

Christian Warfare

Lesson 19: The Armor of God, Part 11

The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, Eph 6.17. Last time we considered the weapon itself. Now let's consider *how we're to use it* in fighting our spiritual battles, by taking our lessons from Christ's use of it in Mt 4.1-11.

Jesus' Second Temptation, vv.5-7

- I. The temptation:
 - A. The devil took Jesus to the pinnacle or wing of the outer wall of the entire temple complex (probably 450 ft. up) and suggested that He throw Himself down.
 - B. Notice how this temptation is connected with the first.
 1. Since Jesus refused to doubt the Father's providence, Satan now tempts Him to presume upon it.
 2. Since Jesus believes in the Father's providence, Satan tempts Him to manifest His faith in it.
 - C. Three lessons:
 1. Your adversary's power is limited by your God, 1Kgs 13.24-28; Job 38.11; Rev 20.2. The devil can do *nothing* without God's permission and serves God against his will.
 2. Satan has no power to force you to sin; he can only entice your lusts, Js 1.14. He presents the bait, but unless you choose to bite there will be no sin.
 3. Few things are more dangerous to a Christian than prosperity and privilege, 1Cor 10.12.
 - a) High places are places of temptation. Therefore beware of coveting places of prominence. If you are at a high place, be watchful and humble. If you are at a low place, wait for the Lord to lift you up.
- II. Satan cunningly used Scripture to advance his temptation, thinking to hide the worst of intentions under the best of words.
 - A. Three lessons:
 1. Satan is a deceiver. He quotes Scripture deceptively. He's an angel of darkness gilded with light.
 2. Satan's not afraid to use Scripture to publish his lies.
 - a) Everything he offers is either a bit of truth distorted into a lie or a whole truth misapplied (2Pet 3.16; Acts 20.29-30). *No devil is so dangerous as the religious devil.*
 - b) Be on your guard against whitewashed lies. Pray for your ministers, your church, and yourselves, that the truth might always be preached. Shun all false doctrine.
 3. Satan loves to misapply Scripture.
 - a) The verses quoted by Satan (Ps 91.11-12) are true, but he misapplied them, tempting Jesus to presumptuously put God's promises to the test.

Jesus' Resistance to the Second Temptation

- I. Jesus resisted the temptation by again believingly standing upon the testimony of Scripture.
 - A. Jesus saw that Satan was *separating* the promise from its condition and the end from its means. By quoting Dt 6.16, He brought these two back together, vindicating the Father's good promise of protection (Ps 91.11-12) *by* confessing His faith in the means appointed for Him to enjoy it—which was by humble reliance, not by presumption.
 1. For us as well, God promises protection from evil, but not from that evil into which we sinfully cast ourselves.
 - B. Learn from your Saviour to be on your guard against being deceived by the separation of what God has joined together.
 1. Instead, keep together what God has joined, affirming your faith in God's promises *and* your dependence upon the means to enjoy them. Satan only meets his match in that Christian who believingly wields the sword of the Spirit, 1Cor 10.13.

Jesus' Resistance to the Third Temptation

- I. Our Lord indignantly rebuked the devil for his black and blasphemous temptation.

- A. To some temptations, nothing is suitable but an outright rejection, a bold and resolute resistance.
- II. After this, the Lord overcame the temptation, once again, by a believing reliance upon the Word of God (Dt 6.13)
 - A. Moreover, the Scripture He used restored the truths which Satan's lies denied:
 1. The LORD alone is God, who reigns over all that He has made, Heb 1.1-2. Satan has no lordship but over the hearts of unbelievers, 2Cor 4.4.
 2. Worship is due to God alone (Rev 19.10). Satan is a vile creature and not to be worshipped.
 3. Satan will one day bow before Jesus Himself, Phil 2.10-11.

Application

- I. Make a covenant with your eyes not to look on vanity, Ps 101.2-3; 119.37; Job 31.1.
 - A. Through the eyes many have been led astray into sin, Gen 3.6; 34.2; Jdg 14.1-2; Josh 7.21. You must therefore guard them by closing them to the vanities and lies of the world.
- II. Get your heart crucified to the world so that it won't lead you astray from God, Gal 6.14.
 - A. Meditate on James 4.4.
- III. Harden your heart against Satan's lies and resolve to take nothing from Satan's hands, but rather seek everything at God's hands.
 - A. Satan promises what he cannot give and hides hooks in everything he does give. All things are the Lord's, who is the Giver of every good and perfect gift, Js 1.17.
- IV. Consider what a bad bargain sin is, Mk 8.36-37.
- V. Open the eyes of faith and learn to live by faith upon the truth of Scripture and not by sight, 2Cor 4.18; Rom 1.17.
- VI. Comfort yourself that your Lord was tempted in every respect and can sympathize with you in *all* your temptations, Heb 4.15; 2.18.
 - A. His three temptations (to unbelief, presumption, and idolatry) serve as a summary of all your temptations.
 - B. Therefore in *every* temptation you face, you can look to the Lord for His example, sympathy, and victory.