

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

LESSON ONE

2 Tim. 2:1-3

- 1. You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.*
- 2. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.*
- 3. You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.*

Ef. 6:10-12

- 10. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.*
- 11. Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*
- 12. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

Why should we become strong in the Lord and put on God's full armour?

Because we are in a spiritual battle against the kingdom of darkness.

Many christians around the world, don't like talking about this, even less practicing spiritual warfare.

One of the goals of satan is making us not to use the weapons we have got from God.

He knows that if the children of God, his church, is using their weapons that he has given them, the enemy, the devil has to release the grip he has on those he keeps in bondage.

But when the church of God seriously starts to fight against the powers of darkness, whole cities and nations will be changed, because the powers of darkness have to give up and the kingdom of God will be manifested.

What is war?

It's an act of power, an act of force for the purpose of expanding the kingdom, making the will of the enemy to submit to the own will.

The means for this is: power, offensive, trained soldiers, and strong weapons.

If the church is passive, the enemy has the advantage.

But if the church is on the offensive line, it will take over the territory of the enemy and the kingdom of God will expand. That's the purpose with spiritual warfare.

We are in this war, whether we like it or not. So we just have to like it, and get used to it.

When we talk about spiritual war we have to understand that it's not a war between humans and countries.

War is horrible. The war between Iran and Iraq took so many young peoples lives, totally in vain. It is nothing that God is blessing. What we are talking about is the spiritual fight that we are in. The one that Jesus won two thousand years ago on Calvary.

A short review from the topic "Angels and demons."

Jesus has totally defeated satan

He is disarmed and it was done after Jesus died and resurrected from the dead.

Col. 2:15

Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

We are standing between the D-day and victory.

During the second world war the allies stormed the shores of Normandie, France, 6th of June 1944 – known as the D-day. That battle, that day was the definite turning point of the war. But it was not until the following year when germans and japanese officially wrote the document of surrender. But the year between D-day and the victory was the bloodiest year during the whole war! More people were killed than during any other earlier year. The enemy knew that he didn't have much time left and if he would come anywhere, he had to act quick and forcefully. The church today stands between D-day and the victory. The D-day was when Jesus was crucified for the sins of the world. Techniqually satan was defeated. But until Jesus comes back in victory and restores his kingdom and force satan to surrender all his authority to him, the church is in the end phase of the war. Therefore we are now facing an intensive resistance.

But if we fight according to the rules, we always will win!

God is a God of battle

Is. 42:13

The Lord shall go forth like a mighty man; He shall stir up His zeal like a man of war. He shall cry out, yet, shout aloud; He shall prevail against His enemies.

Eph. 5:1

Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.

God wants us to be his followers. If God is a God of battle who fights for love, mercy and justice, we should also do that.

But remember:

We are not fighting against flesh and blood. We are fighting against the enemy of darkness. It's a spiritual battle. It can only be won with spiritual weapons.

Neh. 4:7-14

7. Now it happened, when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the Ashodites heard that the walls of Jerusalem were being restored and the gaps were beginning to be closed, that they became very angry,

8. and all of them conspired together to come and attack Jerusalem and create confusion.

9. Nevertheless we made our prayer to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night.

10. Then Judah said, "The strength of the laborers is failing, and there is so much rubbish that we are not able to build the wall."

11. And our adversaries said, "They will neither know nor see anything, till we come into their midst and kill them and cause the work to cease."

12. So it was, when the Jews who dwelt near them came, that they told us ten times, "From whatever place you turn, they will be upon us."

13. Therefore I positioned men behind the lower parts of the wall, at the openings; and I set the people according to their families, with their swords, their spears, and their bows.

14. And I looked, and arose and said to the nobles, to the leaders, and to the rest of the people, “Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, great and awesome, and fight for your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses.”

We are already aware of our enemy’s goal

Joh 10:10

The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

The thief, that’s the devil, satan. He has only one goal. To steal, kill and destroy.

But we have received power and ability both to defend us and drive the enemy on the run.

More about this later.

The will of God is that all of us will come into that which God has for us. A richness of all good.

The fullness of God’s kingdom!

Eph. 1:3

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.

1 Pet. 5:8-11.

8. *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*

9. *Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same suffering are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.*

10. *But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.*

11. *To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

The devil is going around like a roaring lion. He is not a lion, but he tries to be one. We are exhorted to resist him.

The spiritual life is a growing process. We grow exactly like children are growing. By feeding on the word of God, receiving the love we need from God, we develop into mature spiritfilled believers.

Eph. 4:13-15

13. *till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;*

14. *that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,*

15. *but speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ.*

How great is our power?

Eph 1:19-23

19. and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power
20. which he worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,
21. far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.
22. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church,
23. which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Jesus' victory on Calvary is here described. He went down to the kingdom of death. There Jesus took the keys from the devil. After that God took him out and put him on His right hand side. This is the mightiest work that God has ever done. The powers of darkness believed that they had defeated Jesus. But they were ashamed. Jesus triumphed over all the powers of darkness.

That power that was released over Jesus, that power is for you who believe! Wow! It is at work (is functioning here and now) in every believers life. No wonder satan doesn't want us to understand this fact and even less put it to practice. The power that we have in Jesus is so mighty that nothing can stop that which God has decided. He has given us all power we need for every situation.

Col 1: 28-29

28. Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.
29. To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.

The reason why God wants us to be stronger in his power is because he wants us to develop into mature christians and be able to bear heavier loads and take more responsibility. When you are newly saved you only take responsibility for your own life. You eat the food of his word, and grow in maturity. For every step that you then take in responsibility, a heavier opposition will come against you from the enemy. But at the same time you receive more grace and power from God. Therefore God wants us to grow in His mighty power.

LESSON TWO

The armour of God

John. 8:31-32

31. Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed in Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.
32. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

The only weapon that satan has is deception. As long as he can keep people in ignorance of the truth, he can defeat them, deceive them and scare them.

The armour which God has given us, consists most of tearing down wrong thoughts and wrong imaginations.

When we have put on the armour of God, the enemy is not a problem for us. He has to leave us through a word from our mouth in the name of Jesus.

Ef. 6:10-18

10. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

11. Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

13. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

14. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on th breastplate of righteousness,

15. and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

16. above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

17. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;

18. praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perserverance and supplication for all the saints.

⌘ Waist of truth

The loins is the part between the ribs and the hips. The roman soldiers girdle of leather was the most important part of their armour. It not only held the armour in place, but also carried the sword.

You need to know the “truth” about:

Who you are in Christ.

What Christ has done for you.

What you have in Christ.

⌘ Not what Jesus can do!

⌘ Not what Jesus will do!

⌘ But what he already has done for you!

You have to stand on this truth, be clothed in it, and gird it around you like a belt. Do not follow your feelings. The lie binds people, but the truth will set us free. Therefore it’s important that we love the truth. Search for it in the word of God, speak it, let it be one with you. If you have fear in your life, it means that you haven’t let the truth set you free in that area.

The truth sets people free

The following passage is a quote from the book “That nobody should get lost” by Ed Silvano.

“General Jonathan Wainwright was the only of the US generals who was captured by the enemy during the second world war. By his commander, general Douglas MacArthur he had been appointed the command over Corregidor in the Philipines. MacArthur himself had to escape to Australia to plan the counterattack which finally resulted in that the allies defeated Japan. MacArthurs order to Wainwright was very clear: Don’t give up. Fight to the end.” Wainwright did what he could to obey this command. But the far-reaching, systematic and unmerciful destruction that he saw around him, made him finally to surrender. He, and that which was left of his wounded armies, where shipped to prisoncamps all over Asia. Thousands died during the transport. Wainwright found himself in a camp in Mongolia. The

japanese looked after him like a nice trophy. He was the only american general that they had been able to catch.

During a few years in captivity, Wainwright was struggling with terrible thoughts of guilt. His physical health was going down, and he had to use a stick to be able to move. At the same time he experienced an even more soulish decay. He felt totally unsuccessful, because he had given up Corregidor.

After some time MacArthur led his troops to total victory. The uprising sun was changed to the setting sun, when MacArthur drove away the japanese from one island after another in the Pacific. Finally he occupied Japan and set up his headquarter in Tokyo. The japanese kingdom who once was so mighty had to surrender to the “refugee from Corregidor”. When this happened the camps with prison refugees was opened all over Asia.

Since Wainwright was captured in Mongolia, far from Tokyo, his jailer could withhold him from the truth for a time, and therefore Wainwright continued to be a prisoner of war.

Imagine how the japanese commander guarded Wainwright after Japan had surrendered? He well knew that they soon would shift places, and surely he was trembling before the fact that he would have to face the prisoner, who soon would be his jailer. Every time he saw him, he must have felt a discomfort. A fully armed commander in good physic condition, with a military force at hand, was afraid for the weak remnant of a wounded army and its limping general, all suffering from dysentery. Why? The fear depended on the fact that his power over them was because of a lie. I can imagine that he was asking himself: “Does he know the truth yet? And if he does, what will happen to me?”

The only thing that kept the japanese commander to continue with his fraud was that Wainwright didn't know the truth. Wainwright was delievered, but he didn't know about it. And he didn't know that he, together with all other allied prisoners of war over Asia, had received order from the commander-in-chief to take the power in the camps. But since Wainwright didn't know the truth, he continued to obey the order from the jailor, even if he didn't have any legal power over him.

The truth will set you free

Finally an airplane from the allies landed close to the camp where Wainwright was. An american officer approached the fence, made his salute, and said: “General, Japan has surrendered.” Armed with this truth, Wainwright limped all the way to the office of the commander of the camp. He opened the door, and without even raising his voice he firmly said: “My commander has defeated your commander. Now, I am in charge. You have to surrender.” Without firing a shot, the weak, the physically handicapped prisoner took charge over the camp from the fat and heavy armed commander.

How was he able to do that? Becuase the truth had set him free. He also knew how to use his authority to excercise power.”

✠ The breastplate of righteousness

v 14...having put on the breastplate of righteousness.

The breastplate was weared over the chest. It protected heart, lung, stomach; your inner spiritual life.

Prov. 4:23

Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.

Rom. 8:1

There is therefore no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

If you are aware that you are righteous in Christ no matter of your successes or failures, it will be very hard for the enemy to trap you.

His tactic is to:

Make you fall in sin, and then throw condemnation on you so that you will think:

There is no use that I'll try again. I can't make it anyway.

When you think like that you continue in sin or falls in sin again.

If you know that you are righteous and the blood of Jesus cleanses you from all sin, you will not be laying down, if and when you have fallen.

Prov. 24:16

For a righteous man may fall seven times and rise again, but the wicked shall fall by calamity.

You rise again, receive cleansing in the blood and move on without condemnation. You are not more a failure than before you fell, since your life is not based on how many victories you have won or how seldom you have fallen in sin. Your life is based on the work of Jesus. His righteousness has become yours. You are righteous in Christ. The only thing you need to do is to remain in Christ.

Joh 15:4

Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

(Please repeat, if you want, the subject righteousness, lesson two.)

☒ **Feet with the preparation of the gospel** (The shoes of willingness)

Eph 6:15

And having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

The roman soldier wore sandals with studs on so that he would not loose the grip. Shoes stands for a willing heart to go out to others sharing the gospel. If we are not doing that, we are like a soldier without shoes.

As soon as you have recieved Jesus in your life it becomes a natural thing to pass it on unto others. Of course you have to pray to God for wisdom, in what way and to whom you shall give it. There is no greater joy than sharing to others what Jesus has done for you. My experience is that 70 % of those we spoke to in Iran wanted to receive Jesus as their personal Saviour.

In this way we will see more and more people in Iran becoming changed.

☒ **The shield of faith**

Eph 6:16

Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

The shield of faith you develop by feeding yourself on the word. Faith comes by hearing the word. The opposite of faith is fear. A soldier without fear walks straight forward, through the weapon of the enemy. He knows how to use the shield to quench the fiery arrows of the enemy. The arrows come, but you know how to protect yourself.

What are the devils fiering arrows? They are untruthful thoughts, feelings and oppression. He always tries to speak to you how unsuccessful you are, or how fantastic you are, so that you become full of pride. You can say that he takes a snap of you in your worst moments and then shows them for you and says: "Look what you are, you are not a good christian". You are tempted to agree that he is telling the truth. But the truth is that you have been washed with the blood of the Lamb, when you confessed your sin, then you were forgiven and now you have a right standing with God. Even if the sin that the devil is reminding you of happened one second ago, and you already have confessed it, his snaps are lies.

The shield of faith is therefore available! Immediately bring it forth and tell who you believe in. Proclaim loudly that you believe that Jesus has died for your sins and was resurrected for your justification.

1 Joh. 1:5-10

5. This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

6. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

7. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

8. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

10. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

α The helmet of salvation

Eph 6:17

And take the helmet of salvation...

The most precious part of the armour. A protection for your head. The helmet of salvation protects your mind and your thoughts. God wants us to have God's peace and the mind of Christ. The assurance of your salvation gives you stability. I am the child of God, I know what family I belong to. But it's not enough with the helmet, I need the whole armour.

Prov 4:23

Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.

Phil 4:6-8

6. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

7. and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

8. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy – meditate on these things.

When you put on the helmet of salvation, it means that your thoughts become the thoughts of salvation. Salvation is not only regeneration of the spirit, but also the salvation of your soul. This is done by continual feeding of God's word.

James 1:21

Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

How do you put on the helmet of salvation? By choosing your thoughts. Cast away all thoughts which are not edifying! You decide how hard the censoring in your private TV-studio should be. Paul says that you should think on that which is true. It means that you should never think a lie or let any thought of lie be inside of your mind. Cast it out! You should think on that which is noble. Think of your high position. Always think that you are a child of a king. Then it's comes natural what's okey and what's not okey. You should think of that which is just. Not even for a minut think on unrighteous things, for example how you can get money in a wrong way. Think on that which is pure. Those who are unclean have no part in the kingdom of God (Ef. 5:5). Unclean thoughts is for example thoughts about sex outside marriage, imaginations about other's wives or husbands. Don't give promises to others that you know you can't keep. Don't live a life like that. God always mean what he says in his word. We should be like him even in this area.

Think on that which is lovely and of good report. Are you a person that people like to meet, because they feel refreshed and edified when they leave you? Make up your mind to think lovely and be a lovely person. You reach that by giving others your attention and by encouraging them.

⌘ The sword of the Spirit

Eph 5:17

...and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

This is the only weapon of attack that we have. All the others are weapons of defence and protection.

This is a mighty weapon that God has given us. We will see how Jesus used it when he was attacked by satan.

Matt 4:1-11

1. *Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.*
2. *And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry.*
3. *Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."*
4. *But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but ny every word that proceed from teh mouth of God'"*
5. *Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple,*
6. *and said to Him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you, and 'In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.'"*
7. *Jesus said to him, "It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'"*

8. Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.

9. And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me."

10. Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.'"

11. Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.

There is much more to say about spiritual warfare. But we will close with a wonderful promise from **Rom 8:31**:

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

TEST

1. Where does it say, you therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ?
 1. 2 Tim. 2:3
 2. Ef. 6:11
 3. Rom 8:1

2. Is God a warrior?
 1. Yes
 2. No

3. Mention three things that the thief wants according to John 10:10.

4. What six parts consists the armour of God of?

5. What kept Wainwright trapped even though the allies had won the victory?
 1. He was sick and weak.
 2. He didn't know the truth

6. Was Jesus tempted in all things like you and me?
 1. Yes