***The Weapons of Light
Romans 13:11
RO169-02***

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We are on Romans 13:11-14. Our subject is "The Consummation of Salvation," and this is segment number two.

**Glorification**

It is no secret, we realize, that every hour that passes in the life of a Christian brings him nearer to his final salvation in heaven. Salvation in phase three deals with ultimate sanctification when we are in the Lord's presence, and finally totally free of the sin nature, and of all of its destructive effects. Each Christian is headed for his own personal glorification in this sinless perfection someday.

**Wake Up**

For this reason, it is appropriate that Christians should wake up and realize that they are closer to meeting their God every day of their lives. As they lie down to sleep every night, they should realize that they are one day nearer, as they do that final scene at the end of the day, before they fall asleep, of asking God to reveal any wicked thing in them, that they might be cleansed of any evil that they have not squared away with Him before they drift off to sleep. Each day brings us closer to that ultimate perfection.

We should wake up to the wisdom, therefore, of serving God in the grand plan that He has for each of our lives. We should wake up to the fact of yawning in the face of God because we are so preoccupied with self-interests. We should wake up to the fact of having only one life to live, and that only what's done for Christ will last. We should wake up to the reality of facing Jesus Christ at the Judgment Seat of Christ someday. We should wake up to the fact that world conditions today are unique, favoring the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, and His previous rapture of the church. We should wake up to the realization that there is indeed no time to lose in affirming God's final good promise to us in Romans 8:28 – that final ultimate good of rewards in heaven.

In Luke 12:33-35, the Lord puts it this way, reiterating what Paul is teaching us in a different way in the book of Romans: "Let your loins be girded about, and your lamps burning. And you yourselves like men that wait for their Lord when He will return from the wedding; that when He comes and knocks, they may open unto Him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when He comes, shall find watching. Verily, I say unto you that He shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to eat, and will come forth and serve them." Then that is one of the most astounding verses in all of Scripture – the picture of the Son of God returning, and for the Christians who have been devoted to serving Him and to storing treasures in heaven, He will invite them into His banquet hall, and they will be seated, and He will serve them.

However, the sad part are the Christians who are left outside of that banquet hall, who never made the connection of making life count for eternity. And those are described as believers who will be weeping, and they will be gnashing their teeth in the agony of having been left out, as they look through the windows, and they see the joy of servants who are being rewarded by their lord. We are talking about some very serious business.

Verse 38: "And if He shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. And know this – that if the owner of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have permitted his house to be broken through. Be therefore ready also, for the Son of Man comes at an hour when you think not." How true. How true.

**Night**

So, in Romans 13:12, we read, "The night is far spent." This reference in the word "night" is to the era of moral evil under Satan's rule. It refers to the era of time here on earth when Jesus Christ is in heaven, and Satan rules over mankind. This is the period of night for mankind. It is the present era when Satan is in charge. It is the present era, thus, from the time that the church began on Pentecost, and it is dominated by the evil one, Satan. It is spiritual nighttime.

That is what the apostle Paul means in Galatians 1:4, when he says, "Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age according to the will of God and our Father." The age in which we live, the Bible says, is a really bad time in human history. It is a particularly evil age, because it is not only the time of Satan's domination over the world, but it is the time of the intensification of his domination, and of the angelic warfare, because he realizes the time is running out. The sands of time have almost run out for Satan, and the Lord is standing at the door, about ready to come in.

**Far Spent**

Therefore, the nighttime is beginning to be streaked with the first tinges of the dawn of the coming of Jesus Christ. That's what Paul means when he says, "The night is far spent." The words "far spent" mean "it is almost gone." It's nearly over. The present era on earth of spiritual darkness under Satan's control is almost over for all mankind.

**The Day is at Hand**

He also says, "The day is at hand." The word "day" here refers to the moral enlightenment and freedom that believers have through the Word of God. It is an era when Satan will no longer dominate the earth. It refers to the day of the arrival of Jesus Christ on earth from heaven, to rule over mankind.

**The Rapture**

For Christians, this daytime arrives at the rapture of the church, when they meet the Lord in the air, and then they return with Him when this time comes for all the world and the Millennial Kingdom. This day includes the Christian's phase three salvation of ultimate sanctification, and of his rewarding at the Judgment Seat of Christ. For the Christian, this day is going to be a magnificent event.

Hebrews 9:28 refers to that when the writer says, "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." That's done. That's past. The price is paid: "And them that look for Him (here is the future) shall He appear the second time, apart from the sin issue, and unto salvation." The salvation there is our ultimate salvation (phase three) – complete sanctification in the image of Jesus Christ.

Paul says, "That this time is at hand." The Greek word looks like this. It's "eggizo." "Eggizo" means "to be almost here." It is in the perfect tense, which indicates that this day has, in the past, been already determined by God the Father. Therefore, at this moment in time, it is already set. You're not going to change it; I'm not going to change it; and, nobody is going to change it. This word indicates one of those sovereign decisions of God.

I told you several weeks ago that the American presidential election has already been completed, because God in heaven has already decided who the ruler would be – for His own purposes. And it looks indeed like maybe we have been given, once more, a window of opportunity to once more have a voice for righteousness that almost closed upon us. A God of grace has indeed not forgotten us. People voted. People expressed themselves, but behind them, there was, in their back, the hand of a sovereign God who was moving them to His decision. So, we look at it. We are in awe. And we say, "Now, Lord, what's Your purpose in this? Why did You make this choice? Where are we going with it?"

For the same reason, the apostle Paul says, "The day is at hand." And that means that the time that God, in the past, has already determined. And it's going to come about in our experience. This particular day, again, is the return of Jesus Christ for the church. We see the dawn on the horizon, signaling a new spiritual day for mankind. We are not going to bring in that spiritual day, as the Christian reconstructionists are trying to teach us now; as the amillennialists are trying to teach us now; and, more so, as the dominion theology people are trying to tell us now – that we are actually in the millennium now, and that Jesus Christ is actually in charge. That is not true. That is one of the most satanic delusions on the face of the earth. And that's a very dangerous thing for you to try to tell people, because it diverts believers from God's service. That is one of those clever statements, and one of those clever misconceptions, and one of those clever pieces of disinformation that the devil has put out, and that a lot of Christians are swallowing. And I can assure you that if you keep putting it out, God is going to stop you in your tracks one way or another – sooner or later.

This world is not getting better. It is getting worse. We do not live in the millennium. That day is coming. We are still in the darkness of Satan's dominion over the nations of the earth, and we should make no mistake about that.

However, the good times are indeed on the horizon. The era of operating in the darkness of Satan's evil is almost over. But it's going to be over when Jesus Christ, the Son of Righteousness, comes back to illuminate this world with His personal royal rule over the nations of the earth in His millennial kingdom. God's righteousness is almost here in that respect, but not yet. The night of sin and sorrow is nearly over, and the day of righteousness and joy is almost here for the human race. Christians today live in the dawning of the age of Jesus Christ – that dawning of His millennial glory, where conditions will finally be the way they should be.

So, indeed, Paul says in verse 11, "You Christians should know the kind of times you live in." And we looked at that last week. And Paul says, "It's time for you to wake up spiritually, in view of the time you live – the era on earth." And you are to be aware of the fact that every day you live (as a matter of fact, with each breath you take in and out), you come a little closer to the ultimate fulfillment of your salvation in the presence of Jesus Christ.

Then in verse 12, he expands it by saying, "The night of Satan's domination is just about over, and the day of the domination of Jesus Christ, with His personal presence here on this earth, is almost at hand. Therefore." And now he comes to answering the question: "So what?" And he introduces that with this little word "oun." It is a conjunction, and it indicates to us that a conclusion (an inference) is to be drawn. And what he tells us is to get rid of something: "cast off." The Greek word is "apotithemi." "Apotithemi" means "to put something aside." This word is also used in the same way in James 1:21 and in 1 Peter 2:1. It means "to abandon something," or "to get rid of it," or "to tear it away from yourself." It is in the Greek aorist tense, which means at the point of your personal decision. You're not going to do this until you come to a certain point, and you say, "I'm going to make a decision. I'm going to throw something away that perhaps has been attached to me, but I'm not going to keep it on me any longer."

**Cast off the Works of Darkness**

Secondly, it is in the middle voice, which tells us that you are to remove something from yourself. This is a very distinctive statement in the Greek language that this is something that is on each of us, that we have to decide whether we're going to keep, or whether we're going to get rid of. It is in the subjunctive mood, which makes it an exhortation. It is an admonition that Paul is giving here under the Holy Spirit. And he says, "Let us therefore cast off something." And what he wants to point out, interestingly enough, is that we include separating ourselves from something that should not be attached to us. He calls these "the works of darkness." "The works of darkness" refer to spiritual conduct which people do under cover – under cover of night; under cover of darkness; and, under cover of privacy. These are things that people do not want to have others see them doing.

1 Thessalonians 5:7 says, "For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and, they that are drunk, are drunk in the night." There are certain things that you do at night. Sleeping is part of them. And interestingly enough, the Bible says, "Don't do too much of that." And things that you do at night are evil, like being drunk. And he condemns that. He's dealing with conduct from the sin nature which is in violation of God's moral laws. Christians are, therefore, here being exhorted to abandon the evil thinking, and the conduct that is characteristic of Satan's world – conduct which includes sins and human goods, all of which are rejected by God.

**Now you are the Light**

In Ephesians 5:8, the apostle Paul says, "For you Christians were once darkness. But now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light." You see, there was a time when you were nothing but darkness in your unsaved days. It wasn't that you were part darkness and part light. Before you were a Christian, you were nothing but darkness. Now you could have been the most moral; respectable; influential; gifted; capable; accomplished person, but you were still in darkness. And you had nothing to say that was significant.

You probably get as indignant as I do when some lowlife entertainer in the movie or TV industry is brought on television, and they will spend a vast amount of time interviewing this person about the issues of life, and what they think, all of which are creating impressions and conclusions to guide people. These lowlifes are being paraded as someone who has something to say that's of value to guiding other people in their lives. And yet, as you listen to them, you realize that they are total darkness. As you watch their lives, you see that this is a mass of deluded darkness that is walking along. And here you see this big cloud of darkness. And out of it is a mouth talking on television, telling people what's what about the issues of life.

The Lord Jesus is saying to us, "Don't do that. You people once were darkness. Don't even listen to people like that. Don't pay any attention to what those people have to say. They are total darkness. You are light. You are total light because you bear the very light of God Himself. Therefore, you've got something to say. You're the people that should be on there. You're the people that they should be interviewing on Good Morning America." Why don't you write them a letter, and introduce yourself, and say, "I have some light to bring you. You might want to interview me, instead of those dark clouds that you've been sponsoring." But they don't want light. They want darkness.

Many Christians themselves prefer to be a little dark because they do not want other people to think that they're odd. There are some Christians that are very careful to hide behind a cloud of darkness that is not characteristic of them, just so they will be accepted by the world. That is like the man who worked in the lumber camp up in northern Minnesota, that I heard of one time, who was a Christian. And when he went up there, his fellow Christians said, "Boy, that is a terrible, tough territory. Those lumberjacks are tough guys. They're vile men. You're going to have a terrible time associating with them." But because he needed the job, he went up there. A few months later, he came back down to his local church, to meet with his fellow believers, and they said, "We're glad to see you back here. How did it go up in the lumber camp with all those godless men, for you as a Christian to go up there?" And he said, I had no problem at all. I don't think they ever found out I was a Christian."

1 Peter 4:4 addresses that: "In which they think it strange that you don't run with them in the same profligacy, speaking evil of you." If you don't act as dirty as the people of the darkness of this world, they'll have mean things to say about you, and they'll ask you: "What fun do you have in life? You don't go out and hang one on over the weekend?" You'll say, "No." They'll say, "Well, what fun do you have? You don't get so drunk that you vomit by the curb." You'll say, "No." They'll say, "Well, what do you have in life?" And they'll just go through the litany of darkness, and wonder how it is that you could even survive in life without all that fun.

Then when you separate yourself, they will not take it kindly, because they will always interpret your righteous conduct as a condemnation of their dark conduct. And so indeed it should be.

The works of darkness are really the expression of humanism, which makes man his own god, and which violates the Scripture, and is an expression of Satan's world view. Christians instead are to turn on the light of doctrine on the evils of our age, and they are to expose the spiritually disoriented thinking that surrounds us. The painful part is that sometimes those who have this spiritually disoriented darkness are fellow Christians. And sometimes they may even be in your own family, and that's where it gets touchy to turn the light on.

Ephesians 5:11 says, "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." Now that takes some guts to do. It takes some ability not only to be in the presence of evil, and not only to resist it, but to have a voice of condemnation on it.

I remember a great professor that I had, Dr. Carl Armerding at Dallas Seminary, who was talking to us on this principal one day in class. And he said, "You know, it's like when I used to go to my barber. I would no sooner get in that barber chair than he would start telling me the dirtiest, vilest things, and the stories (the latest thing he heard). And I tried to be nice to him, and I didn't want to hurt his feelings. He's standing there with scissors and razors around, you know. You want to be nice to a person like that." He said, "But finally, I had enough of it, and when he started in on it one day when I got in the chair, and I grabbed my ear." And Armerding had big ears. He was one of those people with big ears. And he shook that ear and said, "Mr. Smith, does this look like a sewer to you?" And the barber was startled, and taken aback, and he said, "No." And Armerding said, "Well, then please don't put that sewage into it. Thank you. Will you cut my hair?"

It takes a little guts to do that. And it's rebuking darkness, because we want to be so nice, and we want to be so kind, and non-offensive that we Christians will take a lot. But the Word of God says, "There comes a time when you just don't take it. You separate yourself from evil. You give people their freedom to do what they choose to do, but when that evil starts splashing on you, then you raise a protest.

So, there is the change of uniform for the Christian. Change from the uniform of darkness, and put on something totally different: "Let us cast off the works of darkness. Let us put on." The words "put on" is the Greek word "enduo," and "enduo" means to put on some items of clothing. This is in the past tense, which tells us again that there's a point in time when you make the decision. It's middle voice. You have to put it on yourself. It doesn't just grow. This is a deliberate taking off of darkness. It's a deliberate putting on of items that are befitting a Christian lifestyle. It's subjunctive. It is again an exhortation. This is an action to be taken by the Christian, he says, "In view of the nearness of the Lord's return from heaven.

**Put on the Weapons of Light**

What are you to put on? Our King James translation says, "Put on the armor of light." The word which is translated "armor" here is the Greek word "hoplon." "Hoplon" means "weapons," which is a better translation: "Put on the weapons of 'phos'" – the weapons of light. The Christian is to put on weapons which God has supplied for spiritual combat in Satan's dark world.

**The Weapons of Light**

Where do we find the Christians weapons of light? Where do we find the Christians weapons of spiritual warfare described for us? Ephesians 6. In Ephesians 6, these weapons are explicitly laid out for us. Spiritual battles, we must remember, cannot be fought with the weapons of earthly warfare. In 2 Corinthians 10:3-4, the apostle Paul points this out, when he says, "For though we walk in the flesh (though we're in physical bodies on this earth), we do not make war after the flesh." We do not make war as normal, military, earthly combat is conducted. And he's referring to war in the spiritual realm: "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal (that is, they are not earthly material weapons), but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strongholds." God has given us some weapons that we Christians can put on which will tear down the darkest corners that Satan has ever built with his evil devices.

**Put on the Whole Armor of God: to Stand**

So, these weapons are found at Ephesians 6, and we begin at verse 11. First of all, verse 11 tells us that the Christian soldier is to go into spiritual combat each day of his life with the equipment supplied by God: "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. And you notice that we put on the armor of God, not in order just to hold the devil off, and not in order just to compromise with him, but it says, "To stand." And that word means that we are victorious. You put down the whole of God so that you may be able to stand. And the implication of this word is that you will stand against the devil, and you'll beat him every time.

In verse 12, the enemy in spiritual combat is identified as the demonic forces of Satan: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities." That is a category. It's a military rank of demon angels: "Against powers." That's another rank: "Against the rulers of darkness of this world." That's another rank: "Against spiritual wickedness in high places." So verse 13 says that only the weapons of light can defeat Satan's army. Verse 13 says, "Wherefore, take unto you the whole armor of God." That is the same thing that Paul is talking about in Romans 13: "That you may be able to withstand, in the evil day (the day of darkness that Paul has been describing); and, having done all, to stand." And again, you have this word "to stand," which means "to be victorious." So, how shall you do this?

1. **The Belt of Truth**

Point number one: "Stand therefore, having your loins girded about with truth." The first item of our armor of light is the belt of truth. This is something which the individual Christian soldier wraps around his waist. What is this referring to? It does me no good, and it does you no good, to tell you to put on the belt of truth if you don't have the foggiest notion what the belt of truth is, and less notion as to how in the world you would put it on yourself. Well, you might agree that if I had this, I'd be in a position to meet the devil in his dark attacks. If you don't have it, you will be at his mercy.

Well, what this is referring to is spiritual, doctrinal truth found in Scripture. It is the truth of doctrine which is secured by that grace system that God has provided us for equally being able to have access to learning the Word of God – that system, which God has provided in a completed Bible; in a local church organization; in a pastor-teacher gift; in the teaching work of the Holy Spirit; and, in a human spirit where we can store doctrinal phenomena. This whole marvelous chain system is interrelated, one piece to the other, is the only way a Christian can generally receive in-depth instruction and understanding of the Word of God. That's what we have local church services for. It is the truth of doctrine secured by this system that provides you with the truth that makes the belt that you put about yourself. This belt of truth is then, in fact, doctrine which is stored in the Christian's human spirit reservoir for his personal guidance. The belt of truth is the Christians frame of reference in all of his service to God. The belt of truth is the basis for building spiritual maturity in your soul.

The Christian who does not have the belt of truth can only function on the darkness of human viewpoint. And that Christian is useless in spiritual warfare. He cannot serve God, and he wastes his life. You do not want to go into spiritual combat with a Christian who does not demonstrate that he has the belt of truth. And who you go into combat with is very important.

When I was in Officer Candidate School in the Marine Corps, as we came to graduation time, after months of training, from boot camp on up through the candidate school, one of the last things of evaluation before they pinned those gold bars on us was to set all those 170 men in that particular class down on paper, and say, "You have a combat mission to perform of great hazard and great importance. Put down the name of the one man in this class that you'd say, 'That's the one I want to take with me.'" And it was an honor to be picked even once, and even a greater honor if you were picked several times, because it demonstrated that the men who had observed you recognized that you were a soldier who is equipped to do battle, and with whom they could trust their lives.

So, if you find a Christian who does not have a belt of truth, don't trust him. If you find a Christian who's mulling around out there, with all kinds of human viewpoint concepts that he has picked up because he's listening to sermonettes for Christianettes every Sunday, you don't want to get into spiritual combat with him, because that guy is going to bring you down. You are going to get hurt.

1. **The Breastplate of Righteousness**

The second thing that Paul says that you must have as part of your weapons of light is the breastplate of righteousness (Ephesians 6:14): "And having on the breastplate of righteousness." This is a piece of equipment that provides protection for the vital torso area of the body. If you want to kill somebody, one of the things that you are taught to do, in places like the FBI or in the military, is to hit what is called the pinball. The top of the pinball is the head and the torso area is the rest of the pinball. Always imagine a pinball, and shoot for some part of the pinball. You will almost inevitably kill the person if you hit him there.

So, this piece of equipment over the pinball area of the human body was very critical, even in ancient days, because it was that pinball area that they struck for with their short little combat swords. So, the apostle principle, as he looked at the soldiers standing by him guarding, looked at the man's chest protector (his armor around his chest) – the breastplate. He says, "That's like righteousness." It protects the Christian soldier from becoming a spiritual casualty.

The righteousness referred to here is not the righteousness of Jesus Christ, which is imputed to the believer at the point of salvation. We are talking about Christians here, who are now going to walk over, and they're going to get ready for spiritual combat by putting something on themselves that they are capable of putting on themselves. We could not put absolute righteousness on ourselves, but as Christian soldiers, that we begin with. We already have that. So, this must be a different kind of righteousness, as indeed it is. This refers to the righteousness of our daily conduct. Now we're back to experiential sanctification. This is the personal conduct of the believer which is sustained by the belt of truth that will lead him into godly living. If you want to be able to do battle in the darkness of Satan's world, you better be pretty clean-cut yourself. You better have a quality of personal character, and a conduct of personal righteousness, whether people see you, or whether they don't. This protects the Christian soldier from falling back into revisionism where he will begin indulging the lusts of the sin nature.

**Legalism and Asceticism**

A pseudo breastplate of righteousness can be built by legalistic conduct – legalisms by which you think you will gain merit with God; and, by asceticism – that you won't do certain things, and that you will not be part of certain things in order that you may demonstrate righteousness. That's a pseudo breastplate of righteousness. And the devil will come right through that like through tin foil with his weapon. It will not protect you against demonic assaults.

**The Spiritual Maturity Structure**

The breastplate of righteousness includes (remember) the spiritual maturity structure of the super-grace Christian: that grace-orientation capacity; that relaxed mental attitude that expresses itself in "agape" love; that mastery of the details of life, so that your money does not dominate you; that capacity to love (that "phileo" rapport) toward God, toward your husband or wife, and toward your friends; and, that inner happiness that only God can produce. That spiritual maturity structure is part of this breastplate of righteousness. You can see that a Christian who has this kind of spiritual maturity is not going to be easily knocked over. He is not going to be anybody's patsy. He will not be easily misled. And when you come to grips with him in spiritual combat, you will know that this man has a protective armor upon himself that is going to be very hard for you to penetrate.

1. **The Gospel of Peace**

Next thing in Ephesians 6:15 in our armor of light category is that your feet be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace – the shoes of the gospel of peace. A soldier's mobility, it is self-evident, and his desire to be (his motivation to do battle) is dependent upon having protection on his feet. If his feet hurt, he's not mobile. If his feet hurt, he's not interested in moving against the enemy. The Christian soldier who is shod with the proper spiritual shoes, then, will be motivated and capable of moving out forcefully against satanic forces. He will not just stand and watch the devil. He will charge into him because he has a foundation on his feet on which to do that. And that's the point here. The issue is not securing his personal salvation, for again, the Christian already possesses this. So, when we say the shoes of the gospel of peace, we're not saying that he should be saved. He already has that. This is something he has to put on. The issue is his personal peace, and knowing that he is eternally secure in his salvation. That's what the issue is here.

There is no possibility of his losing his salvation and ever facing the lake of fire. He doesn't have to be preoccupied with that. His mind is at peace, so he can devote himself to God's work. He can devote himself to pushing back the darkness of Satan. He has confidence because he stands on the firm ground of the rock of Jesus Christ, so that he can charge into battle.

The gospel of the grace of God alone can bring you peace with God because you are permanently reconciled to God. The Christian soldier is free of any fear in moving out into combat with Satan's followers. His feet are shod with the shoes of peace that come to him because he has a salvation that is based upon the grace of God.

There are plenty of religious people who are out there indeed fighting the forces of darkness, but they're uneasy. They're not at peace. The very fact that they're fighting the forces of darkness is in the hope that they will gain merit with God so that he will take them to heaven. They do not go into combat with peace. Therefore, they move very gingerly and very carefully. A soldier who has high combat morale moves out forcefully in battle. If his morale is low, he's going to hang back.

1. **The Shield of Faith**

The next thing is the shield of faith. Verse 16: "Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. The Christian soldier has a shield to deflect the fiery darts of Satan as they come from various directions. This shield represents the believer's faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Word of God. This is confidence and trust in the Christ who has saved him, and in the Bible which can guide him.

**Inerrancy**

Therefore, he has faith in the inerrancy of Scripture that enables him. Because he has confidence (he believes in the inerrancy of the Word of God), he is able to ward off the attacks of humanism; the attacks of rationalism; the effects of pseudo intellectualism; the attacks of liberalism; and, the subtle effects of all the cults, which can sound indeed awfully good and awfully impressive.

**Faith in the Word of God**

Faith in the Word of God is the thing that counts. It is not faith in your religion. It is not faith in your preacher. It is not faith in your denominational structure. None of that is going to protect you from Satan's attack – only faith in the truth of the Word of God. Believing God is the key to defense against Satan attacks every time. God has spoken, so we know what we're talking about. Those who are ignorant of Bible doctrine, or they're on negative volition to the Word of God are sitting ducks for the devil every time. But when you have confidence in Scripture, (if you have confidence in the Word of God), and you devote yourself to learning it, so that you understand the principles by which God operates, you very quickly become a very courageous and formidable foe in the angelic conflict.

The forces of darkness cringe as you hold up the shield of such confidence in God and in His Word. How are they going to break through that? No matter how they come at you, the shield is moving in every direction, and those arrows are deflected immediately. If you haven't had that experience, you haven't had enough knowledge of the Word of God for the devil to shoot anything at you.

1. **The Helmet of Salvation**

The next thing is in verse 17: "And take the helmet of salvation." This is a piece of equipment of our armor of light designed to protect the believer's mind. Genuine salvation enables the Christian soldier to understand spiritual things. So, the Christian soldier is protected in his thinking. He is not taking again salvation. He already has that. But this is to protect the mind that salvation gives you, which is the mind of Christ. It suddenly gives you access to the thinking that God has. And here again, we get to the mind which controls it all. That's what you're going to do with your emotions. That's what you're going to do with your will. It is what you think. That's what you will feel. That's how you will decide. And here that has to be protected. Your mentality has to be protected from all that human viewpoint disorientation of the darkness that Satan puts out there.

You and I are hit with it all the time. You cannot turn on a television program; you cannot really advertising; and, you cannot listen to the pronouncement of people in prominent places, without realizing that they're shooting a lot of darkness at you. The only way you will be protected from their human viewpoint thinking is by the indwelling of God the Holy Spirit. So, the Christians mind, because he has a salvation by grace, has given him access to the Word of God, and to the mind of God, and the Christian who is in temporal fellowship, which is your helmet of salvation, is the Christian whose mind is going to be protected from legalism; from fear; and, from being bowled over by ridicule, and you'll not be taken in by Satan's lies.

1. **The Sword of the Spirit**

Then there is the sword of the Spirit in Ephesians 6:17: "And the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. This is the hand weapon of the believer for his combat with the forces of darkness. The Christian soldier's sword is the Word of God. In the Greek Bible, it is not our normal word for "word" that all of you know: the word "logos" is familiar to most of you. The word "logos" simply means a word that conveys a thought. This is a different word. The Greek Bible uses the word "rhema" here for the word "word, and that means a proposition of truth. Aha! That's a totally different concept. It isn't just that you know how to recite a Scripture verse. It is that you know a category of doctrine. You know a summary of doctrinal truth.

So, this is a weapon by which you know what God thinks about human government, for example. You know the role of human government. You know where leaders come. Therefore, you have a sword in your hand by which you may judge the leader; by which you may judge the government; and, by which you may take action. You know how people should act in various associations in life. You know what the moral code of God is. You have that sword in your hand. Therefore, you can charge into darkness, and you can deal with those evil things.

The sword of the Spirit are categories of doctrine containing spiritual phenomena. This sword of the Holy Spirit is inerrant, and it is deadly when it is applied to Satan's soldiers. I need only remind you of the experience of the Lord on the Mount of Temptation, when Satan came to him with the most reasonable; most clever; and, most well-thought-through attack, in asking Jesus to do three simple things, each of which was a violation of the will of God, and each of which was a great evil. And you will remember how the Lord dealt with each one. He took the sword of the Spirit, and He quoted an appropriate Scripture, and he gouged the devil with that every time. And Satan moved off. After the devil had been stabbed the third time, he said, ". . . I'm leaving." And he got out, and he no longer sought any further combat with the Lord. You'll drag the devil off with principles of doctrine every time.

However, I would not suggest that you go charging in with the sword that isn't there. If you don't know the Word, you have nothing to fight with. The Christian who will try to attack the devil with no grasp of doctrine is going to end up being defeated, and he'll look like a fool. Satan's forces are set to flight by the Word of God. Therefore, he belittles the importance of knowing doctrine.

That's why, on these public television talk shows, the Word of God is always belittled, because the devil hates this authority of hearing God speak. So, it is dismissed as being irrelevant to human experience. But the Bible says, "No. With this sword, you are capable of stopping people in their tracks." And don't go around trying to prove that the Bible is true. What you should do is quote the principles of Scripture. You might meet an enemy soldier on the field of battle who has a bayonet on the end of his rifle, and he were to say to you, "I don't believe that that bayonet works. I don't believe that that bayonet would truly hurt me. I simply don't believe that." What would you do? You would say, "Well, let me show you." And you would take the bayonet and run it through him. And then you would say, "Does it work?" And he is lying there oozing on the ground. That's how the sword of the Spirit works. Don't standing around here saying, "Hey, I want to prove this to you."

We do a little of that, and that has some significance. We have to establish that this book has qualities that nobody on his own could have written. But when you want to deal with the world, you just keep hitting the Word of God. And I've heard some preachers do this on television programs. One was speaking to Madalyn Murray O'Hair, the great atheist. And she'd say something, and he'd quote Scripture. And she'd say something else, and he'd quote a Scripture. And she'd say something else, and he'd quote a Scripture. And she would just get more irritated all the time, as he was just quoting Scripture. She'd say something, and he'd quote Scripture. And pretty soon you got the idea: "Boy, the Bible has something to say about this." The Bible is not just a little trivial composition of some sincere religious people that has no bearing upon human conduct, and no effect with God. You suddenly were aware that you were in the presence of the sword of the Spirit.

The sword of the Spirit, the Bible tells us, is living; it's active; it's sharp; and, it pierces into the soul and spirit. It can judge the thoughts and the intents of the mind.

1. **Prayer**

The final element of the Christian soldier's weapons of light is not a weapon as such, but is the tactic for using these weapons. And here's where many Christian soldiers who have the weapons of light miss out on being effective in spiritual combat, because they use the wrong approach in battle.

**Confession**

Verse 18: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." This is the tactic of prayer. Spiritual combat must flow from prayer if it is to be victorious. Without unceasing prayer, the Christian soldier cannot use his weapons of light effectively, no matter how well he has them in place. God the Holy Spirit is the One who guides the Christian soldier in his very prayer life so that he will truly move in combat within the will of God. The use of the prayer tactic requires being, of course, in temporal fellowship with God the Father. So, we're back to 1 John 1:9. You cannot pray without starting with confession of known sins.

Prayer is to deal with every desperate need of the believer. It is to cover, as this verse says, all of the people of God that should be your concern as they are brought to your attention. "The prayer," the Bible tells us, "of a righteous person is able to do much when it is used." That's what James says. The prayer of a righteous person is able to do much when it is used. When it is not used, it's worthless.

So, here is the great and marvelous issue of the day that we Christians face. Paul says, "Time is moving along. Some of you need to wake up. Some of you ought to be aware of the fact that the dawn is breaking, indicating the return of our Lord." Satan's night upon this earth is beginning to be pushed back. So, what kind of people should you be? You should cast off all of the works of darkness, and all of the lifestyle of evil that is associated with Satan's world. And instead of being victims, you should be those who are in the forefront of pushing Satan and his darkness back, and letting the light come in.

"Let us put on the weapons of light," so that you and I have the potential to be like the farmer who, when he opens his barn door in the morning, causes the rats to run, and the birds to start singing.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1988

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