . God is supreme and in His timing will defeat and put to rest for all times, Satan and all of his evil spirits and demons

USING THE ARMOR - EPHESIANS 6:13-20

- . God wants us to recognize that the battle is being waged and we are in the midst of it, whether we choose to believe it or not
 - . However the fight is not to be in our own strength but the Lord's
 - . We can only adequately resist the devil after we have submitted ourselves to God
- . The first five pieces of armor that Paul talks about are protective in nature and meant to protect us against the forces of our enemy
 - . **The belt of truth**
 - . The belt holds everything in place
 - . The truth here implies the true doctrine
 - . "I am the truth - no one comes to the Father except through me"
 - . Without the truth that is found in scripture, one is powerless against Satan
 - . The truth alone will set you free - John 8:32
 - . Truth here also means one's truth before God
 - . If we have sinned, do not cover it up, but name it, confess it, take God's cleansing of it and meet the enemy as a person open before God
 - . **The breastplate of righteousness**
 - . The breastplate covers the heart, both physically and emotionally
 - . Righteousness might apply to the righteousness of Christ that has been transferred to a believers account, when one surrenders his life to Christ
 - . We are also called to live by the power of His imparted righteousness that protects our heart, giving us life
 - . It means putting on His right motives in place of devious ones when tempted
 - . **Feet fitted with the readiness of the gospel of peace**
 - . The soldier's feet must be equipped for movement, for long marches, for sudden attack

- . This implies readiness for sudden movement
- . The opposite is to be stuck in a rut where we are easily attacked
- . **The shield of faith**
 - . The shield here implies the large body shield used by Roman legions as they advanced in to battle
 - . Our faith should leave no part of us exposed to attack
 - . It also should be joined with others to give us a great wall of defense
 - . Finally it should deflect fiery arrows fired at us by the enemy
- . **The helmet of salvation**
 - . The security of the mind is all-important
 - . We may have momentary setbacks in our Christian lives but we must remain confident that the final glorious triumph of our king and commander is certain
 - . Those who choose to go into battle everyday with the ultimate victor can rest assured that they will be saved from Satan's power and saved from the wrath to come
- . The sixth weapon is designed to go after the enemy and defeat the enemy
 - . **The sword of the Spirit**
 - . The Spirit brings to the believers mind the Word of God and the truth embedded in it to fend off the enemy
 - . The Spirit not only warns us but gives us clarity through our knowledge of scripture
 - . A weapon is only useful if we know how to use it
 - . The Spirit allows us to go on the offensive and not have to wait to be attacked
 - . The Spirit will give us to boldness to proclaim God's truths
- . The final offensive weapon talked about is prayer

NEXT LESSON: JULY 26, 2017 - JAMES 1-2

**** THE STUDY ON ROLAND'S BOOK WILL BE NEXT WEEK, JULY 19. I WILL LEAD THE BIBLE STUDY ON JULY 26. WE WILL DO ROLAND'S STUDY THE FOLLOWING TWO WEEKS, AUGUST 2 AND AUGUST 9. MY STUDY WILL BE ON AUGUST 16 WHEN WE RESUME THE NORMAL STUDY SCHEDULE. THANKS FOR YOUR WILLINGNESS TO BE FLEXIBLE.**