

Christ-Centered

Reformed-Foundation

Bible-Based

*"All Scripture is
inspired by God
and is profitable for*

CROSS

T R A I N I N G

3

- 2 Timothy 3:16

Spiritual Warfare - Leader's Edition

Cross TRAINING

Course 3. Spiritual Warfare

Leader's Guide

Teacher's Name:

N a m e

*Dedicated to our dear friends Chris and Leigh Ledlow,
for whom spiritual warfare has been not just an interesting
Bible Study, but a daily experience.*

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written & compiled by Pastor Stephen Hildebrandt
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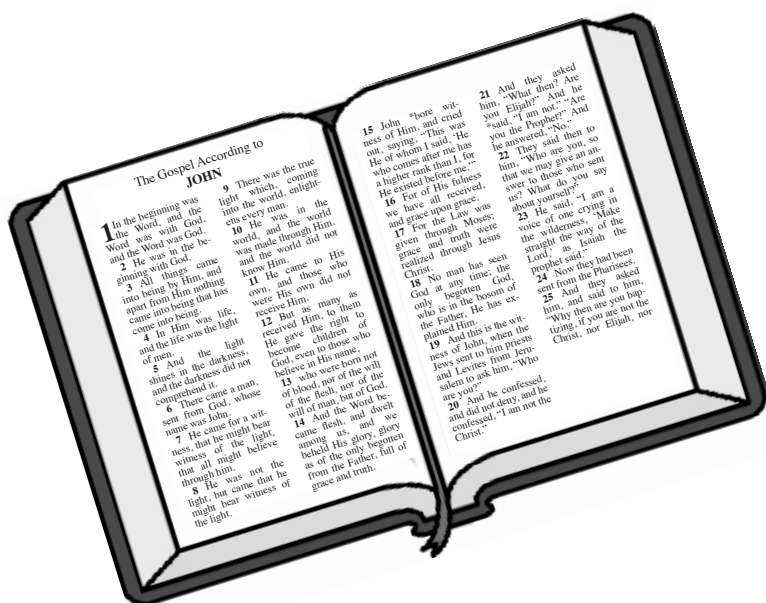
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THE CROSS TRAINING SERIES

CROSS TRAINING 1. DOCTRINE & THEOLOGY

CROSS TRAINING 2. CHRISTIAN LIVING

CROSS TRAINING 3. SPIRITUAL WARFARE



CHRIST-CENTERED STUDIES RESTING WHOLLY
UPON THE INSPIRED AND INERRANT WORD OF
GOD AS THE ONLY INFALLIBLE RULE FOR FAITH
AND PRACTICE.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

All men ought to love peace. War is an immense evil, though it is a necessary evil sometimes. Battles are bloody and distressing events, though sometimes nations cannot maintain their rights without them. But all men ought to love peace. All ought to pray for a quiet life. All this is very true, and yet there is one war which it is a positive duty to carry on; there is one battle which we ought to be always fighting. The battle I speak of is the battle against the world, the flesh, and the devil. With these enemies we never ought to be at peace; from this warfare no man ought ever to seek to be discharged, while he is alive. ... Every professing Christian is the soldier of Christ. He is bound by his baptism to fight Christ's battle against sin, the world, and the devil. The man that does not do this, breaks his vow ... The man that does not do this, is practically renouncing his Christianity. The very fact that he belongs to a Church, attends a Christian place of worship, and calls himself a Christian, is a public declaration that he desires to be reckoned a soldier of Jesus Christ.¹

*John
Charles
Ryle*



1816-1900

*English
pastor &
author*

1 ||

ALLIES

God, the Angels & the Church

A.	God, The Almighty	1
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God, The Almighty.

① In His Word, God is called a Warrior .

- Exodus 15:3-7 - (After the destruction of Pharaoh's army) "The Lord is a WARRIOR ... Thy right hand, O Lord, shatters the enemy. And in the greatness of Thine excellence Thou dost overthrow those who rise up against Thee; Thou dost send forth Thy burning anger, and it consumes them as chaff."
- Isaiah 42:13 - "The Lord will go forth like a WARRIOR, He will arouse His zeal like a MAN OF WAR."
- Zephaniah 3:17 - "The Lord your God is in your midst, a VICTORIOUS WARRIOR."

② He is also called a Dread Champion .

- Jeremiah 20:11 - "But the Lord is with me like a DREAD CHAMPION; therefore my persecutors will stumble and not prevail."
- Nahum 1:2 - "A jealous and avenging God is the Lord; The Lord is avenging and wrathful. The Lord takes vengeance on His adversaries, and He reserves wrath for His enemies."

③ God the Son is the Commander of a vast angelic army.

- Joshua 5:13-15 - (*Before the destruction of Jericho*) "Now it came about when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man was standing opposite him with His SWORD DRAWN in His hand, and Joshua went to Him and said to Him, 'Are you for us or for our adversaries?' And He said, 'No, rather I indeed come now as CAPTAIN OF THE HOST OF THE LORD.' And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and bowed down"

His Sword is Drawn

“Christ’s sword drawn in His hand [in Joshua 5] denotes how ready He is for the defense and salvation of His people, who through Him shall do valiantly.” ²

Matthew Henry (1834-1892)



Stop & Think

☼ The Book of Isaiah describes the Lord as the “Prince of Peace” (9:6) and a “Man of War” (42:13). How can He be both?

*He offers love, joy & peace to
those who surrender and receive
Him (Rom. 5:1), but judgment and
wrath to His enemies
(Nahum 1:2).*

The Divine Warrior

“Christ is the divine warrior ...
the holy warrior, who judges with justice
... the head of a holy army” ³

Dr. Vern Poythress (1946-Present)



4 God is Omnipotent - all powerful .

- Genesis 17:1 - "I am God Almighty" (58x)
- Romans 8:31 - "If God is for us, who can stand against us?"
- 1 John 4:4 - "greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world."

Therefore He is mighty in battle .

- Psalms 24:8 - "Who is the King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord MIGHTY IN BATTLE."
- 1 Samuel 17: 45-47 - (Before the destruction of the Philistine's army) "Then David said to [Goliath], 'You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have taunted. This day the Lord will deliver you up into my hands ... that all this assembly may know that the Lord does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the BATTLE is the Lord's'"
- 2 Chron. 20:15 - (Before the destruction of the armies of Moab and Ammon) "Thus says the Lord to you, 'Do not fear or be dismayed because of this great multitude, for the BATTLE is not yours but God's.'"
 - Proverbs 21:31 - "The horse is prepared for the day of BATTLE, but victory belongs to the Lord."

5 God is Omniscient - all knowing .

- Psalms 147:5 - "Great is our Lord ... His understanding is infinite."

Therefore He knows the enemy's plans .

- 2 Kings 6:8-12 - "Now the king of Aram was warring against Israel; and he counseled with his servants saying, 'In such and such a place shall be my camp.' The man of God [Elisha] sent word to the king of Israel saying, 'Beware that you do not pass this place, for the Arameans are coming down there.' The king of Israel sent to the place about which the man of God had told him; thus he warned him, so that he guarded himself there, more than once or twice. Now the heart of the king of Aram was enraged over this thing; and he called his servants and said to them, 'Will you tell me which of us is for the king of Israel?' One of his servants said, 'No, my lord, O king; but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom.'"

6 God is Omnipresent - everywhere .

- Psalms 46:1 - "God is a very present help in times of trouble"
- Psalms 73:28 - "But as for me, the nearness of God is my good"

Power Belongs to God

“Power belongs to God,’ (Psa. 62:11) and to Him alone. Not a creature in the entire universe has an atom of power save what God delegates. But God’s power is not acquired ... It belongs to Him inherently.⁴

Arthur W. Pink (1886-1952)



Stop & Think

☼ What attribute of God do Psalm 46:1 and Jeremiah 20:11 speak of that should comfort the believer in the heat of the battle.

God's Omnipresence

Psa. 46:1 - a very PRESENT help

*Jer. 20:11 - God is WITH ME like
a dread champion.*

Infinite Wisdom & Power

“The cause of God is never in danger: infernal craft is outwitted by infinite wisdom, and Satanic malice held in check by boundless power.”⁵

Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892)



“IN RIGHTEOUSNESS HE JUDGES
AND WAGES WAR”

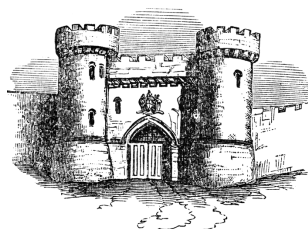


**Who is this
Warrior?**

Christ!

REVELATION 19:11-16

- 11 And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war.
- 12 And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself.
- 13 And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God.
- 14 And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.
- 15 And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.
- 16 And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, “King of kings and Lord of lords.”



A Mighty Fortress

A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;
Our Helper He amid the flood, of mortal ills prevailing.

For still our ancient foe, doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great, and armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.

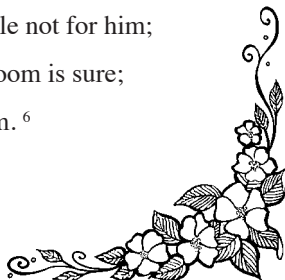
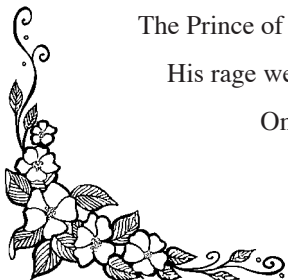
Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing,
Were not the right Man on our side, the Man of God's own choosing.

Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is He;
Lord Sabaoth, His name, from age to age the same,
And He must win the battle.

And though this world with devils filled, should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear for God hath willed, His truth to triumph through us.

The Prince of Darkness grim, we tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure, for lo, his doom is sure;
One little word shall fell him. ⁶

Martin Luther
1528





The Hosts of Heaven, Angelic Armies.

*"I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels
around the throne ... and the number of them was
myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands"*

Revelation 5:11



1 Angels are created beings, made by Christ during the six days of creation.

- Exodus 20:11 – "For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them..." (cf. Gen. 2:1)
- Nehemiah 9:6 – "Thou alone art the Lord. Thou hast made the heavens, the heaven of heavens with all their host"
- Job 38:4,7 – "when I laid the foundation of the earth ... the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" ◀ Created 1st day?
- Psalms 148:2,5 – "Praise Him, all His angels ... For He commanded and they were created."
- Colossians 1:16 – "For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities..."

2 There is a hierarchy of angels.

- Myriads - Deut. 33:2; Psalms 68:17; Dan. 7:9-10; Heb. 12:22
 - Cherubim - Gen. 1:24; Ezekiel 1; Rev. 4
 - Seraphim - Isaiah 6:1-6
 - Archangels - 1 Thess. 4:16
- Michael - Dan. 10:13 (called "one of the chief princes"), Jude 9; Rev. 12:7
Gabriel - Dan. 8:16; 9:21; Lk. 1:19, 26

3 There are twice as many angels as demons.

- Revelation 12:3-4 – "And another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon ... And his tail swept away a third of the [angels] of heaven, and threw them to the earth."

Organized Ranks

“[There are] ranks of angels in the invisible army. And the invisible army is organized. I’m telling you, that army is super-organized. It’s all cataloged and ranked. They were made by God. It says right there [Col. 1:16] they were created by the Lord Jesus Christ.” ⁷

John MacArthur (1939-Present)



Stop & Think



Definition: Archangel

arch - chief

Implication:

There is an angelic hierarchy

Servants of God

“Scripture, describes angels as servants of the Creator and His people (Heb. 1:13–14) ... They are powerful creatures tasked with glorifying God and fighting on His behalf against all His enemies.” ⁸

R. C. Sproul (1939-Present)



4 They are a mighty army under Christ's command.



- Josh. 5:13-14 - “behold, a Man was standing opposite [Joshua] with His sword drawn in His hand... And he said, ‘I come now as Captain of the host of the Lord.’” (“Lord of hosts” (OT, 229x), “Lord Sabaoth” (NT, 2x))
- Matt. 26:52-53 - “Then Jesus said to [Peter] ... ‘do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels?’”
- Psalm 103:20 - “Bless the Lord, you His angels, mighty in strength, who perform His word, obeying the voice of His word!”

5 They protect believers. (cf. Gen. 19; Acts 12:1-11)

- 2 Kings 6:15-17 - “Now when the attendant of the man of God had risen early and gone out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was circling the city. And his servant said to him, ‘Alas, my master! What shall we do?’ So he answered, ‘Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.’ Then Elisha prayed and said, ‘O Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see.’ And the Lord opened the servant’s eyes and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.” cf. Psalm 34:7
- Psalm 34:7 - “The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him, and rescues them.”
- Psalm 91:11 - “For He will give His angels charge over you, to guard you in all your ways.”
- Matthew 18:10 - “See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you, that their angels in heaven continually behold the face of My Father who is in heaven.”
- Hebrews 1:14 - “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?”

6 They fight battles in the spiritual realm.

- Daniel 10:11-13 - Michael fought the [spiritual] prince (demon) of Persia.
- Revelation 12:7-9 - “there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. And the dragon and his angels waged war ... And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan ... and his angels were thrown down with him.”
- Revelation 20:1-2 - “Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years”

Angelic Armies

“Do you ever forget that God has an army? ... It would be foolish to ignore the reality that God has legions of angels at His command.”⁹

F. B. Meyer (1847-1929)



Stop & Think

☼ Summarize below five attributes of angels:

Made by God

(Psa. 148:2, 5)

Mighty in Strength

(Psa. 103:20)

Myriads in Number

(Rev. 5:11)

Ministering Spirits

(Heb. 1:14)

Majority: 2 to 1

(Rev. 12:3-4)

Guardian Angels

“‘For he shall give His angels charge over thee’ (Psalm 91:11). It is down in the marching orders of the hosts of heaven that they take special note of the people who dwell in God.”¹⁰

Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892)





The Church, Your Spiritual HQ.



Four Purposes of the Church With Respect to Spiritual Warfare:



1 Defending the Truth

- 1 Timothy 3:15 – “I write so that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the *pillar and support of the truth*.”



2 Equipping the Troops

- Ephesians 4:11-12 – “He gave some as ...pastors and teachers, for the *equipping* of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ”
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17 - “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, *equipped* for every good work.”



3 Caring for the Wounded

- 1 Thessalonians 5:14 - “We urge you, brethren ... encourage the fainthearted, help the weak”
- Galatians 6:1 - “Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness...”



4 Advancing of the Gospel

- Matthew 16:18 - “upon this rock [confession of faith] I will build My church; and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.”

Choose Wisely

“Don’t go where it is all fine music and grand talk and beautiful architecture ... Go where the gospel is preached, the gospel that really feeds your soul, and go often.”⁻¹¹

Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-1892)



Stop & Think

☼ Five personal benefits of belonging to a local church that help in spiritual warfare:

1. Sword fighting lessons .
(Ephesians 4:11-12; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)
2. Sharing war stories .
(Proverbs 27:17; Galatians 6:1)
3. Spiritual accountability .
(1 Peter 5:8-9; Romans 12:15)
4. Supporting services .
(1 Peter 4:10; Romans 12:4-5)
5. Strength in numbers .
(Matthew 18:20; Ecclesiastes 4:9-10)

A Place to Grow

“The church is the gathering of God’s children, where they can be helped and fed like babies and then, guided by her motherly care, grow up to manhood in maturity of faith.”⁻¹²

John Calvin (1509-1564)



Lesson 1 Review

1. Who is the Commander of the host of the Lord in Joshua 5:13-15, and who are the hosts?

*Jesus Christ is the Commander,
& the host are the angels.*

2. How can Christ be both the “Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6) and a “Man of War”? (Isaiah 42:13)

*He offers peace to those who receive
Him, but war to those who do not.*

3. What are the three “omni” attributes of God that should comfort the believer with respect to spiritual warfare?

*Omnipotence - He is all powerful.
Omniscience - He is all knowing.
Omnipresence - He is everywhere.*

4. What fraction of angels did not fall and became demons? (Revelation 12:3-4)

Two-thirds of myriads of myriads.

5. What are the angels’ responsibility toward believers? (Hebrews 1:14)

*They are ministering spirits sent out
to render service to those who will
inherit salvation.*

6. How can the local church help its members with respect to spiritual warfare? (Eph. 4:12)

*By equipping them for battle with the
Word of God.*

Zephaniah 3:17**Spiritual Warfare****The Lord**

“The Lord your God is in your midst,
a victorious Warrior.”

Lesson 1**Allies****Hebrews 1:14****Spiritual Warfare****The Angels**

“Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to
render service for the sake of those who will
inherit salvation?”

Lesson 1**Allies****Matthew 16:18****Spiritual Warfare****The Church**

“upon this rock [confession of faith] I will build
My church; and the gates of hell will not prevail
against it.”

Lesson 1**Allies**

2 || ADVERSARIES

The World, The Flesh & The Devil

A.	The World, Babylon the Great	15
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A The World, Babylon the Great.

1 The Love God Hates.

- 1 John 2:15 - “Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”
- Romans 12:2 - “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...”
- James 4:4 - “You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”

2 The “World” Christians Cannot Love.



Planet
Earth

Genesis 1:1, 31 - “In the beginning God created the heavens and the EARTH. ... God saw all that He had made, and it was very GOOD.”



Mankind

John 3:16 - “God so LOVED the WORLD, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.”



Babylon

1 John 2:15 - “DO NOT LOVE THE WORLD nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

Babylon the Great



Revelation 17

- 1 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I shall show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters,
- 2 with whom the kings of the earth committed acts of immorality, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality."
- 3 And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns.
- 4 And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality,
- 5 and upon her forehead a name was written, a mystery, "Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots, and of the abominations of the earth."
- 6 And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints...

Interpretation

*Babylon = The world system of
immoral government, commerce,
philosophy & man-made religion.*

3 We Overcome The World By:

A. *Faith in Jesus Christ*

- 1 John 5:4-5 - "For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world -- our faith. And who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?"
- 1 John 4:4 - "You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world."
- Hebrews 2:18 - "For since Christ Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted."

B. *Prayer for Help*

- Matthew 26:41 - "Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

C. *Separating Ourselves*

- 2 Corinthians 6:14-17 - "Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, 'I will dwell in them and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate,' says the Lord. 'And do not touch what is unclean; and I will welcome you.'" cf. Rev. 18:4
- 1 Corinthians 15:33 - "Do not be deceived, bad company corrupts good morals."

D. *Renewing Our Minds*

- Romans 12:2 - "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind..."

E. *Spiritual Accountability*

- Proverbs 27:17 - "Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another."
- Galatians 6:1-2 - "Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ."

Stop & Think

☀ Romans 12:2 tells Christians to overcome the temptation to conform to this world by the renewing of their minds. How is this accomplished?

Through meditation:

- *Eastern: clear your mind*
- *Christian: fill your mind with God's Word.*

Renewing Effect of Word:

- *Psalm 119:11 - "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee."*

Guarding Against Temptation

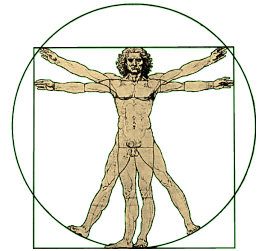
"Temptations that have been anticipated, guarded against, and prayed about have little power to harm us. Jesus tells us to 'keep watching and praying, that you may not come into temptation' (Mark 14:38). Victory over temptation comes from being constantly prepared for it, which, in turn, comes from constantly relying on the Lord." ¹³

John MacArthur (1939-Present)





The Flesh, The Enemy Within.



1 War With the Flesh.

- James 1:14-15 - “But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.”
- Galatians 5:17 - “For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.”
- Romans 7:18-19 - “For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want.”
- 1 Peter 2:11 - “Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.”
- Genesis 4:7 - “If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.”

2 What Are You Feeding?

- Galatians 6:8 - “For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.”



A missionary to the American Indians, who had led the chief of one tribe to Christ, later visited to check on his growth. The chief said, “I have two dogs living in my body who are always fighting.” To this the missionary asked, “Which dog is winning?” The old chief answered, “The dog I feed the most is always the dog that wins.” ¹⁴

Harder To Say “No”

“Every time we say yes to temptation, we make it harder to say no the next time.” ¹⁵

Jerry Bridges (1929-Present)



Stop & Think

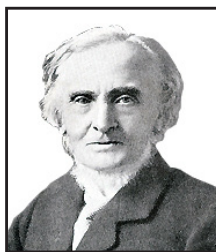
☼ If the Christian is a new creation in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17), why is there a war raging within him? (1 Peter 2:11)

- *Justification makes us positionally righteous at the point of conversion.*
- *Sanctification is our lifelong fight of faith to make our practice match our position*

Temptation's Momentum

“The temptation once yielded to gains power. The crack in the embankment which lets a drop or two ooze through is soon a hole which lets out a flood.” ¹⁶

*Alexander Maclaren
(1826-1910)*



3 We Overcome The Flesh By:

A. *Walking in the Spirit* _____ .

- Romans 8:13 - “for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”
- Galatians 5:16 - “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.”
- Galatians 5:25 - “If we live by the Spirit (regeneration), let us also walk by the Spirit (sanctification).”

B. *Fearing God* _____ .

- 2 Corinthians 7:1 - “Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

C. *Crucifying the flesh* _____ .

- Galatians 5:24 - “Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.” (cf. Gal. 2:20)
- Galatians 2:20 - “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.”
- Romans 8:13 - “for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”
- Romans 6:6 - “knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin”
- Romans 6:11 - “Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.”
- Colossians 3:5 - “Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.” (NIV)
- 1 Corinthians 15:31 - “I die daily”

The Holy Spirit

“‘Walking by the Spirit’ and ‘being led by the Spirit’ refer to the same thing. ‘Being led by the Spirit’ stresses the Spirit’s initiative and enablement. ‘Walking by the Spirit’ stresses our resulting behavior. The Spirit leads us by creating desires to obey God, and we walk by fulfilling those desires in action.”¹⁷

John Piper (1946-Present)



Stop & Think

☼ What does it mean to crucify the flesh?

- (1) *Deny self (cf. Mt. 16:24).*
- (2) *Die to fleshly desires.*
- (3) *Tell yourself "No" sometimes.*

☼ What does it mean to walk in the Spirit?

- (1) *Daily confession & repentance.*
- (2) *No unconfessed sin.*
- (3) *Submission to God's will.*
- (4) *Prayer, Bible study, etc.*

Mortify the Flesh

“Do you mortify [the flesh]? Do you make it your daily work? Be always at it whilst you live; cease not a day from this work; be killing sin or it will be killing you.”¹⁸

John Owen (1616-1683)



③ We Overcome The Flesh By: (Cont'd)

D. *Making no provision for the flesh* .

- Romans 13:14 - "But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts."

E. *Capturing our thoughts* .

- 2 Corinthians 10:5 - "We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ"

F. *Taking the way out.* .

- 1 Corinthians 10:13 - "No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it."
- 2 Timothy 2:22 - "Now flee from youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart." cf. Joseph (Gen. 39:7-15)

G. *Praying for help.* .

- Matthew 6:13 - "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."

"Temptation usually comes
in through a door that has
deliberately been left open." ¹⁹

*Arnold Glasow
(1905-1998)*



Pray For Help

“We must pray constantly for His enabling grace to say no to temptation, of choosing to take all practical steps to avoid known areas of temptation and flee from those that surprise us.” ²⁰

Jerry Bridges (1929-Present)



Stop & Think

☼ What does it mean to “take every thought captive” to the obedience of Christ?

(-) *not dwelling on lustful, anxious, or any other evil thoughts*

(+) *to dwell on godly thoughts (Phil. 4:6-8).*

Read Isaiah 26:3

Pray For Help

“Unwillingness to accept God’s ‘way of escape’ from temptation frightens me – what a rebel yet resides within.” ²¹

Jim Elliot (1927-1956)





The Devil, Prince of Darkness



"Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." - 1 Peter 5:8

1 His Origin.

- Ezekiel 28:13-15 – "You were in Eden, the garden of God ... You were the anointed cherub ... You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, until unrighteousness was found in you."

Satan is a created angel .

2 Reason's for His Fall.

- Ezekiel 28:17 – "Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor."

Vanity - because of his beauty .

- Isaiah 14:12-14 – "How you have fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the dawn! ... you said in your heart, '*I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.*'"

Pride - he wanted to be God .

- Revelation 12:3-4,9 – "Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon ... And his tail swept away a third of the [angels] of heaven and threw them to the earth. ... And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him."

Rebellion - he led an angelic revolt .

3 The name "Devil" means slanderer .

- Job 1:9-11 – "Then Satan answered the Lord, 'Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But put forth Your hand now and touch all that he has; he will surely curse You to Your face.'" (cf. Job 2:4-5)
- Revelation 12:10 – "the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night."

4 The name "Satan" means adversary .

- 1 Peter 5:8 – "Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."

Assessing the Situation

“As in all warfare, the two essential elements in victory are knowing your enemy and knowing your resources.” ²²

Sinclair B. Ferguson (1948-Present)



Stop & Think

✿ What was Satan's accusation in the following passages. Are these accusations true about you?

Job 1:9-11 - *Job won't praise God if he experiences earthly loss.*

Job 2:4-5 - *Job won't praise God if he experiences physical pain.*

God is Sovereign Over Satan

“That God rules over Satan ... tells us that what we suffer from the Devil, his demons, and all evil is not purposeless but will lead to our good and God's glory.” ²³

R. C. Sproul (1939-Present)



5 Satan has schemes .

- Ephesians 6:11-12 - "Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the *schemes* of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places."
- 2 Corinthians 2:11 - "in order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his *schemes*."

6 Schemes: Doubt & Deception .

- Genesis 3:1, 4 - "And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?" ... And the serpent said to the woman, "You surely shall not die!"
- John 8:44 - "He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature; for he is a liar, and the father of lies."
- Revelation 12:9 - "And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him."
- 2 Corinthians 4:4 - "the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ"

7 Frontal Attack: As a Roaring Lion .

- 1 Peter 5:8 - "Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."

8 Sneak Attack: As an Angel of Light .

- 2 Corinthians 11:14-15 - "Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness"



"And [the saints] overcame [the dragon] because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death."



Revelation 12:11

Satan Baits the Hook

“Satan, like a fisher, baits his hook according to the appetite of the fish.” ²⁴

Thomas Adams (1583-1653)



Stop & Think

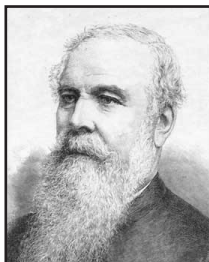
✿ What does Paul mean when he says that we are not ignorant of Satan’s schemes? (2 Cor. 2:11)

(1) *Satan has tactics & strategies*

(2) *After 6000 years of human history we have seen most of his bag of tricks.*

Temptation’s Attractive Wrapping

“We are too apt to forget that temptation to sin will rarely present itself to us in its true colors, saying, “I am your deadly enemy, and I want to ruin you forever in hell.” Oh no! Sin comes to us like Judas, with a kiss; ... The forbidden fruit seemed good and desirable to Eve; yet it cast her out of Eden. Walking idly on his palace roof seemed harmless enough to David; yet it ended in adultery and murder. Sin rarely seems (like) sin at first beginnings. Let us then watch and pray, lest we fall into temptation.” ²⁵



*J. C. Ryle
(1816-1900)*

9 The Devil is powerful, but he is NOT omni potent .

- Revelation 12:7-9 - “And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.”
- Revelation 20:1-3 - “Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him.”
- **Conclusion:** Man $<$ Satan's Power $<$ Some Angels $<$ GOD IS OMNIPOTENT
(Psa. 8:4-5)

10 The Devil is crafty, but he is NOT omni scient .

- Genesis 3:1 - “Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made”
- Job 2:4-5 - “Satan answered the Lord, “... put forth Your hand now, and touch [Job's] bone and his flesh; he will curse You to Your face.” (Job did not, Job 2:9-10).
- **Conclusion:** See the future, \neq Satan has 6000 years of first-hand knowledge of world history $<$ GOD IS OMNISCIENT
thoughts

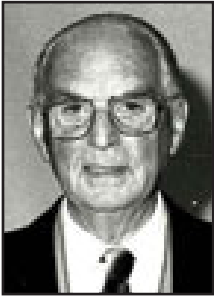
11 The Devil roams about the earth, but he is NOT omni present .

- Job 1:6 - “Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them. The Lord said to Satan, ‘From where do you come?’ Then Satan answered the Lord and said, ‘From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it.’”
- **Conclusion:** Man can be in one place at one time $<$ Satan moves between physical & spiritual realm $<$ GOD IS OMNIPRESENT

Limitations

“Satan’s power is not inherent but permitted (Rom. 13:1). It is not unlimited, but controlled (Job 1:12; 2:6). It is not invincible, but broken (Luke 11:21-11). It is not assured of success, but is surely doomed (Rev. 20:2-3). ...Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world” (1 John 4:4).”²⁶

Oswald Sanders (1902-1992)



Stop & Think

☼ Summarize below three attributes of Satan:

Finite

(Ezek. 28:13-15)

Fallen

(Isa. 14:12-14)

Fatally wounded

(Col. 2:14-15)

Fatally Wounded

“Jesus delivered the fatal blow to the Devil on the cross...though Satan has been mortally wounded, he is still prowling about trying to tear down the church (1 Peter 5:8). Christ has inaugurated His kingdom, but He has not yet consummated it, and the Devil will assault us until that final day.”²⁷

R. C. Sproul (1939-Present)





The Demons, Fallen Angels.

“And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.” - Jude 1:6

1 Demon possession is real.

- Mt. 9:33 - demon-possessed man
- Mt. 17:14-20 - Man with lunatic son
- Mk. 1:21-28; Lk. 4:31-37 - demon-possessed man in synagogue at Capernaum
- Mk. 5:1-13; Lk. 8:26-33 - man with Legion of demons sent into herd of swine
- Mk. 7:26-30 - Syrophoenician woman's demon-possessed daughter
- Mk. 9:17-27 - boy with deaf & dumb spirit

2 No vacancy! Christians already possessed.

- 1 Corinthians 3:16 - “Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?”
- 1 Corinthians 6:19 - “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?”
- cf., Matthew 12:43-45

3 The Holy Spirit & demons can't co-habit.

- 2 Corinthians 6:14-16 - “what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial ... Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God”
- Psalms 5:4 - “For Thou art not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness; no evil dwells with Thee.”
- Mark 5:1-13 - The mere presence of Christ (who indwells the believer) makes the demons flee.

4 Jesus keeps believers safe from cling-ons.

- 1 John 5:18 - “We know that no one who is born of God continues a lifestyle of sin; but He who was born of God keeps him and the evil one does not touch him.” (“touch”, Greek *haptō* - lit. to lay hold of; translated “cling” in Jn. 20:17)

5 There can be no forceful entry into believers.

- 1 John 4:4 - “greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.”

Why Can't the Devil be Redeemed?

C. H. Spurgeon
(1834-1892)



“These angels, that kept not their first estate, but sinned against God, dwelt with their brethren in the courts of the Most High; they seemed to be, as it were, walled round with fire to keep out all evil from them. Their communications were only with perfect spirits like themselves; but yet, as they were undergoing a probation, they were made capable of choosing evil if they willed so to do, or of cleaving to good if their hearts were steadfast with their God. There were none about them to tempt them to evil; they were, on the contrary, surrounded with every good and holy influence: they saw God, and abode in his courts, they conversed with seraphim and cherubim. Their daily engagements were all of a holy order; worship and service were their duty and delight. Their company was select; there were no lapsed classes among them to render the moral atmosphere impure. They were not only in a paradise, but in the central abode of God himself. Yet evil entered into the breasts of angels—even envy, ambition, pride, rebellion; and they fell, fell never to rise again”²⁸

Can A Christian Be Demon-Possessed?

R. C. Sproul
(1939-Present)



“In the Bible, we see [demons] possessing people and oppressing people, causing bodily harm, property damage, and all kinds of things. The Christian is always faced with this question: Can I be demon-possessed? I don't believe so. I believe that people can be demon-possessed, but I don't think that this is possible for a Christian, because God the Holy Spirit resides in the regenerate person, and the Scriptures tell us, “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty” (2 Cor. 3:17). So, no demon can hold us hostage to the power of Satan. Demons can oppress us, they can harass us, they can tempt us, attack us and so on, but thanks be to God, He who is in us is greater than he who is in the world (1 John 4:4).”²⁹

⑥ We Overcome the Devil & Demons By:

A. Resisting them firm in your faith .

- James 4:7 - “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”
- 1 Peter 5:8-11 - “Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world. After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you. To Him be dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

B. [1] The cross-work of Christ .

[2] The Word of God .

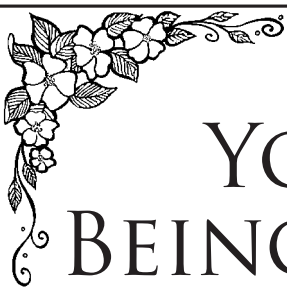
[3] Not putting our hopes in this life .

- Revelation 12:9-11 - “And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, ‘Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night. And they overcame him [1] because of the blood of the Lamb and [2] because of the word of their testimony, and [3] they did not love their life even when faced with death.’”

C. Putting on the full armor of God .

(See next lesson, Lesson 3)

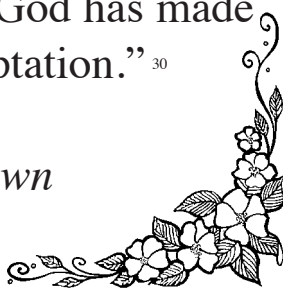
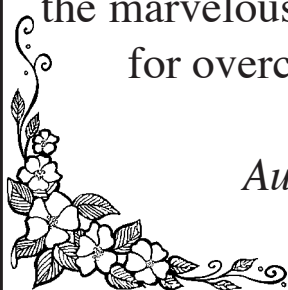
- Ephesians 6:11 - “Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.”



YOU ARE BEING STALKED

Satan and his demons stalk the path of every believer, offering all manner of enticements to lure the Christian away from an obedient and faithful walk with Christ. No one is exempt from Satanic attacks, and no one is completely successful in countering them, but some Christians succumb to temptation so often that they see no hope for victory. They give up and give in without a struggle. This is an unfortunate condition, born out of despair, for it will blind the believer to the marvelous provision God has made for overcoming temptation.”³⁰

Author Unknown



Lesson 2 Review

1. Read John 3:16, 1 John 2:15-16. Should Christians love the world? Explain.

*Yes, the earth & people,
but not this corrupt world system.*

2. If the Christian is a new creation in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17), why is there a war raging within him? (1 Peter 2:11)

*Justification makes us positionally
righteous at the point of conversion.*

*Sanctification is our lifelong fight to
make our practice match our position.*

3. Is the devil as powerful as God? Explain.
(Psalm 62:11)

*Not even close! God is the Creator,
but the devil is a lowly creature.*

4. What are Satan's primary two schemes or strategies?
(Genesis 3:1-7)

Doubt & deception.

5. Can Christians be demon possessed? Explain.
(Ephesians 1:13-14; 1 Corinthians 3:16)

*Absolutely not! The Christian is al-
ready possessed by the Holy Spirit.*

1 John 2:15-16**Spiritual Warfare**

The World

“Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. “

Lesson 2**Adversaries****1 Peter 2:11****Spiritual Warfare**

The Flesh

“Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.”

Lesson 2**Adversaries****1 Peter 5:8****Spiritual Warfare**

The Devil

“Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”

Lesson 2**Adversaries**

3

ARMOR

The Christian's Defenses & Offenses

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Ephesians 6:10-17 Overview.

① Setting.

- The epistle to the Ephesians was written by the Apostle Paul from prison in Rome.

② Symbolology.

- In Ephesians 6, Paul is describing the Christian's spiritual armor and weapons, by comparing them to the physical pieces of armor of the Roman soldiers who were guarding him. These soldiers were the emperor's palace bodyguards, called the praetorian guard (Phil. 1:12-13).

Ephesians 6:10-18

“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. 14 Stand firm therefore, **1** having girded your loins with truth, and **2** having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and **3** having shod your feet with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; 16 in addition to all, **4** taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 And **5** take the helmet of salvation, and **6** the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 18 **7** With all prayer and petition pray at all times”

5

*“take the helmet
of salvation”*
(Eph. 6:17)

7

*“pray at all
times”*
(Eph. 6:18)

4

*“take up the
shield of faith”*
(Eph. 6:16)

2

*“put on the
breastplate of
righteousness”*
(Eph. 6:14)

1

*“gird your
loins with truth”*
(Eph. 6:14)

6

*“take the sword
of the Spirit”*
(Eph. 6:17)

3

*“shod your feet
with the prepara-
tion of the gospel
of peace”*
(Eph. 6:15)



B Gird Your Loins With Truth

“Stand firm therefore having girded your loins with truth”

Ephesians 6:14



1 Observation.

- Roman soldiers would tuck their tunic into their belt to get ready for battle.
- Gird your loins = Get ready for action.
- Gird your loins with what? truth.

2 Correlation.

- 1 Peter 1:13 - “Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind...” (KJV)
NAS - “prepare your mind.”

3 Interpretation.

- Meaning of Paul’s phrase “gird your loins with truth” -
Prepare your mind for battle, trials, etc. (ahead of time), by integrating the objective principles of God’s Word into your life.

4 Application.

- Joshua 1:8 - “This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.”
- Psalms 119:11 - “Thy word I have hidden in my heart, that I may not sin against You.”

TRUTH

“Pilate said to [Jesus],
‘What is truth?’”

John 18:38



Relativism



Man's Subjective Opinions

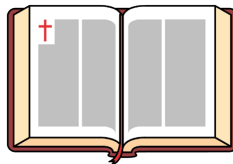


God's Objective Truth

The Bible

“The sum of
Thy Word is truth”

Psalms 119:160



TRUTH



The Breastplate of Righteousness.

*“Stand firm therefore ...
having put on the breastplate
of righteousness”*

Ephesians 6:14



1 Observation.

- Paul likens righteousness to a Roman soldier's "breastplate," Greek: *thorax*
- It was the largest piece of armor, and therefore most fully covered the soldier. It deflected or absorbed the blows of the enemy, protected the vital organs, and covered the heart.

2 Correlation.

- Elsewhere in Scripture righteousness is likened to clothing.
- Job 29:14-14 - "I put on righteousness, and it clothed me"
- Isaiah 61:10 - "I will rejoice greatly in the Lord, My soul will exult in my God; for He has clothed me with garments of salvation, He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness"

3 Interpretation.

- Meaning of Paul's phrase "put on the breastplate of righteousness" -

Let Christ's *imputed* righteousness
guard your heart against self-
righteousness, and fight hard to make
your *practice* match your *position*.

4 Application.

- Ephesians 4:1 - "Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in [practice] a manner worthy of the calling [position] with which you have been called."

RIGHTEOUSNESS

“The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.’”

Luke 18:11



The holey armor of man



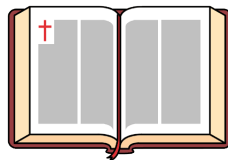
Self-Righteousness



Imputed Righteousness

The holy armor of God

“...that I may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith”



Philippians 3:9

RIGHTEOUSNESS



The Gospel of Peace.

“and shod your feet with the preparation of the Gospel of peace”

Ephesians 6:15



1 Observation.

- Roman soldiers wore “shoes thickly studded with sharp nails” – *Josephus*

2 Correlation. *Primary imagery:*

A. *firm footing* .

- 1 Cor. 16:13 - “Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith...”
- Psalms 119:105 - “Thy Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”

B. *mobility* .

- Isaiah 52:7 - “How lovely on the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who announces peace and brings good news of happiness, who announces salvation, and says to Zion, “Your God reigns!”

C. It is called the Gospel of what? *peace* .

(The Gospel produces **three types** of this - *see page right*) ➡

3 Interpretation.

- Meaning of “shod your feet with the preparation of the Gospel” -

Stand firm upon Gospel promises,
and go out as ambassadors with a
message of reconciliation (peace).

4 Application.

- 2 Cor. 5:20 - “Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.”

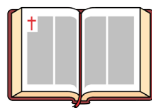
P E A C E

1.

Peace With God

“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,”

Romans 5:1

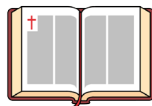


2.

The Peace of God

“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee.”

Isaiah 26:3

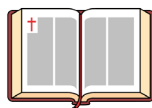


3.

Peace with others

“So then let us pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.”

Romans 14:19



P E A C E



The Shield of Faith.

“in addition to all, take up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.”

Ephesians 6:16



1 Observation.

- “shield” - Greek *thureon*, from *thura*, “a door,” a 2’ x 4’ shield that covered the whole body. Soldiers would join their shields together to form a wall.

2 Correlation.

- 1 Peter 5:8 - “Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your *faith* ...”
- 1 John 5:4 - “For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our *faith*.”

3 Interpretation.

- “Taking up the shield of faith” means -

Unwavering faith in

God who is our shield.

(Read: Psalm 3:3, 18:2, 33:20, 91:4; Proverbs 30:5)

- The “flaming arrows of the evil one” are - *doubts,*
deception, condemnation, impure
thoughts, etc. from Satan.

4 Application.

- Proverbs 3:5-6 - “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.”

What is Biblical Faith?

T F

1. ☐ ☒ Faith is a *force* like electricity or gravity. - Copeland
2. ☐ ☒ Faith is the *substance* out of which God creates whatever is. - Capps
3. ☐ ☒ Faith can be released by anyone, Christian or pagan, if only he believes in his words as God believes in His. - Hagin
4. ☐ ☒ Faith is simply possitive, possibility thinking.- Schuller
5. ☐ ☒ Faith operates by faith; we must have faith in our faith.- Hagin
6. ☐ ☒ Faith is maintaining a Positive Mental Attitude. - PMA
7. ☐ ☒ Faith is making a positive confession and believing it.
8. ☒ ☐ Faith without works is dead. - Jam 2:17, 26
9. ☐ ☒ Faith and works are what save us. - Rom 3:28
10. ☐ ☒ Faith is a blind leap into the dark. - It is a step into the light.
11. ☒ ☐ Faith requires knowledge. - 2 Tim 1:12
12. ☒ ☐ Faith can grow if it is exercised. - Phil 1:25
13. ☒ ☐ Faith must be given by God. - Rom 12:3; Eph 2:8-9; Gal 5:22
14. ☐ ☒ Faith that saves is simply believing that God exists. - Jam 2:19
15. ☒ ☐ Faith is taking God at His word. - Heb 11:13
16. ☒ ☐ Faith is necessary to please God. - Heb 11:6
17. ☒ ☐ Faith is the conviction of unseen things. - Heb 11:1; 2 Cor 5:7
18. ☒ ☐ Faith is reckoned as righteousness. - Rom 4:3
19. ☒ ☐ Faith is independent of feelings. - Col 2:18
20. ☐ ☒ Faith is based on an experience. - Col 2:18



The Helmet of Salvation.

*“and take the
helmet of salvation”*

Ephesians 6:17



1 Correlation.

- 1 Thessalonians 5:8 - “put on ... as a helmet, the *hope* of salvation.”
- Romans 5:1, 5 - “Therefore, having been *justified* by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ ... and [this] *hope* does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”

Three Aspects of Salvation:

1	PAST <i>justification</i>	Release from the <u><i>Penalty</i></u> of sin.
2	PRESENT <i>sanctification</i>	Release from the <u><i>Power</i></u> of sin.
3	FUTURE <i>glorification</i>	Release from the <u><i>Presence</i></u> of sin.

2 Interpretation.

- “Taking up the helmet of salvation” means guarding our minds with the hope of our salvation (1 Thess. 5:8) - a hope which is sure and will not disappoint (Rom. 5:1, 5). Therefore, it is ultimately a belief in our *eternal security* in Christ Jesus.

Triune Work of Eternal Security

1. **The Father's** eternal purpose.
(Job 42:2; Jer. 29:11; Rom. 11:29)
 - Ephesians 1:4-5 – “He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world ... In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will”
2. **The Father's** immutable love.
(Jer. 31:3; Micah 7:18; Psa. 103:17; Eph. 2:4-6)
 - Romans 8:38-39 – “For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
3. **The Father's** protective power.
(Jn. 10:27-29; 2 Tim. 1:12; Rom. 8:31; Jude 1:24-25)
 - 1 Peter 1:5 – You “are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”
4. **The Father** completes what He starts.
(Phil. 1:6; 1 Cor. 1:8)
 - Romans 8:30 – “whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.”
5. **Christ's** perfect sacrifice.
(John 19:30; Heb. 10:10-14)
 - Hebrews 10:12, 14 – “but He [Christ], having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God, ... For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.”
6. **Christ's** intercession.
(Rom. 8:34; John 11:42, 17:9,15; 1 John 2:1; Luke 22:31-32)
 - Hebrews 7:25 – “Hence, also, He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.”
7. **Christ Will** lose not one of those given to Him.
(John 10:27-29, 17:2)
 - John 6:37-39 – “All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me ... all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day.”
8. **The Spirit Permanently** indwells & seals us.
(1 Cor. 3:16, 6:19; Rom. 8:9; Eph. 4:30)
 - Ephesians 1:13 – “you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.”



The Sword of the Spirit.

“And take ... the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.”

Ephesians 6:17



1 Correlation.

- Hebrews 4:12 - “For the Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”

2 Correlation. *Three ways to wield this sword:*

- *apologetics* - Defense of the Christian faith.
- 1 Peter 3:15 - “but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence”
evangelism - Advancement of the Christian faith.
- Matthew 16:18 - “upon this rock [the Gospel message] I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it”
discipleship - Instruction in the Christian faith.
- 2 Timothy 3:16 - “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness”

3 Interpretation & Application.

- 2 Timothy 2:15 - *In reference to spiritual warfare, study to show yourself approved, as a workman [e.g. a skilled swordsman] who does not need to be ashamed [e.g. in battle], handling [i.e. wielding] accurately the Word of God.*

Defensive Use

“The sword of the Spirit is first of all a defensive weapon, capable of deflecting the blows of an opponent. ... The Christian who does not know God’s Word well cannot use it well. Satan will invariably find out where we are ignorant or confused and attack us there.” ³¹

John MacArthur (1946-Present)



Stop & Think

☼ Read Hebrews 4:12 again (top left).

What aspect of the Word is being emphasized?

Nothing can pierce

*the deepest recesses of the
heart like the Word of God.*

“pierce” = convict & confront

Offensive Use

“If the Word of God does not abide in us (Jn. 15:7), we will reach for it in vain when the enemy strikes. But if we do wear it, if it lives within us, what mighty warriors we can be!” ³²

John Piper (1946-Present)





The Prayer Warrior.

*“With all prayer and petition
pray at all times”*

Ephesians 6:18



1 God uses prayer warriors.

- E. M. Bounds - “Praying men have been God’s deputies on earth; prayerless men have never been used of Him. ... God’s secrets, councils, and cause have never been committed to prayerless men.”

2 Prayer may activate heavenly battles.

- Daniel 10:2-13 - After Daniel had been praying for three weeks, an angel appeared and said, “Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding this and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words. But the prince [demon?] of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings [demons?] of Persia.”

3 Essential elements of effective prayer.

- Salvation – 1 Peter 3:12, Prov. 15:8,29, 28:9; Heb. 4:16
- Obedience – Psalm 66:18; 1 Peter 3:7; 1 Jn. 3:21-22
- Whole-hearted devotion – 2 Chron. 16:9; Jam. 5:16; Heb. 11:6
- Faith – James 1:6-7; Matt. 17:20
- Pray according to God’s Will – 1 Jn. 5:14; Lk. 22:42
- In Jesus’ Name – John 14:13-14; 15:7,16; 16:23
- Humility – Matt. 6:5; Psalm 10:17
- Importunity – Gen. 32:26; Ex. 32:32
- Enlarged Expectations – Eph. 1:7-8, 3:20; Phil. 4:19
- Right Motives – James 4:5; Prov. 16:2
- Perseverance – Dan. 10:2-12; Lk. 11:5-10; 18:1-8

Satan Mocks Prayerless Work

“The one concern of the devil is to keep Christians from praying. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work, and prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, mocks at our wisdom, but trembles when we pray.”³³

Samuel Chadwick (1860-1932)



Stop & Think

☼ Do you think E. M. Bounds statement (point ❶ on the previous page) is true?

Yes! Prayer demonstrates our faith in God rather than our own resources.

When is the Weakest Saint the Strongest?

“And Satan trembles when he sees, the weakest saint upon his knees.”³⁴

William Cowper (1731-1800)





Christian Fellowship.



“...let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.”

Hebrews 10:24-25

When is the Local Church A Healthy Fighting Force?

① When there is unity, i.e. there is no in-fighting.

- Psalm 133:1, 3 - “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity! ... For there the Lord commands the blessing”
- Philippians 2:1-2 - “Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.”

② When its troops are well-trained, i.e. skilled in weapons knowledge and use.

- 2 Timothy 3:16 - “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequately equipped for every good work.”

③ When every member is serving, i.e. it has an all volunteer force.

- Romans 12:4-6 - “For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. And since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let each exercise them accordingly”
- 1 Peter 4:10 - “As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”

Strength in Numbers

“Satan always hates Christian fellowship; it is his policy to keep Christians apart. Anything which can divide saints from one another he delights in. He attaches far more importance to godly fellowship than we do. Since union is strength, he does his best to promote separation.” ³⁵

Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892)



Stop & Think

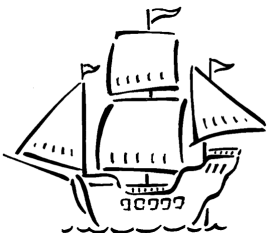
☼ Why do you think the American church is often so ineffective in spiritual warfare?

*Lack of all of the items on the
previous page.*

Strength in Numbers









“Satan watcheth for those vessels that sail without a convoy.” ³⁶

George Swinnock (1627-1673)





Summary of Christian Defenses & Offenses.

1		Gird your mind for action with the <u>Objective Truth</u> of the written Word of God.	Matt. 7:24-25 1 Pet. 3:15
2		Put on the breastplate of Christ's <u>Imputed Righteousness</u> and continually fight to make your practice match your position.	Phil. 3:9 Eph. 4:1
3		Plant your feet firmly upon the <u>Gospel of Peace</u> then go out as ambassadors with a message of reconciliation.	Rom. 10:14-15 2 Cor. 5:18-20
4		Extinguish doubts and deception by <u>Unwavering Faith</u> in God who is our shield.	Prov. 3:5-6 Psalm 3:3
5		Guard your mind with an understanding of your <u>Eternal Security</u>	Heb. 4:10 Rom. 8:38-39
6		Study to show yourselves approved, skillfully wielding the <u>Inspired Word of God</u>	2 Tim. 2:15 Heb. 4:12
7		Successful spiritual warfare must begin on your knees in <u>Intercessory Prayer</u>	Phil. 4:6-7 Jam. 5:16
8		There is strength in numbers through <u>Christian Fellowship</u>	Heb. 10:25 Psa. 133:1-3

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Like the Spartans, every Christian is born a warrior. It is his destiny to be assaulted, his duty to attack. Part of his life will be occupied with defensive warfare. He will have to defend the *Faith once delivered to the saints*. He will have to resist the devil. He will have to *Stand against all the devil's wiles, and having done all, still to stand*. He will, however, be an ineffective Christian, if he acts only on the defensive. He must be one who goes against his foes, as well as [one who] stands still to receive their advance. He must be able to say with David, "I come to thee in the Name of The Lord of Hosts, The God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied" (1 Sam. 17:45). He must *wrestle not with flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers*. He must have weapons for his warfare - not carnal - but "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds" (2 Cor. 10:4). He must not be content to live in the stronghold, though he is well guarded, and munitions of stupendous strength are at his disposal; but he must go forth to attack the castles of the enemy, pull them down."³⁷

Charles
Haddon
Spurgeon



English
pastor &
author

1834-1892

Lesson 3 Review

1. What is relativism and how does it differ from God's Word?

Situational ethics vs. the object truth of God's Word.

2. What kind of righteousness will defend the Christian against all of Satan's fiery darts?

The imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ.

3. How can the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God be used defensively?

Christian apologetics - giving a defense of the faith (1 Pet. 3:15).

4. Why is the Gospel called the Gospel of "peace" (Eph. 6:15)

It gives peace with God (Rom. 5:1), and the peace of God (Isa. 26:3).

5. List at least three reasons that the Christian can know that he or she is eternally secure.

See page 48.

6. What is perhaps the Christians strongest posture with regard to spiritual warfare?

Kneeling in prayer.

7. What are three things that make a local church a powerful fighting force.

(1) Unity, (2) sound biblical teaching, and (3) everyone serving.

1 Corinthians 10:3-4**Spiritual Warfare**

The Weapons Of Our Warfare

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.”

Lesson 2**Armor****Hebrews 4:12****Spiritual Warfare**

The Sword of the Spirit

“For the Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”

Lesson 2**Armor****2 Timothy 2:15****Spiritual Warfare**

Learn to be a Skilled Swordsman

“Study to show yourselves approved as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the Word of God”

Lesson 2**Armor**

4

AFFLICTION

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Christian Growth

“Every adversity that comes across our path, whether large or small, is intended to help us grow in some way. If it were not beneficial, God would not allow it or send it ... He brings only that which is necessary, but He does not shrink from that which will help us grow.” ³⁸

Jerry Bridges (1929-Present)



Stop & Think

☼ How does studying God's purposes for affliction relate to spiritual warfare?

*The Christian's primary
spiritual battle is a fight
of faith under fire.
(1 Timothy 6:12).*

God's Sovereignty

“There is no attribute of God more comforting to His children than the doctrine of Divine Sovereignty. Under the most adverse circumstances, in the most severe troubles, they believe that Sovereignty hath ordained their afflictions, that Sovereignty overrules them, and that Sovereignty will sanctify them all.” ³⁹

Charles Spurgeon (1839-1892)





Advancement of the Gospel.

“Now I want you to know, brethren, that my [imprisonment] has turned out for the greater progress of the Gospel ...”

Philippians 1:12

1 Religious affections are often quenched by feelings of self-satisfaction.

- Deuteronomy 31:20 - “For when I bring them into the land flowing with milk and honey, which I swore to their fathers, and they have eaten and are satisfied and become prosperous, then they will turn to other gods and serve them, and spurn Me and break My covenant.”
- Jeremiah 22:21 - “I spoke to you in your prosperity; but you said, ‘I will not listen!’ This has been your practice from your youth, that you have not obeyed My voice.”
- Hosea 13:6 - “As they had their pasture, they became satisfied, and being satisfied, their heart became proud; therefore they forgot Me.”

2 Historically, the greatest progress of the Gospel has often come during the times of the greatest persecution.

- Philippians 1:12-14 - “Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel, so that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else, 14 and that most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear.”
- 2 Timothy 2:8-9 - “I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal [for the Word of God]; but the Word of God is not imprisoned.”
- Foxe’s Christian Martyrs of the World - Two captains of the Roman guard and forty-seven other persons were converted to Christianity, some from Nero’s own household! Given the number of Roman senators listed in Foxe’s book who were martyred for their faith, one wonders how many were won to Christ either directly or indirectly by Paul during his first Roman imprisonment.⁴⁰
- Tertullian (160-220 A.D.) - “the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church”⁴¹

Corrie Ten-Boom



Corrie Ten-Boom
1892-1983

*“In the German camp,
with all its horror,
I found many prisoners
who had never heard
of Jesus Christ. ...
They were well worth
all our suffering”*

When the Nazis invaded Holland during World War II, a devout Christian family named the Ten-Booms, provided a hiding place for Jews in their home above their father’s watch repair shop. But their Jewish sympathies were discovered and 59 year old Corrie, her sister Betsie, and their father were arrested and sent to Ravensbruck concentration camp. “Yet in the German camp, with all its horror, I found many prisoners who had never heard of Jesus Christ. ... Before long we were holding clandestine Bible study groups for an evergrowing group of believers, and Barracks 28 became known as ‘the crazy place where they hope.’ But because of the terrible infestation of fleas in Barracks 28, German guards never entered or discovered the Bible study, so Corrie and Betsie thanked God for the fleas! Later through an administrative error Corrie was released. She is the author of *The Hiding Place*, a personal account of her arrest and time spent in prison.”⁴²

Notes



Belief in God's Supernatural Ability to Deliver.

*"He saved them for the sake of His name,
that He might make His power known."*

Psalm 106:8

① To break down self-reliance, God may deliberately lead us into overwhelming situations.

- Exodus 13:21-14:31 - God guided Israel with the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night to that place where Israel's back was against the Red Sea and there was no way of escape from Pharaoh's armies.
- John Piper - "Nothing exalts [God] more than the collapse of self-reliance which issues in passionate prayer for help. "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me" (Psa. 50:15).⁴³
- John Calvin - "Men have no taste for God's power until they are convinced of their need of it and they immediately forget its value unless they are conditionally reminded by awareness of their own weakness."⁴⁴
- John 15:5 - Jesus said, "Apart from Me you can do nothing"

② To increase our faith in Him, God may deliver us from those same seemingly impossible situations that He has orchestrated.

- Exodus 14:1-30 - Israel's deliverance at the Red Sea.
- 2 Kings 6:8-23 - Elisha's deliverance from the armies of Aram.
- 2 Chronicles 20:1-25 - Jehoshaphat/Judah's deliverance from three armies.
- John 11:1-45 - Lazarus' deliverance from death.
- Acts 12:1-17 - Peter's deliverance from prison.
- Ephesians 3:20 - "[God] is able to do exceedingly abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us"
- Matthew 19:26 - "With God all things are possible"

The Man Born Blind



**Jesus healed the man
born blind.**

*“It was neither that
this man sinned, nor
his parents; but it
was in order that the
works of God might be
displayed in him.”*

“As Jesus and His disciples passed by a blind man, the disciples asked, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?” (Jn. 9:2). Like Job’s three “comforters,” the disciples assumed that all suffering was a result of one’s own personal sin. But Jesus answered, “It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was in order that the works of God might be displayed in him” (John 9:1-3). Perhaps Jesus’ reply raises more questions than answers. What or who made this man blind? The answer does not fit today’s pop-theology, but the answer is God. The Lord declared to Moses, “Who has made man’s mouth? Or who makes him dumb or deaf, or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord?” (Ex. 4:11). God’s sovereign plan was that this man should be born blind “that the works of God might be displayed in him” when Jesus later healed Him (John 9:3).

Notes



Comfort & Compassion for Others.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort; who comforts us in all our affliction so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.”

2 Corinthians 1:3-5

① The root of “compassion” is passion, and without trials our comfort to others might be sincere, but it will be theoretical and somewhat dispassionate .

- Charles Spurgeon - “Many of the trials which are experienced by Christians are sent as an education in the art of sympathy. There is nothing that makes a man have a big heart like a great trial.” ⁴⁵
- Francis Schaeffer - “Biblical orthodoxy without compassion is surely the ugliest thing in the world.” ⁴⁶

③ Affliction equips believers to show compassion to others who are afflicted.

- A.B. Simpson - “I never had a trial but when I got out of the deep river I found some poor pilgrim on the bank that I was able to help by that very experience.” ⁴⁷
- Charles Spurgeon - “You must go through the fire if you would have sympathy with others who tread the glowing coals.” ⁴⁸

② The ultimate example of compassion born out of affliction is Christ .

- Hebrews 2:18 - “For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.”
- Hebrews 4:15 - “For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin”

The Apostle Paul



**The Apostle Paul
4-67 A.D.**

*“[God] comforts us
in all our affliction so
that we may be able to
comfort those who are
in any affliction”*

Paul’s résumé of suffering was extensive: “Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure upon me of concern for all the churches” (2 Cor. 11:24-28; cf. 1 Cor. 4:11-13). Nevertheless, under the influence of the Spirit, suffering enlarged Paul’s heart and increased his capacity to comfort others who were likewise tried.

Notes



Dependence on Christ.

*"Since I am afflicted and needy, let the Lord be mindful of me.
You are my help and my deliverer; do not delay, O my God."*

Psalm 40:17

① God is a help for the helpless.

- Psalm 72:12 - "For He will deliver the needy when he cries for help, the afflicted also, and him who has no helper."

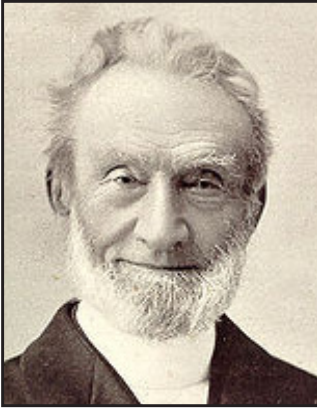
② Until we understand that we are absolutely needy, we will never live in dependence upon Christ.

- + Psalm 70:5 - "But I am afflicted and needy; hasten to me, O God! You are my help and my deliverer; O Lord, do not delay."
- Revelation 3:17 - "you say, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,' and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked"

② Affliction identifies root-level needs in our lives so that we will turn to Christ to supply those needs.

- Psalm 46:1 - "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."
- Philippians 4:19 - "And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus."
- Charles Spurgeon - "Live, then, daily, a life of dependence on the grace of God. Do not set yourself up as if you want to be an independent gentleman; do not start in your own concerns as if you could do all things yourself; but live always trusting in God. You have as much need to trust Him now as ever you have." ⁴⁹

George Müller



George Müller
1805-1898

“they gave thanks for breakfast ... even though there was nothing to eat in the house. As they finished praying, the baker knocked on the door with sufficient fresh bread to feed everyone.”

George Müller was born and raised in Prussia, and lived in sin and crime even while studying for the ministry at the state church. He was converted at a prayer meeting in a private home, and from that time his life was changed dramatically. Müller moved to Bristol, England, and by 1870 he had built five large orphans' homes and was feeding 2,100 orphans daily. He solicited no financial help and told only the Lord of the daily needs. Many times he received unsolicited food donations only hours before they were needed to feed the children. On one well-documented occasion, they gave thanks for breakfast when all the children were sitting at the table, even though there was nothing to eat in the house. As they finished praying, the baker knocked on the door with sufficient fresh bread to feed everyone. As a result many children were won to Christ each year.⁵⁰

Notes



Endurance & Perseverance.

“Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.”

James 1:2-3

❶ In the Bible, the Christian life is compared to a marathon.

- Hebrews 12:1-2 - “Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith”
- 1 Corinthians 9:24 - “Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win.”

❷ Trials exercise and strengthen faith which produces endurance to finish the race.

- Jerry Bridges - “In His infinite wisdom, God allows trials in order to develop perseverance in us and to cause us to fix our hopes on the glory that is yet to be revealed... Our faith and perseverance can grow only under the pain of trial.” ⁵¹
- Author unknown - “Trials are the crucible in which perseverance is forged” ⁵²

❸ Those that persevere to the end demonstrate that they are the true children of God.

- Martyn Lloyd-Jones - “There is nothing which so certifies the genuineness of a man’s faith as his patience and his patient endurance, his keeping on steadily in spite of everything.” ⁵³
- 1 John 2:19 - “They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us.”

Job



The Patriarch Job
~ 2000 B.C.

“We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord’s dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.”

James 5:11

“There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job, and that man was blameless, upright, fearing God, and turning away from evil...” (Job 1:1). And Job had seven sons and three daughters and his possessions also were 7000 sheep, 3000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 female donkeys, and very many servants, and “that man was the greatest of all the men of the east” (Job 1:2-3). But within a very short period of time, Job was divested of his possessions (Job 1:15-17), bereaved of his children (Job 1:18-19), and deprived of his health (Job 2:7-8); yet he praised God: “Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head, and he fell to the ground and worshiped. And he said, ‘Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I shall return there. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord’” (Job 1:20-21). Today, Job’s name is synonymous with endurance (James 5:11).

Notes



Fervent Prayer.

"I cried with all my heart; answer me, O Lord!"

Psalm 119:145

1 In Scripture, prayer is compared to the incense that burned on the golden altar and ascended before the throne of God.

- Psalm 141:2 - "May my prayer be counted as incense before You"
- Revelation 5:8 - "When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints."
- Revelation 8:3-4 - "Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, so that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand."

2 Just as fire ignited the incense, so also the fires of affliction often fuel the fervency of our prayers.

- Psalm 50:15 - "Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you"
- Psalm 86:1,7 - "Incline Your ear, O Lord, and answer me; for I am afflicted and needy ... In the day of my trouble I shall call upon You, for You will answer me."
- Psalm 107:6 - "Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble; He delivered them out of their distresses." (4x in Psalm 107, v. 6, 13, 19, 28)
- Psalm 120:1 - "In my trouble I cried to the Lord, and He answered me."

3 It is the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. (James 5:16, KJV)

- E. M. Bounds - "The fires of prayer have burned low. Ashes and not flames are on its altars ... True prayer must be aflame." ⁵⁴
- E. M. Bounds - "The prayer habit is a good habit, but praying by force of habit only is a very bad habit... it is a delusion." ⁵⁵

Horatius Bonar



Horatius Bonar
1808-1889

*“What a friend we have
in Jesus, all our sins
and griefs to bear!
What a privilege
to carry, everything
to God in prayer!”*

Horatius Bonar was a Minister of the Church of Scotland, a prolific hymn writer (~600 with ~100 still common use), and a great man of prayer. While Bonar was producing his remarkable output of hymns, he suffered the death of five of his young children in succession. Towards the end of his life, one of his surviving daughters was left a widow with five small children and she returned to live with her parents. The gracious spirit of Horatius and his wife could be clearly seen in a letter to a friend in which he wrote, “God took five children from life some years ago, and He has given me another five to bring up for Him in my old age.” Bonar himself was sorely afflicted during the last two years of his life. He died on July 31, 1889, deeply mourned by Christians throughout the world who had come to know him through his wonderful hymns. ⁵⁶

Notes



Grace on Display.

“My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.”

2 Corinthians 12:9

1 When we allow God’s power for Christian ministry to operate despite our personal weaknesses or affliction, we become trophies of God’s grace which He puts on display to touch and inspire others.

- 2 Corinthians 12:7-9 - “Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me - to keep me from exalting myself! Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me. And He has said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.’ Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ’s sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.”

2 There are none too weak for God’s grace to be displayed, but some too strong.

- John MacArthur - “The same suffering that reveals our weaknesses reveals God’s strength, ‘for power is perfected in weakness’ (2 Cor. 12:9). When we are least effective in our human strength and have only God’s power to sustain us, then we are suitable channels through which His power flows. And so we should praise God for adversity because that’s when His power is most evident in our lives. There is no one too weak to be powerful, but there are many too strong.” ⁵⁷
- 1 Corinthians 1:26-31 - “For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, so that no man may boast before God. ... so that, just as it is written, ‘Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord.’”

Moses



Moses
1526-1406

“Who has made man’s mouth? Or who makes him mute or deaf, or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord?”

Exodus 4:10-11

The Bible declares that “Moses was very meek, more than any man who was on the face of the earth” (Num. 12:3). God chose Moses to deliver Israel from bondage in Egypt, not because he was a dynamic leader or a great speaker, but because he was not. “Moses said to the Lord, ‘Please, Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither recently nor in time past, nor since You have spoken to Your servant; for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.’ The Lord said to him, ‘Who has made man’s mouth? Or who makes him mute or deaf, or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord?’” (Exodus 4:10-11). In other words, God made Moses, with all of his meekness and weakness, so that when he delivered Israel, God’s grace would be put on display; and as a result Israel would boast in God, not in Moses.

Notes



Humility.

“He is able to humble those who walk in pride.”

Daniel 4:37

1 Humility is an elusive quality.

- Author Unknown - “Humility is a strange thing. As a rule, once you discover you have it you lose it. Humility is like a rare flower -- put it on display and it instantly wilts and loses its fragrance! Humility is one character trait that can never come out of the closet; it is not something to announce from the rooftop. No, humility is not something to be announced. For then, if you can imagine the irony of this, you have become proud of your humility.” ⁵⁹

2 God uses affliction to produce humility in even His choicest servants.

- Job 23:10 - “When He has tried me, I shall come forth as gold.”
- 2 Corinthians 12:7 - “Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself!”
- Author Unknown - “In order to mold His children, God sometimes has to melt them down.” ⁵⁸

3 Affliction that produces humility ultimately results in honor.

- Matthew 20:26 - “whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant”
- Matthew 23:12 - “Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.”
- James 4:6 - “But He gives a greater grace ... to the humble”
- 1 Peter 5:6 - “Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time”
- Proverbs 29:23 - “A man’s pride will bring him low, but a humble spirit will obtain honor.”

The Apostle Paul



**The Apostle Paul
4-67 A.D.**

*“to keep me from
exalting myself,
there was given me
a thorn in the flesh”*

2 Cor. 12:7

Paul was arguably the greatest theologian and evangelist in the first century. He wrote at least 13 books of the new Testament and planted dozens of churches. But Paul did not think highly of himself. He called himself “the chief of sinners” (1 Tim. 1:15), “the very least of the saints” (Eph. 3:8), and “the least of the apostles” (1 Cor. 15:9). He acknowledged what others said about him, that “his personal presence [was] unimpressive and his speech contemptible” (2 Cor. 10:10). Christ had personally appeared to Paul and given him many amazing revelations (Gal. 1:11; 2 Cor. 12:1-7), but to keep His servant humble the Lord also gave Paul “a thorn in the flesh” (2 Cor. 12:7), and would not remove it even though the apostle prayed repeatedly for the Lord to take it away (2 Cor. 12:8-9).

Notes



Intimacy With Christ & Insight Into His Word.

“God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in times of trouble.”

Psalm 46:1

1 The Christian’s closest fellowship with Christ often occurs during trials.

- Psalm 46:1 - “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in times of trouble.”
- Joshua 5:13-15 - Christ was with Joshua before the battle of Jericho.
- Daniel 3:24-25 - Christ was with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the fiery furnace.
- Charles Spurgeon - “As sure as God puts His children in the furnace of affliction, He will be with them in it.” ⁶⁰
- John Bunyan - “In times of affliction we commonly meet with the sweetest experiences of the love of God.” ⁶¹

2 Affliction is often the birth place of the Christian’s most profound insights into God’s Word.

- John Piper - “There are things to see in the Word of God that our eyes can only see through the lens of tears.” ⁶²
- J. C. Ryle - “There is no commentary that opens up the Bible so much as sickness and sorrow.” ⁶³
- Jerry Bridges - “Although we may be going to the Scriptures to learn how to respond to our adversities, we find those adversities in turn help us to understand the Scriptures. It is not that we will learn from adversity something different than what we can learn from the Scriptures. Rather, adversity enhances the teaching of God’s Word and makes it more profitable to us. In some instances it clarifies our understanding or causes us to see truths we had passed over before. At other times it will transform “head knowledge” into “heart knowledge” as theological theory becomes a reality to us.” ⁶⁴

John Bunyan



John Bunyan
1628-1688

“Those Scriptures that I saw nothing in before, are made in [prison] to shine upon me. Jesus Christ also was never more real and apparent than now; here I have seen and felt Him indeed.”

John Bunyan was arrested at age 32 for preaching the Gospel to the poor. The judge ordered Bunyan to stop preaching, to which he replied, “If I were out of the prison today, I would preach the Gospel again tomorrow, by the help of God.” For his “crime” Bunyan spent twelve years in prison in Bedford, England. By day John tagged shoe laces to help support his wife and four children, assisted by his blind daughter at his side. By night, the child was dismissed to her home, and John would meditate upon the Scriptures. He wrote, “I never find, in all my life, so great an inlet into the Word of God as now. Those Scriptures that I saw nothing in before, are made in this place and state to shine upon me. Jesus Christ also was never more real and apparent than now; here I have seen and felt Him indeed.” Moreover, from his cell, or “den” as Bunyan called it, came many masterpieces of Christian literature, including *Pilgrim’s Progress*, Bunyan’s most famous writing.⁶⁵

Notes



Joy In & Of The Lord.

*“Consider it all joy, my brethren,
when you encounter various trials”*

James 1:2-3

① The Christian can “rejoice always,” because the Lord is both the source and object of the Christian’s joy.

- Philippians 4:4 - “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!”

② Trials reveal the difference between the Christian’s joy and the unbeliever’s happiness.

- Job - Divested of his possessions (Job 1:15-17), bereaved of his children (Job 1:18-19), and deprived of health (Job 2:7-8), yet he praised God (Job 1:20-21; 13:15)
- Jeremiah - In the middle of one of the saddest books of the Bible, he rejoiced in God’s lovingkindness and compassion (Lam. 3:19-23)
- Paul & Silas - “praying and singing hymns of praise to God” at midnight while in chains in prison at Philippi (Acts 16:25)
- Christ - Our ultimate example (Psa. 45:7), “who for the *joy* set before Him endured the cross” (Heb. 12:2).

③ Suffering for Christ is a privilege.

- Acts 5:40-42 - “they flogged [the apostles] and ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and then released them. So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name.”
- 2 Corinthians 4:17 - “For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison”
- Romans 8:18 - “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.”

Sadhu Sundar Singh



Sunday Singh
1889-1929

“We hoped with this punishment to make this man sorry and leave off preaching, but we are only adding to his happiness.”

“Sundar Singh a converted Hindu of India, was put in prison in Nepal for preaching Christ; so he preached to the other prisoners, as did Paul on a similar occasion. The governor then had him thrust into solitary confinement, in a foul-smelling cowhouse tied by hands and feet, with clothing taken away, and leeches thrown on his body. He lifted up his heart to God, and sang His praises, “Though I am a very poor singer,” he adds. His accuser said to the jailer, “What do you think of this man? He is so happy though he is suffering.” “He must be mad,” the jailer replied. The jailer went to the governor. “Our purpose is not being fulfilled,” he said. “We hoped with this punishment to make this man sorry and leave off preaching, but we are only adding to his happiness.” Then the governor said, “He is only a madman: let him go.” ⁶⁶

Notes



Knowledge of Impure Heart Attitudes.

*“The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold,
but the Lord tests hearts.”*

Proverbs 17:3

1 Scripture compares the Lord to a refiner's fire. (Malachi 3:2)

- Psalm 66:10 - “For You have tried us, O God; you have refined us as silver is refined.”
- 1 Peter 1:6-7 - “... you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ”

2 God uses the furnace of affliction to reveal and remove impurities from the hearts of His people.

- Isaiah 48:10 - “Behold, I have refined you ... I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.”
- Psalm 139:23-24 - “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”
- Matt. 12:34 - “out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks” (NIV)
- Charles Spurgeon - “You cannot see the stars while the sun shines. Wait till it is dark, and then you shall behold them. And many a Christian grace is quite imperceptible until the time of trial, and then it shines out with great luster. All this supposes that grace is there. But if it be lacking, trial discovers the lack. You know not what spirit you are till you have been under tribulation.” ⁶⁷
- Larry Loper - “Like a tea bag, God puts us into hot water to show what will come out” ⁶⁸

The Apostle Peter



Simon Peter
10 B.C. - 64 A.D.

“Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing”

1 Peter 4:12

Simon Barjona was a fisherman by trade (Mt. 4:18), and he was probably the oldest disciple when Jesus called him and renamed him Peter (Petros), which means “little rock” (Jn. 1:42). On the night of Jesus’ arrest, Jesus said to His disciples, “You will all fall away because of Me this night (Mt. 26:31). But Peter quickly replied, ‘Even though all may fall away because of You, I will never fall away’” (Mt. 26:33). Jesus answered, “Truly I say to you that this very night, before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times” (Mt. 26:34). Again Peter protested, “Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You” (Mt. 26:34). Peter was sincere, but he was sincerely wrong, and Jesus correctly predicted his betrayal (Mt. 26:69-75). The Lord used this trial to break down Peter’s self-confidence and expose his fear. Peter thought he was a rock, but the trial showed him his weakness, so that he could grow from it and later strengthen others (Lk. 22:31-32).

Notes



Longing for Heaven.

“For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain ... But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ”

Philippians 1:21

1 God uses affliction to wean us off earthly

treasures and pleasures.

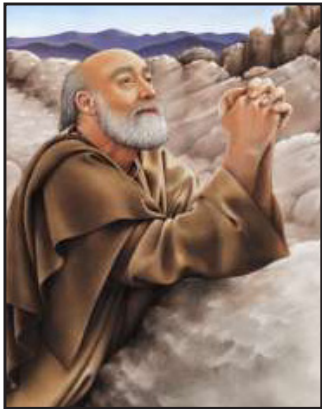
- Colossians 3:2 - “Set your affections on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”
- John Newton - “A measure of trials is necessary ... to wean you more effectually from the world.” ⁶⁹

2 Affliction helps correct spiritual

short-sightedness .

- Alistair Begg - “If we are devoid of a theology of suffering, we are in danger of marginalizing our expectations of heaven... If we conclude that we are now to experience total healing, unfettered joy, unparalleled success, and freedom from pain, then why be concerned about heaven? How did Paul handle his sufferings and encourage the church to face theirs? Not by trying to produce heaven on earth but by recognizing that for the Christian the best is yet to be. He took the moment and put it in the larger context of God’s unfolding purpose, not only for time but also in eternity (2 Cor. 4:16-18).” ⁷⁰
- J. C. Ryle - “Let all true Christians remember, that their best things are yet to come. Let us count it no strange thing, if we have sufferings in this present time. It is a season of probation. We are yet at school. We are learning patience, gentleness, and meekness, which we could hardly learn if we had our good things now. But there is an eternal holiday yet to begin. For this let us wait quietly. It will make amends for all.” ⁷¹
- 2 Corinthians 4:17 - “For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison”
- Romans 8:18-25 - “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.... we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body ... with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.”
- Matthew 6:19-20 - “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal”

Elijah



The Prophet Elijah
~860 B.C.

*“there appeared a
chariot of fire ...And
Elijah went up by a
whirlwind to heaven.*

2 Kings 2:11

Elijah, whose name means “my God is Yah (Yahweh),” was a one of the most colorful characters in the Old Testament and mighty prophet of God. Some of the remarkable events in Elijah’s life included being fed by ravens in the wilderness (1 Kings 17:1-7), raising the widow of Zarephath’s son from the dead (1 Kings 17:17-24), and the amazing showdown between Elizah and the 450 prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:20-40). But Elijah’s meager existence in the wilderness and Queen Jezebel’s threats to kill him (1 Kings 19:1-2), gave the prophet a longing for heaven. “He himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree ...and said, ‘It is enough; now, O Lord, take my life’” (1 Kings 19:4). And, in arguably the most dramatic exit from this life recorded in the Bible, Elijah was taken up into heaven in a chariot of fire (2 Kings 2:11).

Notes



Motivation for Christian Action.

“for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials ... Therefore, prepare your minds for action”

1 Peter 1:6, 13

① The Christian Church often slumbers during peace time, but rises to action in times of adversity and opposition.

- Martin Luther - In 1517, Luther nailed his 95 the sale of indulgences by the Catholic Church to the door of the Wittenburg Chapel.
- Hymn by William P. Merrill, 1911 - “Rise up, O men of God! Have done with lesser things. Give heart and mind and soul and strength, to serve the King of kings. Rise up, O men of God! The church for you doth wait. Her strength unequal to her task; Rise up and make her great!” ⁷²

② Affliction is often God’s antidote for spiritual apathy .

- Judges - Cycles of disobedience, oppression, repentance and deliverance.
- Revelation 3:1-3 - “To the angel of the church in Sardis write ... I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die; for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God. So remember what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. Therefore if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you.”

Gladys Aylward



Gladys Aylward
1902-1970

*“God has chosen
the weak things of
the world to shame
the things which are
strong”*

1 Corinthians 1:17

Gladys Aylward did not excel scholastically or set herself apart based on any exhaustive knowledge of the Bible. She became an assistant to an aging missionary in the mountainous Chinese province of Shansi, but after the elder missionary’s death, Gladys’ work turned in a different direction. During that time China was under attack by Japan and many children were orphaned. These desperate circumstances motivated Gladys to act and soon 100 children were under her care. Fleeing from the Japanese, Gladys lead her children, on foot, 100 miles over the mountains. During the 27 day trek, Gladys became very ill and when they finally reached safety, Gladys was diagnosed with typhus, pneumonia, malnutrition, and extreme exhaustion. Someone has said that when the going gets tough, the tough get going; but Gladys Aylward is a perfect example that when the going gets tough, the Lord can use even the weakest vessel, whose heart is completely His, to perform mighty works.⁷³

Notes



Nurture & Develop Faith that Works

“But someone may well say, ‘You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works.’”

James 2:18

1 God does not save a person by good works, but for good works.

- Ephesians 2:8-10 - “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; *not as a result of works*, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus *for good works*, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.”
- R. C. Sproul - “True faith will inevitably manifest itself in the performance of works of obedience... The performance of works are the result of faith and the fruit of justification.” ⁷⁴
- J. I. Packer - “The truth is that, though we were justified by faith alone, the faith that justifies is never alone” ⁷⁵

2 Trials expose the difference between true faith that works and dead faith (head knowledge without commitment).

- James 2:26 - “faith without works is dead”
- George Müller - “God delights to increase the faith of His children. We ought, instead of wanting no trials before victory, no exercise for patience, to be willing to take them from God’s hands as a means. Trials, obstacles, difficulties and sometimes defeats, are the very food of faith.” ⁷⁶
- George Müller - “The only way to learn strong faith is to endure great trials. I have learned my faith by standing firm amid severe testings.” ⁷⁷
- Robert Murray McCheyne - “When God gives a promise, He always tries our faith. Just as the roots of trees take firmer hold when they are contending with the wind, so faith takes a firmer hold when it struggles with adverse appearances.” ⁷⁸

Watchman Nee



**Watchman Nee
1903-1972**

*“Instead of resting
and getting rusty,
why not labor
and trust?”*

For centuries, the Chinese church has lived under some of the harshest persecution in the world. Into this climate, Watchman Nee was born on November 4, 1903 of Chinese Christian parents. Beginning in the 1930s, Nee helped establish local house churches in China, though he was afflicted with tuberculosis, stomach illness, and angina. He wrote, “In the past days my natural strength has been much weakened. Even light activity causes my body to feel its burden. But praise the Lord that this year was still filled with many days of work. Instead of resting and getting rusty, why not labor and trust?” In 1949, Mao Tse Tung took control of China and in 1952 Watchman Nee was arrested by the Communists. Twenty years later, in 1972, he died in prison. He left a note under his pillow which read: “Christ is the Son of God who died for the redemption of sinners and resurrected after three days. This is the greatest truth in the universe. I die because of my belief in Christ. Watchman Nee.”⁷⁹

Notes



Obedience to the Word & Will of God.

*“Before I was afflicted I went astray,
but now I keep Thy Word.”*

Psalm 119:67

1 When God’s people wander away from God’s Word, the Lord often uses affliction to steer His people back on track.

- Psalm 119:67 - “Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Your word.”
- Psalm 119:71 - “It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I may learn Your statutes.”
- Psalm 119:75 - “I know, O Lord, that Your judgments are righteous, and that in faithfulness You have afflicted me.”
- Charles Spurgeon - “Grace is in that heart which profits by its chastening. It is of no use to plough barren soil. When there is no spiritual life affliction works no spiritual benefit; but where the heart is sound, trouble awakens conscience, wandering is confessed, the soul becomes again obedient to the command, and continues to be so.” ⁸⁰

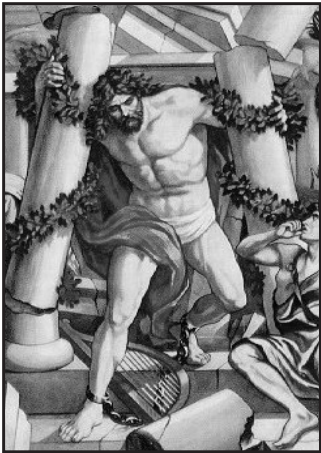
2 God shields the obedient Christian from many harms.

- Psalm 5:12 - “For it is You who blesses the righteous man, O Lord, You surround him with favor as with a shield.” (cf. Job 1:1, 1:10)

3 God may allow the disobedient Christian to experience those afflictions which are the natural consequences of sin in order to lead him or her to repentance.

- Psalm 25:18 - “Look upon my affliction and my trouble, and forgive all my sins.”

The Time of the Judges



Samson
~1100 B.C.

When Israel disobeyed the Lord, “He gave them into the hands of plunderers who plundered them”

Judges 2:14

The book of Judges is the history of the nation of Israel from about 1385 to 1055 BC, before Israel had a king. It is the 330 year record of Israel’s repeated cycles of disobedience, oppression, repentance and deliverance. When Israel disobeyed the Lord, “He gave them into the hands of plunderers who plundered them; and He sold them into the hands of their enemies around them, so that they could no longer stand before their enemies” (Judges 2:14). But each time Israel repented, the Lord raised up a judge to deliver them. “When the Lord raised up judges for them, the Lord was with the judge and delivered them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for the Lord was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed and afflicted them” (Judges 2:19). And so, the Lord used affliction to teach His people the importance of obedience to His Word.

Notes



Peace that Passes All Understanding.

“These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.”

John 16:33

① The peace of God is the fruit of the Spirit in the one whose eyes are on the Lord, not on the winds and waves of adversity.

- Matthew 14:28-30 - “Peter said to [Jesus], ‘Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.’ And He said, ‘Come!’ And Peter got out of the boat, and walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But seeing the wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, ‘Lord, save me!’”
- Isaiah 26:3 - “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee.”
- Philippians 4:7 - “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”
- John MacArthur - “Those who are in the best of circumstances but without God can never find peace, but those in the worst of circumstances but with God need never lack peace.”⁸¹

② God displays supernatural peace in His people in the face of adversity to show the authenticity of His work in them.

- John 14:27 - “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.”
- John 16:33 - “These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.”

Horatio Spafford



Horatio Gates Spafford
1828-1888

*When peace,
like a river,
attendeth my way,
When sorrows
like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot,
Thou has taught
me to say,
It is well, it is well,
with my soul.*

Horatio Spafford, 1873

Horatio Spafford was godly Christian man who experienced two great traumas in his lifetime. First, the great Chicago fire of 1871 destroyed all of Spafford’s real estate holdings and left him in near financial ruin. Then, in 1873, Spafford, his wife and four daughters planned a trip to Great Britain to help his close friend Dwight L. Moody with his evangelistic tour. His wife and four daughters went ahead on the French passenger liner S.S. Ville Du Havre, but in route the ship was struck by another vessel and sank in twelve minutes. 226 people drowned including all four of Spafford’s daughters. Nine days later Mrs. Spafford cabled her husband this two-word message, “Saved alone.” When Spafford made the ocean crossing to meet his grieving wife, the Captain called Spafford to the bridge of the ship and said, “According to my calculations, we are now passing over the place where your children drowned.” Spafford thanked the Captain, went back to his cabin, and in the midst of his sorrow Spafford composed the lines to the now famous hymn *It is Well With My Soul*.⁸²

Note



Qualities for Future Ministry.

“‘For I know the plans that I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.’”

Jeremiah 29:11

① Present work may prepare us for future storms.

- Matthew 7:24-25 - “Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock.”

② Present storms may prepare us for future work.

- Charles Spurgeon - “The affliction of today may have no reference to the circumstances of today, but to the circumstances of fifty years ahead. I do not know that that blade required the rain on such a day, but God was looking not to February as such, but to February in its relation to July, when the harvest should be reaped.”⁸³

③ God works all of these things together for our eternal good and His eternal glory.

- Romans 8:28 - “And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.”



Joseph, Son of Jacob



Joseph
1800-1690 B.C.

*“you meant evil
against me, but God
meant it for good”*

Genesis 50:20

On the surface, the first half of Joseph’s life looks like a senseless series of tragic events: He was sold to Midianite traders by his own brothers (Gen. 37:26-28), unjustly accused by Potiphar’s wife and sent to prison (Gen. 39:7-20), and then forgotten in prison for two years by Pharaoh’s cupbearer (Gen. 40:14, 41:1). At the time, Joseph’s trials probably didn’t make much sense to him. But Joseph’s afflictions were God’s preparation and positioning for Joseph’s future ministry as second in command over all of Egypt under Pharaoh. Joseph said to his brothers, “And as for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good” (Gen. 50:20). God used even the evil actions of the people in Joseph’s life to put his faith in the one true God on display in Egypt, to lead his brother’s to repentance, and to preserve Israel through seven years of drought.

Notes



Righteousness.

“All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.”

Hebrews 12:11

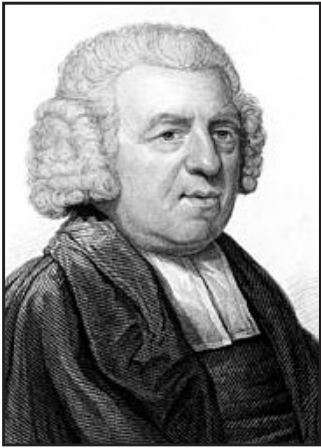
1 Affliction may come as a form of God's discipline which He administers to all of the legitimate children of God.

- Hebrews 12:6-11 - “My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reproved by Him; for those whom the Lord loves He discipline, and He scourges every son whom He receives. It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.”

2 health & wealth teaching is contrary to both Scripture and experience which teach that God can even use poverty and illness to produce righteousness.

- J. I. Packer - “Any idea of getting beyond conflict, outward or inward, in our pursuit of holiness in this world is an escapist dream that can only have disillusioning and demoralizing effects on us as waking experience daily disproves it. What we must realize, rather, is that any real holiness in us will be under hostile fire all the time, just as our Lord's was.” ⁸⁴
- Charles Spurgeon - “Sweet are the uses of adversity, and this is one of them, it puts a bridle upon transgression and furnishes a spur for holiness.” ⁸⁵

John Newton



John Newton
1725-1807

*“Amazing grace
how sweet the sound,
that saved a wretch
like me”*

Hymn by John Newton, 1779

John Newton was once the captain of his own slave ship, and it was reported that “at times he was so wretched that even his crew regarded him as little more than an animal. Once he fell overboard and his ship’s crew refused to drop a boat to him. Instead they threw a harpoon at him, with which they dragged him back into the ship.” But through “many trials, toils and snares” Newton gradually saw his own depravity, received Christ, and finally renounced the slave trade that he had once vigorously supported. At the age of 82, Newton said, “My memory is nearly gone, but I remember two things, that I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a great Saviour.” Eight years later he died and on his tombstone was inscribed, “John Newton, Clerk, once an infidel and libertine, a servant of slaves in Africa, was, by the rich mercy of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, preserved, restored, pardoned, and appointed to preach the faith he had long labored to destroy.”⁸⁶

Notes



Stand-Alone Faith.

"I searched for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand in the gap before Me ... but I found no one."

Ezekiel 22:30

① The Christian must learn to stand up for Jesus Christ irrespective of family influence.

- Job 2:9 - "Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die!"
- Matthew 10:37 - "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me."

② The Christian must learn to stand up for Jesus Christ irrespective of societal pressure.

- Joshua 24:15 - "If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."
- Romans 12:2 - "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

③ Examples of stand-alone faith under fire.

- 1 Kings 18:20-39 - Elijah vs. 450 prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel.
- 2 Kings 6:13-17 - Elisha surrounded by the armies of Aram.
- Daniel 3:14-18 - The three Jewish young men before Nebuchadnezzar.
- Acts 4:18-20 - Peter and John on trial before the Jewish counsel.
- Acts 5:27-40 - The apostles on trial before the Jewish counsel.

Martin Luther



Martin Luther
1483-1546

*My conscience
is captive to the
Word of God”*

During his study of the book of Romans, Martin Luther realized that salvation is by grace through faith, not through good works. Furthermore, Luther realized that the sale of indulgences, essentially allowing people to buy their salvation, was contrary to the Gospel. On October 31, 1517, Luther nailed his 95 *Theses* to the door of the Wittenberg Chapel against papal abuses and the sale of indulgences by church officials. Called by the Roman Emperor to appear before the Diet (Counsel) in Wörm, Germany, Luther was ordered to recant of his teachings, to which he replied, “Unless I am convinced by Scripture and plain reason - I do not accept the authority of the popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other - my conscience is captive to the Word of God. God help me. Amen.” Luther was declared a heretic and his writings were forbidden.⁸⁷

Notes



Thankfulness & Contentment.

*“in everything give thanks;
for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”*

1 Thessalonians 5:18

1 Affliction produces thankfulness for things previously taken for granted .

- Philippians 4:11-13 - “I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.”

2 Thankfulness & contentment during affliction are only possible through an overriding belief in God’s sovereignty .

- Romans 8:28 - “And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.”
- Arthur W. Pink - “Contentment is possible only as we cultivate and maintain that attitude of accepting everything which enters our lives as coming from the Hand of Him who is too wise to err, and too loving to cause one of His children a needless tear.” ⁸⁸

3 Contentment in God can sustain the Christian through the worst affliction.

- John Piper - “This is God’s universal purpose for all Christian suffering: more contentment in God and less satisfaction in the world.” ⁸⁹
- Richard Wurmbrand - “It was strictly forbidden to preach to other prisoners, as it is in captive nations today. It was understood that whoever was caught doing this received a severe beating. A number of us decided to pay the price for the privilege of preaching, so we accepted their terms. It was a deal: we preached and they beat us. We were happy preaching; they were happy beating us—so everyone was happy.” ⁹⁰

Richard Wurmbrand



Richard Wurmbrand
1909-2001

*“If the heart is cleansed
by the love of Jesus
Christ, and if the heart
loves Him, one can
resist all tortures.”*

Romanian pastor Richard Wurmbrand spent 14 years in prison for preaching the gospel. Although his captors smashed four of his vertebrae and either cut or burned 18 holes in his body, they could not defeat him. He testified, “Alone in my cell, cold, hungry, and in rags, I danced for joy every night.” During this time he turned to a fellow prisoner, a man he had led to the Lord before they were arrested, and asked, “Have you any resentment against me that I brought you to Christ?” His response: “I have no words to express my thankfulness that you brought me to the wonderful Savior. I would never have it another way.” These two men exemplify the heart-felt thankfulness that can be experienced by believers as the result of being severely persecuted.⁹¹

Notes



Undivided Affection.

“For to me, to live is Christ”

Philippians 1:21

① God desires His people to be

single-minded

- Psalm 27:4 - “*One thing* have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord And to meditate in His temple.”
- Philippians 4:13-14 - “... *one thing I do*: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”
- Matthew 6:31-33 - “Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’ For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But *seek first* His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”
- Colossians 3:1-2 - “Set your affection on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.”
- Helen H. Lemmel - “Turn you eyes upon Jesus, look full in His wonderful face. And the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace.” (Hymn) ⁹²

② Trials often help *refocus* our attention on Christ.

- 1 Kings 18:21 - “Elijah came near to all the people and said, ‘How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.’ But the people did not answer him a word.”
- Matthew 6:24 - “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”

Jim Elliot



Jim Elliot
1927-1956

“He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep, to gain what he cannot lose.”

In 1955 Jim Elliot was one of five missionaries who attempted to make contact with a fierce tribe of Indians called the Aucas (which translated means “savages”), deep within the dense rain forests of Ecuador. On Tuesday, January 3rd, 1956 the five men landed in a small Piper Cub plane and made camp, but on that Sunday afternoon, January 8th, all five missionaries were speared to death. Undaunted, Jim’s wife, Elisabeth Elliot, along with the sister of another one of the martyred missionaries were later able to share the message of Jesus Christ, in the Auca language, to the very men who had speared the five men to death. Comparing earthly treasures to heavenly rewards, Jim Elliot once wrote, “He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep, to gain what he cannot lose.”⁹³

Notes



Valor to Witness Boldly.

*"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the defense of my life; whom shall I dread?"*

Psalm 27:1

1 Only the Holy Spirit can produce

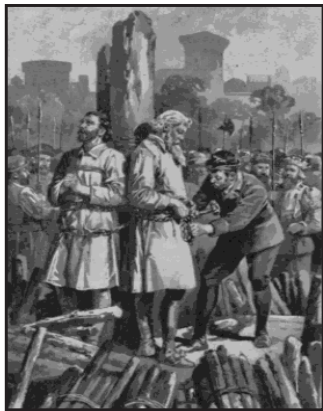
spiritual boldness

- Acts 1:8 - "... you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."
- Acts 4:31 - "And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness."

2 Trials and affliction give boldness the opportunity to spring into action.

- Daniel 3:16-18 - "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, 'O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.'"
- Acts 4:18-21 - "And when they had summoned them, they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said to them, 'Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard.' When they had threatened them further, they let them go..."
- Acts 5:27-42 - "When they had brought [the apostles], they stood them before the Council. The high priest questioned them, saying, 'We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name' ... But Peter and the apostles answered, 'We must obey God rather than men.' ... [then] they flogged them and ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and then released them. So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name. And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ."

Hugh Latimer & Nicholas Ridley



Hugh Latimer & Nicholas Ridley
Martyred October 2, 1555

*“So long as the
breath is in my body
I will never deny the
Lord and his known
truth; God’s will be
done to me.”*

Two years after Mary I, Queen of England (1553-1558) settled on the throne, she reestablished Roman Catholicism and bitterly persecuted the Protestants, earning her the nickname “Bloody Mary.” During her reign of terror, two of her most notable victims were protestant reformers Nicholas Ridley, bishop of London, and Hugh Latimer, bishop of Worcester. Condemned at St. Mary’s church in Oxford, Latimer and Ridley were sentenced to be burned at the stake. On October 2, 1555 the two friends were lead out to the north side of the tower of Oxford. Dr. Marshal, vice-chancellor of Oxford University urged them to recant. Ridley replied, “So long as the breath is in my body I will never deny the Lord and his known truth; God’s will be done to me.” When the fire was lit, 80 year old Latimer said to the much younger Ridley, “Be of good courage, brother Ridley, and play the man, for we shall this day light such a candle by God’s grace in England, as I trust shall never be put out.” ⁹⁴

Notes



Worship from the Heart.

*“When my heart is overwhelmed,
lead me to the Rock that is higher than I”*

Psalm 61:1

① God may sometimes leads His people into and then out of seemingly insurmountable circumstances to turn our whine into worship .

- Israel - They *whined* when they were trapped against the Red Sea as Pharaoh's armies were bearing down upon them (Ex. 14:1-14); then they *worshipped* after they crossed on dry land and Pharaoh's armies were drowned in the sea (Ex. 15:1-21).

② God uses affliction to test and even enhance the sincerity of our worship.

- Job - Divested of his possessions (Job 1:15-17), bereaved of his children (Job 1:18-19), and deprived of health (Job 2:7-8), yet Job praised God (Job 1:20-21; 13:15).
- Jeremiah - In the middle of one of the saddest books of the Bible, Jeremiah rejoiced in God's lovingkindness and compassion (Lam. 3:19-23)
- Paul and Silas - Imprisoned and in chains for their faith in Philippi, at midnight Paul and Silas began "praying and singing hymns of praise to God" (Acts 16:25)

③ The end result is that God desires that His people should be overwhelmed by God and not by our circumstances.

- Psalm 61:1 - "When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the Rock that is higher than I"

Israel at the Red Sea



**Red Sea Crossing
1450 B.C.**

*“I will sing unto the
Lord, for He hath
triumphed gloriously:
the horse and rider is
thrown into the sea.”*

Exodus 15:1

After ten miraculous plagues upon Egypt (Exodus, chap. 7-12), Pharaoh finally relented and released Israel from bondage (Ex. 12:30-32). Then God lead Israel in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night (Ex. 13:21-22), to a place where there backs were against the Red Sea (Ex. 14:1-2). But Pharaoh hardened his heart and chased after Israel with all of his army, horsemen, and chariots (Ex. 14:6-9). Israel had no weapons and no way of escape! As Pharaoh’s armies approached, Israel cried out against the Lord and His servant Moses (Ex. 14:10-12). “Be silent!” Moses shouted, then God parted the Red Sea and Israel crossed on dry land (Ex. 14:21-22). When Pharaoh’s armies pursued, the Lord released the waters and they drowned (Ex. 14:23-31). In Exodus 15, Israel worshiped and praised God for such a might victory (Ex. 15:1-21).

Notes



eXperiential Knowledge of Our Theology.

*“I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear;
but now my eye sees Thee”*

Job 42:5

① Until we experience trials in the Christian life our theology is theoretical .

- Job 42:5 - “I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye sees Thee”

② The true effectiveness of the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, is learned on the battlefield .

- Charles Spurgeon - “Men will never become great in theology until they become great in suffering” ⁹⁵
- Martin Luther - “Affliction is the best book in my library” ⁹⁶

The Sword is Made for War

“Historically, in periods of peace and prosperity, doctrine is treated like a vestigial organ in the body of Christ; that is, in many churches it no longer serves any *practical* purpose. But in truth, the Word of God is a sword (Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12). A sword is not made for peace time, but war. When life is easy, men forget the battle, like David on his rooftop, though his troops were at war (2 Sam. 11:1-2). So too, when life is easy, the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, is seldom drawn. O, we may play with it; we may take it out for fencing contests, as in public debate with those of a different sword. But in peace time the great doctrines of the Bible are treated more like a showpiece, a sword in a trophyroom. It is true, “When life is a picnic, we play with theology.” ⁹⁷

John Henry Jowett (1864-1923)

Dietrich Bonhoeffer



**Dietrich Bonhoeffer
1906-1945**

*“I’m learning to
practice myself what
I have said to other
people in sermons
and books.”*

Born in Germany in 1906, Dietrich Bonhoeffer was one of the few pastors in Germany who stood courageously in opposition to Adolph Hitler’s Nazi regime. Bonhoeffer’s efforts to help Jews escape from Germany led to his arrest and imprisonment in the spring 1943 where he spent much of his time writing. He wrote to his parents shortly after his arrest, “I’m learning to practice myself what I have said to other people in sermons and books.” In February, 1945, Bonhoeffer was moved to the Flossenbürg concentration camp where he was hanged on April 9, 1945, at the age of 39, just days before the camp was liberated by allied forces. The SS doctor who witnessed Bonhoeffer’s death stated that he was a man “devout, brave and composed ... I have hardly ever seen a man die so entirely submissive to the will of God.” ⁹⁸

Notes



Yieldedness in Areas that We are Stubborn.

“Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Your word.”

Psalm 119:67

① Two ways God breaks down areas where we are stubborn:

A. He D~~raws~~ us with A f~~fection~~ to Himself.

- Jeremiah 31:3 - “The Lord appeared to him from afar, saying, “I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness.”
- Romans 2:4 - “Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?”

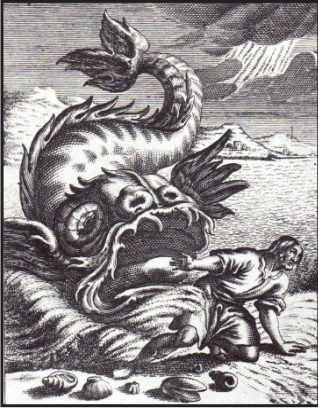
B. He D~~rives~~ us with A f~~fiction~~ to Himself.

- Psalm 119:67 - “Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Your word.”
- Hebrews 12:5-6 - “ My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reproved by Him; for those whom the Lord loves he disciplines and He scourges every son whom He receives.”
- Revelation 3:19 - “Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent.”

② By His Spirit working in us, the Lord uses these methods to S~~overeignly~~ overcome stubborn areas of sin in our lives.

- John Piper - “Therefore every instance of turning from sin to righteousness is due to the irresistible work of God, who transforms the mind and heart so that the believer prefers righteousness over sin. I conclude, therefore, that no Christian determines ultimately whether he will overcome a temptation to sin. God determines that.”⁹⁹
- Philippians 1:6 - “For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.”

Jonah



The Prophet Jonah
~782 B.C.

*“for I know that on
account of me this
great storm has come
upon you.”*

God commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian Empire, to call the Assyrians to repentance (1:2). The Assyrians were legendary for their cruelty and violence. Assyrian rulers boasted of their brutal treatment of the peoples they conquered. Ancient depictions show their enemies beheaded, children disembowelled, and pregnant women ripped open. Even the thought that he should preach to the Assyrians repulsed Jonah, and the possibility that they might repent and God would show mercy on them was even unacceptable (Jonah 3:10-4:4). And so, Jonah boarded a ship in the port city of Joppa and headed the opposite direction toward Tarshish (1:3). But God appointed a great fish (1:17, 2:10) to bring His reluctant prophet back to preach in Ninevah (3:2-3), and the city did indeed repent (3:5-9).¹⁰⁰

Notes



Zeal for the Glory of God.

“zeal for Your house has consumed me” - Psalm 69:9

① God detests Christian commitment that is luke-warm and may use trials and affliction to stir up zeal.

- Revelation 3:14-19 - “To the angel of the church in Laodicea write ... I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. ... Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent.”
- Charles Spurgeon - “Take care of giving up your first zeal; beware of cooling in the least degree. Ye were hot and earnest once; be hot and earnest still, and let the fire which once burnt within you still animate you. Be ye still men of might and vigour, men who serve their God with diligence and zeal.” ¹⁰¹

② True Christian zeal springs from the heart that has an all-consuming desire for the glory of the Lord.

- Ezra 7:23 - “Whatever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be done with zeal for the house of the God of heaven”
- Charles Spurgeon - “If you never have sleepless hours, if you never have weeping eyes, if your heart never swells as if it would burst ... You do not know the beginning of true zeal, for the foundation of Christian zeal lies in the heart. The heart must be heavy with grief and yet must beat high with holy ardor. The heart must be vehement in desire, panting continually for God’s glory, or else we shall never attain to anything like the zeal which God would have us know.” ¹⁰²

③ Zeal is distinguished from ordinary religious affections, by the trials and affliction it overcomes to serve the Lord.

Susannah Spurgeon



Susannah Spurgeon
1832-1903

*“The moment we
come into any trial
or difficulty, our first
thought should be
... how can we best
glorify God in it.”*

In 1855, Susannah Thompson married a young man by the name of Charles Haddon Spurgeon, who was destined to become one of the most famous preachers of all time. By the time she was 33, however, Susannah was bed-ridden with a chronic illness. But her weakened condition only aroused her zeal. During this time she wrote, “The moment we come into any trial or difficulty, our first thought should be, not how soon can we escape from it, or how we may lessen the pain we shall suffer from it, but how can we best glorify God in it.” From her bedside, Susannah started a book fund, in order to place Christian materials into the hands of ministers too poor to afford them. Initially Susannah used money that she had saved for her own personal use for this effort. Impressed by the example of his frail wife, Charles Spurgeon wrote, “For most human maladies, the best relief and antidote will be found in the self-sacrificing work for the Lord Jesus.”¹⁰³

Notes

Lesson 4 Review

1. What does affliction say about our sonship?
(Hebrews 12:7-8)

That we are true sons of God, but without it we are illegitimate.

2. How can affliction further the gospel?
(Philippians 1:12)

By waking us out of our apathy & stirring up boldness.

3. How can affliction equip us to minister to others?
(2 Corinthians 1:3-5)

By producing in us compassion for others who are afflicted.

4. How can affliction affect our fellowship with Christ?
(Psalm 46:1; Daniel 3:23-25)

By drawing us closer to Him.

5. How can affliction help us in our sanctification?
(Psalm 66:10, 119:67)

By revealing impurities and by producing repentance and obedience.

6. How can affliction help our prayer life?
(Psalm 120:1)

By producing a greater urgency and fervency in our prayer.

7. How can affliction improve our theology?
(Job 42:5)

By giving us real life applications of what we say we believe.

Romans 8:18**Spiritual Warfare****Present Sufferings, Future Glory**

“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.”

Lesson 4**Affliction****2 Corinthians 4:17****Spiritual Warfare****Momentary Affliction, Eternal Glory**

“For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison”

Lesson 4**Affliction****1 Peter 4:19****Spiritual Warfare****According to the Will of God**

“Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.”

Lesson 4**Affliction**

5 || ANXIETY, ADDICTION, etc.

Fight the Good Fight of Faith

A. Anxiety & Worry	115
B. Fear	119
C. Depression	127
D. Addictions	133

A Anxiety & Worry.

❶ Some causes identified in Scripture.

- a. Unconfessed sin .
 - Psalm 38:18 - “I am full of *anxiety* because of my sin.”
 - b. Worry about basic provisions .
 - Matthew 6:25-30 - “Do not be *anxious* for your life, as to what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, as to what you shall put on. . . . And which of you by being anxious can add a single cubit to his life’s span? And why are you anxious about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory did not clothe himself like one of these. But if God so arrays the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more do so for you, O men of little faith?”
 - c. Worry about the future .
 - Matthew 6:34 - “Therefore do not be *anxious* for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”
 - d. The fear of man .
 - Luke 12:11-12 - “And when they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not become *anxious* about how or what you should speak in your defense, or what you should say; for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say. ”
-

Antithesis of Trust

“Worry is the antithesis of trust. You simply cannot do both. They are mutually exclusive.” ¹⁰⁴

Elisabeth Elliot (1926-Present)



Stop & Think

☼ What is the difference between godly concern and sinful anxiety?

concern + unbelief = anxiety

concern + belief = biblical virtue

(2 Cor. 11:28)

Anxiety Maligns God

“Worry shows that we are mastered by our circumstances and by our own finite perspectives and understanding, rather than by God’s Word. Worry is therefore not only debilitating and destructive but maligns and impugns God.” ¹⁰⁵

John MacArthur (1939-Present)



② Side-effects of anxiety.

God's Word is choked out .

- Matthew 13:22 - “And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.”

③ Some cures identified in Scripture.

a. *Reprioritize Christ first* .

- Matthew 6:31-33 - “Do not be *anxious* then, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘With what shall we clothe ourselves?’ For all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you.”

b. *Pray with thanksgiving* .

- Philippians 4:6-7 - “Be *anxious* for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

c. *Meditate on God's promises* .

- Psalms 94:19 - “When my *anxious* thoughts multiply within me, Thy consolations delight my soul.”

d. *Take control of your thought life* .

- 2 Corinthians 10:5 - “take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.”
- Philippians 4:8-9 - “Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things. The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things; and the God of peace shall be with you.”
- 1 Peter 5:7 - “cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.”

The Effect of Anxiety

“Anxiety does not empty tomorrow of its sorrows, but only empties today of its strength.” ¹⁰⁶

Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892)



Stop & Think

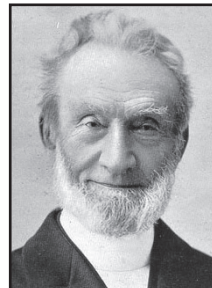
☼ What are some other side effects of anxiety and worry?

*Ulcers, high blood pressure,
hypertension, insomnia, anger,
irrational behavior, breakdown of
relationships, self-centeredness,
depression, poor testimony.*

The End of Anxiety

“The beginning of anxiety is the end of faith, and the beginning of true faith is the end of anxiety.” ¹⁰⁷

George Müller (1805-1898)



B Fear.

① Some common & uncommon earthly fears.

a. The fear of man. (Anthropophobia)

- Deuteronomy 1:17 – “You shall not fear man”
- Proverbs 29:25 – “The fear of man brings a snare”
- Edward T. Welch - “The ‘fear of man’ goes by other names. When we are in our teens, it is called ‘peer pressure.’ When we are older, it is called ‘people-pleasing.’ Recently, it has been called ‘codependency.’” ¹⁰⁸

b. The fear of death. (Thanatophobia)

- Hebrews 2:14-15 - Christ died “that through death He might ... free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.”
- Sinclair Ferguson - “Without redemption in Christ, we are lifelong slaves to the fear of death. We see this in all non-Christian funerals ... The fear of death is the mother of all fears. Psychobabble abounds over the fears people have. The world is awash in insecurities. Only Christ delivers from the fear of death.” ¹⁰⁹

c. The fear of the unknown.

- Charles Spurgeon - “The worst evils of life are those which do not exist except in our imagination. If we had no troubles but real troubles, we should not have a tenth part of our present sorrows.” ¹¹⁰

d. Man’s plethora of phobias & insecurities.

- Alektorophobia - Fear of chickens
- Alliumphobia - Fear of garlic
- Anglophobia - Fear of the English
- Anthophobia - Fear of flowers
- Chaetophobia - Fear of hair
- Barophobia - Fear of gravity
- Oviphobia - Fear of sheep
- Homilophobia - Fear of sermons



*“The only thing
we have to fear
is fear itself”*

FDR

(1882-1945)

Phobaphobia?

Afraid of Death?

Afraid? Of what?
To feel the spirit's glad release?
To pass from pain to perfect peace,
The strife and strain of life to cease?
Afraid? Of that?

Afraid? Of what?
Afraid to see the Saviour's face,
To hear His welcome, and to trace,
The glory gleam from wounds of grace,
Afraid? Of that?

Afraid? Of what?
A flash - a crash - a pierced heart;
Brief darkness - Light - O Heaven's art!
A wound of His a counterpart!
Afraid? Of that?

Afraid? Of what
To enter into Heaven's rest,
And yet to serve the Master blessed?
From service good to service best?
Afraid? Of that?

Afraid? Of what?
To do by death what life could not -
Baptize with blood a stony plot,
Till souls shall blossom from the spot?
Afraid? Of that? ¹¹¹

Poem written by E. H. Hamilton after hearing of the death of his missionary colleague Jack Vinson who was martyred in 1931, telling his Chinese captors, "Kill me if you wish. I will go straight to God."

② Some spiritual cures.

*“For God has not given us a spirit of fear,
but of power and love and discipline.” - 2 Timothy 1:7*

a. *Trust in the Lord* _____ .

- Psalm 34:4 – “I sought the Lord, and He answered me, and delivered me from all my fears.”
- Psalm 56:11 – “In God I have put my trust, I shall not be afraid. What can man do to me?” (cf. Psa. 118:6)
- Psalm 23:4 – “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for Thou art with me”
- Proverbs 29:25 – “The fear of man brings a snare, but he who trusts in the Lord will be exalted.”
- Isaiah 12:2 – “Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid”

b. *Fear of the Lord* _____ .

- Edward T. Welch – “We stand at the crossroads between fear of others and fear of God. The road leading to the fear of man may be expressed in terms of favoritism, wanting others to think well of you, fearing exposure by them, or being overwhelmed by their perceived physical power. When these fears are not combated with the fear of the Lord, the consequences can be devastating. But when God is given his rightful place in our lives, old bonds can be shattered.” ¹¹²
- Matt. 10:28 – “And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”

c. *Magnify the Lord* _____ .

- Psalm 27:1,3 – “The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the defense of my life; whom shall I dread? ... Though a host encamp against me, my heart will not fear”
- Psalm 91:1,5 – “He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High Will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. ... 5 You will not be afraid of the terror by night, or of the arrow that flies by day.” (Read all of Psalm 91)

Remedy for Fear

“The most radical treatment for the fear of man is the fear of the Lord. God must be bigger to you than people are.” ¹¹³

Edward T. Welch (1954-Present)



Stop & Think

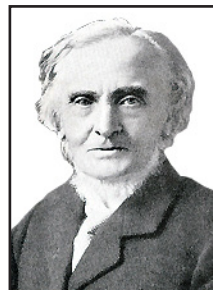
☼ What does it mean to “magnify” the Lord, and how can it help us overcome earthly fears?

It means to see God as bigger than we previously considered, i.e. infinitely bigger than our problems.

When God is My Strength

“Only he who can say, ‘The Lord is the strength of my life’ can say, ‘Of whom shall I be afraid?’” (Psalm 27:1). ¹¹⁴

Alexander MacLaren (1826-1910)



③ Fear of the Lord: Both an OT & NT concept.

Old Testament

Deut. 6:13 – “fear only the Lord your God”

Deut. 10:12 – “...what does the Lord your God require from you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul”

1 Sam. 12:24 – “Only fear the Lord and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you.”

2 Chron. 19:7 – “Now then let the fear of the Lord be upon you; be very careful what you do, for the Lord our God will have no part in unrighteousness...”

Psalms 34:9 – “O fear the Lord, you His saints; for to those who fear Him, there is no want.”

Psalms 103:11 – “For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him.”

Psalms 103:17 – “But the lovingkindness of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children’s children”

Eccles. 8:12 – “I know that it will be well for those who fear God, who fear Him openly.”

Eccles. 12:13 – “The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person.”

Isa. 8:13 – “It is the Lord of hosts whom you should regard as holy. And He shall be your fear, and He shall be your dread.”

Isa. 66:2 – “But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word.”

Jer. 32:40 – “And I will make an everlasting covenant with them that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; and I will put the fear of Me in their hearts so that they will not turn away from Me.”

New Testament

Matt. 10:28 – “And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” cf. Lk 12:5

Acts 9:31 – “So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and, going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase.”

2 Cor. 5:10-11 – “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ ... Therefore knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men...”

2 Cor. 7:1 – “Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

Eph. 5:21 – “and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.”

Phil. 2:12 – “So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling”

Heb. 4:1 – “Therefore, let us fear lest, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it.”

1 Pet. 1:17 – “And if you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each man’s work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay upon earth”

1 Pet. 2:17 – “Honor all men; love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.”

Rev. 14:7 – “and he said with a loud voice, ‘Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters.’”

An Old Testament Concept?

“Some seem to think the fear of God is strictly an Old Testament concept that passed away... [but] one of the blessings of the new covenant is the implanting in believers’ hearts of the fear of the Lord. In Jeremiah 32:40 God said, ‘I will make an everlasting covenant with them ... and I will put the fear of Me in their hearts so that they will not turn away from Me.’”¹¹⁵

Jerry Bridges (1929-Present)



Stop & Think

☼ What does 1 John 4:17-18 mean when it says that “perfect love casts out fear”?

*Whoever accepts and confesses
Jesus Christ's substitutionary
atonement (v. 14-15), abides in God's
love (v. 16), and this love casts
out the fear of God's wrath
and punishment (v. 17-18).*

Love & Fear of God

“No man more truly loves God than he that is most fearful to offend Him.”¹¹⁶

Thomas Adams (1583-1652)



4 Definition of the Fear of the Lord.

Filial dread of displeasing our Father

- Malachi 1:6 - "A son honors his father, and a servant his master. Then if I am a father, where is My honor? And if I am a master, where is My *fear*?" says the Lord of hosts to you"
- 1 Peter 1:17 - "If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in *fear* during the time of your stay on earth"

Elipsing fear of anything/anyone else

- Isaiah 8:12-13 - "And you are not to fear what they fear or be in dread of it. It is the Lord of hosts whom you should regard as holy. And He shall be your *fear*, and He shall be your dread."
- Matt. 10:28 - "Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather *fear* Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

Awareness of accountability to God

[1] Words	[2] Actions	[3] Thoughts	[4] Motives	[5] Attitudes
(Mt. 12:36)	(2 Cor. 5:10)	(Psa. 139:1-2)	(Prov. 16:2)	(Jer. 12:3)

- 2 Cor. 5:10-11 - "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Therefore, knowing the *fear* of the Lord, we persuade men..."
- Phil. 2:12 - "So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with *fear* and trembling"

Reverence and awe

- Heb. 12:28-29 - "Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with *reverence and awe*; for our God is a consuming fire."
- Isaiah 66:2 - "But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who *trembles* at My word."

NOTE

- The Christian should fear God's discipline which may be sorrowful (Heb. 12:5-11), but should never fear God's punishment or wrath (1 John 4:17-18; Rom. 5:9; 1 Thess. 1:10, 5:9).
- The non-Christian, on the other hand, should fear the wrath of God (Rev. 14:9-11; Rom. 1:18-20, 2:5, 9:22; Eph. 2:1-3; 5:5-6; Col. 3:5-6)

Focus of the Fear of God

“For the child of God, the primary meaning of the fear of God is veneration and honor, reverence and awe. It is the attitude that elicits from our hearts adoration and love, reverence and honor. It focuses not upon the wrath of God but upon the majesty, holiness, and transcendent glory of God.”¹¹⁷

John Murray (1898-1975)



Stop & Think

☼ How should God's discipline of His children play into a wholesome fear of the Lord?
(Read Hebrews 12:4-11)

*"all discipline for the moment
seems not to be joyful,
but sorrowful" (v. 11);
"scourging" (v. 6) is painful.*

An Eclipsing Fear

“The fear of the Lord tends to take away all other fears... This is the secret of Christian courage and boldness.”¹¹⁸

Sinclair Ferguson (1948-Present)



C Depression.

① Some causes identified in Scripture.

a. *Unconfessed Sin.*

- Psalm 32:3-4 - “When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night Thy hand was heavy upon me; my vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer.”
- Biblical Counseling Foundation - “Depression is not a disease. While there are some organic malfunctions that may trigger feelings of depression, many symptoms and maladies defined as depression (whether short-lived or chronic) are the consequences of unbiblical habits and/or sinful reactions to circumstances and other people. Depression that stems from unbiblical living can be overcome as you deal biblically with your sins and purposefully live in a manner that is pleasing to the Lord.” ¹¹⁹

b. *Guilt & feelings of remorse.*

- Matthew 26:74-75 - “Then [Peter] began to curse and swear, ‘I do not know the man!’ And immediately a cock crowed. And Peter remembered the word which Jesus had said, ‘Before a cock crows, you will deny Me three times.’ And he went out and *wept bitterly*.”

c. *Anger*

- Genesis 4:5 - “but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his *countenance fell*.”
- Jonah 4:1, 3 - “But it greatly displeased Jonah, and he became angry. ... Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for death is better to me than life.”

d. *Fear of people*

- Psalm 6 - “I am pining away ... my bones are dismayed” (v.2), “my soul is greatly dismayed” (v.3), “I am weary with my sighing; every night I make my bed swim, I dissolve my couch with my tears.” (v.6), “my eye has wasted away with grief; It has become old because of all my adversaries.”

Causes of Depression

“So what is the cause of depression? That is like asking, what is the cause of suffering? There are at least five different causes. First, we can cause our depression. Our own sin, unbelief, commitment to our interpretations instead of searching for God’s interpretation can all be causes of depression. Second, other people can cause our depression. A steady diet of discouraging words from people who are supposed to love us, or sexual violation and its shame can certainly contribute to depression. Third, our bodies can cause depression. Our bodies can’t create hopelessness or loss of purpose, but they can disrupt sleep, fog our thinking, and cause us to have the physical feelings of depression. Fourth, Satan, arguably, can cause depression. He can afflict the body and heap accusations on the sensitive conscience. Fifth, God is over all things, including suffering and depression. We can say that He allows it, and we can say that there are times when He ordains it.” ¹²⁰

Edward T. Welch (1954-Present)

Stop & Think

☼ What are some specific physical and psychological causes of depression?

*Loss of a loved one, loss
of a job, financial struggles,
prolonged illness, weight gain,
divorce, rejection by a child
(P.S. these can also be
results of depression)*

② Some side-effects of depression.

Ill health

- Proverbs 17:22 - “A joyful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit dries up the bones.”
- Psalms 32:3-4 - “When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night Thy hand was heavy upon me; my vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer.”

③ Some cures for depression.

a. *Confession & repentance*

- Acts 3:19 - “Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.”

b. *Forget what lies behind*

- Philippians 3:13-14 - “forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”
- D. Marty Lloyd-Jones - “Would you like to be rid of this spiritual depression? The first thing you have to do is to say farewell now once and for ever to your past. Realize that it has been covered and blotted out in Christ. Never look back at your sins again. Say: ‘It is finished; it is covered by the Blood of Christ.’ That is your first step. Take that and finish with yourself and all this talk about goodness, and look to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is only then that true happiness and joy are possible for you. What you need is not to make resolutions to live a better life, to start fasting and sweating and praying. No! You just begin to say: I rest my faith on Him alone who died for my transgressions to atone.”¹²¹

c. *Obedience*

- Genesis 4:7 - “If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.”

Balancing Medicine & Christianity

“Medication for some people functions like aspirin in that it might alleviate symptoms, but not necessarily treat causes. People, of course, are free to take medication. Medication should, however, come with a warning. Medication cannot address spiritual matters. It can help a person sleep, and it might alleviate some pain, but it does not have the power to build faith. Too often, those who take medication adopt the medical perspective that comes with it, that is, that the cause of depression is the physical body. Then they are less inclined to fight the spiritual battle that inevitably emerges with depression, and they are slower to turn to Christ for spiritual strength. Regardless of the cause of depression, the deepest reality is that suffering, on this side of the cross, has redemptive purposes. When sufferers understand that God has a purpose in suffering, they tend to pause before they reach for the psychiatric medication.” ¹²²

Edward T. Welch (1954-Present)

Stop & Think



What does it mean to
“forget what lies behind”? (Phil. 3:13-14)

[1] Confess and repent of past mistakes (1 John 1:9); [2] accept Christ's forgiveness (Rom. 8:1); and [3] move on. [4] Don't let past failure paralyze current & future service.

d. *Do the next thing* .

- Elisabeth Elliot - “[The apostle Paul writes,] ‘In conclusion, my brothers, delight yourselves in the Lord!...You will find it a great safeguard to your souls’ (Phil 3:1). ... This is a command and therefore an act of the will, and it is done in the Lord. No circumstance is so dismal as to prevent obedience to the command. No trouble can blast that safeguard. Do it. Do it by faith. Delight yourself in the Lord. Maybe you will have to get out of bed, get up from your chair, go outdoors and walk, sing a song out loud, bake a pie for somebody, or mow the lawn as an offering of praise. You can do something which will help you to obey that command. It is amazing how strongly what we do affects how we feel.” ¹²³

e. *Trust in the Lord with all your heart* .

- Proverbs 3:5-8 - “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your body, and refreshment to your bones.”

f. *Preach the Gospel to yourself* .

- Psalm 42:5, 11 - “Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him, the help of my countenance, and my God.”
- D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones - “Have you realized that most of your unhappiness in life is due to the fact that you are listening to yourself instead of talking to yourself? Take those thoughts that come to you the moment you wake up in the morning. You have not originated them, but they start talking to you, they bring back the problem of yesterday, etc. Somebody is talking. Who is talking to you? Your self is talking to you. Now [David’s] treatment [in Psalm 42] was this; instead of allowing this self to talk to him, he starts talking to himself, ‘Why art thou cast down, O my soul?’ he asks. His soul had been repressing him, crushing him. So he stands up and says: ‘Self, listen for a moment, I will speak to you’.” ¹²⁴

g. *Pray without ceasing* .

- Philippians 4:6-7 - “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

Do the Next Thing

From an old English parsonage, down by the sea
There came in the twilight a message to me;
Its quaint Saxon legend, deeply engraven,
Hath, as it seems to me, teaching from Heaven.
And on through the hours the quiet words ring
Like a low inspiration -- "DO THE NEXT THING."

Many a question, many of fear,
Many a doubt, hath its quieting here.
Moment by moment, let down from Heaven,
Time, opportunity, guidance, are given.
Fear not tomorrows, Child of the King,
Trust them with Jesus, "DO THE NEXT THING."

Do it immediately; do it with prayer;
Do it reliantly, casting all care;
Do it with reverence, tracing His Hand
Who placed it before thee with earnest command.
Stayed on Omnipotence, safe 'neath His wing,
Leave all resultings, "DO THE NEXT THING."

Looking to Jesus, ever serener,
(Working or suffering) be thy demeanor,
In His dear presence, the rest of His calm,
The light of His countenance be thy psalm,
Strong in His faithfulness, praise and sing,
Then, as He beckons thee, "DO THE NEXT THING."¹²⁵

Author unknown

D Addictions.

1 Descriptions & definitions.

- 1 John 2:16-17 - “For all that is in the world, *the lust of the flesh* and *the lust of the eyes* and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.”
- Titus 3:3 - “For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, *enslaved to various lusts and pleasures*, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another.” -
- James 1:14-15 - “But each one is tempted when he is *carried away and enticed by his own lust*. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.”
- 1 Peter 2:11 - Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from *fleshly lusts, which wage war* against the soul.”
- Ephesians 2:1-3 - “And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, *indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind*, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.”
- Edward T. Welch - “The Bible has a different view of how we first get involved in addictions. Instead of explaining the overpowering urge for [something] as a disease, the Bible talks about our motivations and desires, forces so powerful that they can take over our lives. The Bible says that we first choose our addictions, and only then do our addictions choose us.” ¹²⁶
- Edward T. Welch - “If we allow the Bible to reveal the unseen spiritual realities behind addictions, we suddenly realize that addictions are more than self-destructive behaviors. They are violations of God’s laws: His laws that call us to avoid drunkenness and immoderate self-indulgence (Rom. 13:13), His law that calls us to love others (1 John 4:7), and His law that calls us to live for Him rather than ourselves (1 Cor. 10:31). This means that addiction is more about someone’s relationship with God than it is about biology. It reveals our allegiances: what we want, what we love, whom and what we serve. It brings us to that all-important question, ‘Will you live for the fulfillment of your desires or for God?’” ¹²⁷

Freedom From Bondage

“When individuals rebel against God, they don’t achieve freedom. They fall into bondage, because rebellion is sin, and sin is a tyrant. On the other hand, when men and women submit to God, becoming his slaves, they become truly free. They achieve the ability fully to become the special, unique beings that God created them to be.” ¹²⁸

James Montgomery Boice (1938-2000)



Stop & Think

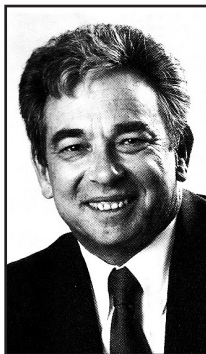
☼ What does 1 Corinthians 6:12 say about addiction and the Christian’s will?

Paul’s says I will not be mastered by anything (except Christ). It is a choice.

Overcome Persistent Sin

“If we are not careful with what we look at, listen to, or think about, we may also join the list of believers who introduced tragedy into their lives due to the temporary reign of sin. If you struggle with a persistent sin, turn it over to God today, lest it master you. If necessary, seek accountability and counseling to overcome it.” ¹²⁹

R. C. Sproul (1939-Present)



② The born again Christian is the only person with a truly free will. Nevertheless, a Christian with an addiction is still living like a slave, even though he has been set free.

- John 8:31-32, 34, 36 - “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you *free*. ... Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the *slave* of sin. ... So if the Son makes you *free*, you will be *free* indeed.”
- Romans 6:12-18 - “Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be! Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as *slaves* for obedience, you are *slaves* of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? But thanks be to God that though you were *slaves* of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been *freed* from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.”
- 2 Peter 2:19 - “... for by what a man is overcome, by this he is *enslaved*.”

③ Breaking habitual sin.

(See Pages 21-24,
overcoming the flesh)



Can a Christian Have an Addiction?

“Can Christians be addicted? I always like a question to which I can give a direct answer, and the answer here is ‘Yes’. We live in bodies, and with hearts and minds, that if exposed to sin are often brought into bondage to those sins. Different people have different predispositions to addiction. For some it is alcohol, for others it is pornography or nicotine ... Let me say a word of encouragement, therefore, to all you sin addicts. Maybe it is a substance addiction, like alcoholism, or maybe a certain sin that has taken root in your flesh, in your mind, in your heart. It could be pornography; it could be vicious speech. In all of these cases, you can be delivered by the power of God through Jesus Christ and the working of the Holy Spirit. Christians can go beyond the mere coping offered by groups like Alcoholics Anonymous – groups who offer people real help but not deliverance. You can be delivered because of the power of God available in Jesus Christ. Indeed, all who have come to Jesus are being delivered not just from this sin or that, but to sin itself. Jesus Christ is leading us out of our sinful state even now, sanctifying us progressively so that we are becoming more and more holy. Progressive deliverance from sin is the normal experience of a growing Christian. For those areas where we as individuals are particularly under sin’s influence, we need to turn to God in faith and prayer, asking for a new work of power in our lives.”¹³⁰

Richard Phillips

Stop & Think

☼ What does the apostle Paul mean when he says to “present yourselves to God ... and your members as instruments of righteousness to God”?

*Present yourselves in absolute
dependence and unconditional
surrender to God.*

Lesson 5 Review

1. Why is worry a sin?

Because it is a lack of faith (distrust) in God.

2. What is the difference between godly concern and sinful anxiety?

Faith in God.

3. What is the best cure for the fear of man?

The fear of the Lord.

4. What does the Bible mean when it says that perfect love casts out fear? (1 John 4:17-18)

True love for God, casts out the fear of His wrath.

5. When depression paralyzes activity, what is the most practical principle to apply?

Do the next thing.

6. Why are addictions a contradiction to the Christian's life?

Because addictions are slavery to sin (John 8:34), but the Christian has been set free from sin (John 8:36).

1 Peter 5:7**Spiritual Warfare****Cast Your Cares Upon Him**

“cast all your anxiety on Him,
because He cares for you.”

Lesson 5**Anxiety, Anger & Addiction****Psalms 42:5****Spiritual Warfare****Hope for the Hopeless**

“Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have
you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I
shall again praise Him for the help of His presence.”

Lesson 5**Anxiety, Anger & Addiction****1 Corinthians 6:12****Spiritual Warfare****Christ Our Only Master**

“All things are lawful for me, but not all things are
profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will
not be mastered by anything.”

Lesson 5**Anxiety, Anger & Addiction**

Endnotes

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“The sum of Thy Word is truth” - Psa. 119:160

- Who are the Christian's spiritual allies and what are their resources and abilities?
- Who or what are the Christian's spiritual adversaries and what are their abilities and limitations?
- What defenses can the Christian rely upon for spiritual warfare?
- What are the Christian's primary spiritual weapons?
- What are God's purposes for affliction?
- How is dealing with affliction related to spiritual warfare.

PURPOSE Answers to these and many more of life's most important questions are explored in four biblically-based chapters, written to help Christians grow in Christ and to glorify and enjoy the Lord.