

LESSON EIGHT**WARFARE TO DEAL WITH THE SPIRITUAL ENEMY
&
THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD (1)**

Scripture Reading:

Eph. 6:10 Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength.

Eph. 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil,

Eph. 6:12 For our wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies.

Eph. 6:13 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.

Eph. 6:14 Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth and having put on the breastplate of righteousness

Eph. 6:15 And having shod your feet with the firm foundation of the gospel of peace;

Questions:

Section 1

1. What are the twelve aspects of the church revealed in Ephesians and what are the main aspects? Why are these the main aspects?
2. What are the three wills in this universe and why does it matter to us?
3. What is the true significance of the preaching of the gospel and how does it relate to God's enemy?

Section 2

1. What does it mean that we must "be empowered" and by what are we empowered?
2. Why do we need to put on the whole armour of God and what is the result?
3. Who is the church really fighting against?

Section 3

1. What does truth refer to? How can we have our loins girded with the truth?
2. How do we put on the breastplate of righteousness? Please share some of your experiences?

Section 4

1. Please explain the phrase "the firm foundation of the gospel of peace".
2. We need to grow up into the One who is the Head, what does it indicate?
3. What is the most difficult matter in which to grow up into Christ?

[Section 1]

WARFARE TO DEAL WITH THE SPIRITUAL ENEMY

In this message we come to 6:10-20, a strategic section of this book dealing with spiritual warfare. As we have seen, in Ephesians Paul covers various aspects of the church. The Greek word for church, *ekklesia*, denotes a gathering, an assembly, of called ones. For example, when city officials in ancient times called the people of the city together for a meeting, that meeting was known as an *ekklesia*. The church is such an assembly of God's called people. In Ephesians 1 Paul reveals that the church is the Body of Christ. Just as a person's body is his stature and expression, so the church as the Body of Christ is the stature and expression of Christ. As Christ's Body, the church is the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

In 2:10 Paul indicates that the church is God's poem, His masterpiece, a poetic writing that expresses the desire of the writer's heart. In this chapter Paul goes on to point out that the church is the corporate new man created in Christ Jesus, the commonwealth of God, and the household of God. Furthermore, in this chapter the church is also the dwelling place of God (v. 22).

In 3:4 Paul speaks of the mystery of Christ. The mystery of God is Christ, and the mystery of Christ is the church. As the mystery of God, Christ is the definition of God. In the same principle, as the

mystery of Christ, the church is the definition of Christ.

In 3:19 Paul uses the term the fullness of God. This term is similar to the expression "the fullness of the One Who fills all in all" (1:23). The fullness of God refers mainly to the source, and the fullness of the One who fills all in all refers mainly to the outcome. For example, the fullness of God is like a fountain, and the fullness of the One who fills all in all is like the stream that flows forth from the fountain. The church is both the fullness of God and the fullness of Christ as the One who fills all in all.

In chapter four Paul again speaks of the new man (v. 24). Chapter two covers the creation of the new man, but not the living of the new man. The new man is composed of two peoples, the believing Jews and the believing Gentiles. Concerning the living of the new man, chapter four covers both the principle and the details. The principle is related to the truth as it is in Jesus, the mold established by the living of Jesus on earth. The details are related to God's grace. By grace the new man carries out God's eternal purpose.

In chapters five and six we see two further aspects of the church: the Bride to satisfy the desire of Christ and the warrior to defeat God's enemy. As the Bride, the church needs love and light. As the warrior, the church needs might and the whole armor of God.

I. THE NEGATIVE SIDE OF THE CHURCH'S RESPONSIBILITY

Of the twelve aspects of the church covered in Ephesians, the main aspects are the new man, the Bride, and the warrior. The new man includes the aspect of the Body, and the Body includes the fullness and the dwelling place. Therefore, the first ten aspects of the church are all included in the new man who fulfills God's eternal purpose and carries out His economy. This new man is used by the Triune God to accomplish what He planned in eternity past for eternity future. Nevertheless, although God's plan is fulfilled with the new man, Christ's desire still needs to be satisfied, and God's enemy still must be defeated. Hence, there is the need for the church to be both the Bride and the warrior.

The passage from 1:1 to 6:9 completes the revelation on the positive side concerning the church for the fulfilling of God's eternal purpose. Yet on the negative side, that is, for dealing with God's enemy, something still remains to be covered. In the first five chapters the church is portrayed in many ways, on the positive side, to fulfill God's eternal purpose. On the negative side, the church is seen in chapter six as a warrior to defeat God's enemy, the Devil. To do this, the church must put on the whole armor of God.

In 1928 brother Nee held his first overcomer conference on spiritual warfare. In that conference Satan, the evil one, was exposed to the uttermost. Brother Nee pointed out that in the universe there are three wills: the divine will, the satanic will, and the human will. If we would know how the church can be God's warrior to engage in spiritual warfare, we must know these three wills, these three intentions. God's will, being self-existing, is eternal, uncreated. As created beings, the angels also have a will. One of these angels, an archangel, was appointed by God to rule the universe that existed before the creation of Adam. Because of his high position and his beauty, this archangel became proud. This pride gave rise to an evil intention, which became the satanic will. Therefore, in addition to God's intention, God's will, there is a second intention, a second will, for now the satanic will is set against God's will.

All warfare has its source in this conflict of wills. Before the satanic will rose up to contradict the divine will, there was no war in the universe. The controversy in the universe began with the rebellion of the archangel against God. That rebellion was the beginning of all the fighting that is now taking place among nations, in society, in the family, and in individuals. Throughout history there have been wars between nations, groups, persons, and even within individuals. For example, you may experience an inner warfare between your reason and your lust. All the different kinds of warfare have

their source in the controversy between the divine will and the satanic will.

We do not know how much time elapsed between the rebellion of Satan and the creation of Adam. We simply know that at a particular time, God created man and endowed him with a human will that was free. It is because of God's greatness that He gave man a free will. A great person will never compel anyone to follow him. By giving man a free will, God was indicating that He would not force man to obey Him. When I was young, I thought that God was not wise in creating man with a free will. If I had been God, I would have made it impossible for man to have had a choice. I would have created man in such a way that all he could do was follow God. But in His greatness God gave man freedom of choice.

In Genesis 2 we see that man was free to exercise his will to eat either of the tree of life or of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. These two trees represent the divine will and the satanic will, respectively. Hence, in the garden there was a triangular situation, with the tree of life representing the divine will, the tree of knowledge representing the satanic will, and Adam representing the human will. Actually, the tree of life denotes God Himself, and the tree of knowledge denotes Satan. Therefore, there were three persons—God, Satan, and man—each one with a will.

Although there were three wills, the controversy involved just two parties—God and Satan. The crucial issue was whether man would choose the divine will or the satanic will. If the human will stood with the divine will, then God's will would be accomplished. But if the human will took sides with the satanic will, Satan's will would be carried out, at least temporarily. As we all know, the human will took sides with the satanic will. This means that man chose to follow Satan and sided with the satanic will. Therefore, Satan was victorious temporarily.

However, through repentance man can turn from the satanic will to the divine will, from Satan's side to God's side. The first commandment in the gospel is to repent. The next two commandments are to believe and to be baptized. Any sinner who desires to be saved must obey these three commandments. He must repent to God, believe in the Lord Jesus, and be baptized in water. To repent is to have a turn from the satanic will to the divine will. Since birth our will has stood on the side of the satanic will. The reason for this is that we were in Adam when he chose Satan's will above God's will.

Many Christians do not know the true significance of the preaching of the gospel. The Bible says that we must repent for the kingdom (Matt. 4:17). The

kingdom of God is actually the exercise of the divine will. When sinners repent for the kingdom of God, they turn from the side of Satan to the side of God, which is the kingdom of God, the will of God. After a person turns from the satanic will to the divine will, he must believe in the Lord Jesus and be baptized. Through baptism he is brought out of the authority of darkness, the satanic will, and is transferred into the kingdom of the Son of God's love (Col. 1:13).

From the day we were saved, our Christian life has been a life of warfare. The same was true of the children of Israel after they made their exodus from Egypt. After eating the Passover, they marched like an army out of the land of Egypt. This indicates that their eating of the Passover lamb was a preparation for war. They were saved in an atmosphere of warfare. As soon as they came out of Egypt, the fighting began. Pharaoh and his chariots pursued the children of Israel, but God came in to fight for them. After the children of Israel had passed through the Red Sea and Pharaoh's army had been overthrown, God's people triumphantly praised Him for His victory over the enemy. The Israelites proceeded to fight their way through the wilderness, and they continued fighting in the good land. Their history thus reveals that the life of a saved one is a life of warfare.

We have seen that as the new man the church should walk according to truth and by grace and that as the Bride the church should live in love and in light. However, not only must God's eternal purpose be fulfilled and the desire of Christ's heart be satisfied, but God's enemy must be defeated. For this, the church must be a warrior. Even in the Song of Songs we see that as the seeking one enjoys the Lord's presence, the fighting is going on. Therefore, we walk according to truth and by grace, we live in love and light, and we fight to subdue the satanic will. Our walk is for the fulfillment of God's purpose, our living is for the satisfaction of Christ, and our fighting is for the defeat of God's enemy. Hence, for these three things the church must be the new man, the Bride, and the warrior.

[Section 2]

II. EMPOWERED

Ephesians 6:10 says, "For the rest, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength." The Greek word here rendered empowered has the same root as the word power in 1:19. To deal with God's enemy, to fight against the evil force of darkness, we need to be empowered with the greatness of the power that raised up Christ from the dead and seated Him in the heavens, far above all the evil spirits in the air. The fact that we are to be empowered in the

Lord indicates that in the spiritual warfare against Satan and his evil kingdom, we can fight only in the Lord, not in ourselves. Whenever we are in ourselves, we are defeated.

The charge to be empowered implies the need to exercise our will. If we would be empowered for spiritual warfare, our will must be strong and exercised. We should not be like jellyfish, those who are weak-willed and vacillating. Actually, it is those with a strong will who are most able to repent. Consider Saul of Tarsus as an example. As he was traveling to Damascus with the intention of arresting all those who called on the name of the Lord Jesus, he was apprehended by the Lord. Because Saul had such a strong will, he could have a strong repentance.

In addition to preserving our conscience, God has sovereignly preserved our will. If He had not done so, the preaching of the gospel could have no effect on people. We may mistakenly think that it is difficult to preach the gospel to one with a strong will. According to my experience, most of those who were saved through my gospel preaching were those with a strong will and a definite intention. Such a will is able to function positively in repentance. Repentance requires the exercise of the will. In like manner, to be empowered also involves our will.

On the day of Pentecost Peter told the people to be saved from that crooked generation (Acts 2:40, Gk.). This command seems to be both active and passive, with the word be implying something active and the word saved, something passive. The same is true of Paul's command in 6:10 to be empowered. An active element—be—is combined with a passive element—empowered. We need to exercise our will to be empowered in the Lord.

In chapter four we see that we must be renewed (v. 23) and in chapter five, that we must be submissive (5:21). For the new man, we need to be renewed; for the Bride, we need to be submissive; and for the warrior, we need to be empowered. As the warrior, we must go into battle not as a gentleman or as a lovely Bride, but as a lion. Therefore, for the new man, the Bride, and the warrior, let us be renewed, submissive, and empowered.

The fact that we need to be empowered in the Lord indicates that we cannot fight the spiritual warfare in ourselves; we can fight only in the Lord and in the might of His strength. In 6:10 Paul refers to power, might, and strength. Firstly, we are empowered by the power that raised Christ from among the dead and made Him to be the Head over all things. Then we know God's might and strength.

III. PUTTING ON THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD

Verse 11 opens with the words, “Put on the whole armor of God.” To fight the spiritual warfare, we need not only the power of the Lord, but also the armor of God. Our weapons do not avail, but God’s armor, even the whole armor of God, does.

The whole armor of God is for the entire Body, not for any individual member of the Body. The church is a corporate warrior, and the believers together make up this unique warrior. Only the corporate warrior can wear the whole armor of God; no individual believer can. We must fight the spiritual warfare in the Body, not individually.

The charge to put on the whole armor of God is an imperative, a command. God has provided the armor for us, but He does not put it on for us. Rather, we ourselves must put on the armor God has provided. For this, we need to be empowered. Although God can empower us, we still must exercise our will to cooperate with Him. In the same principle, we must cooperate with God’s command to put on the armor.

IV. ABLE TO STAND AGAINST THE STRATAGEMS OF THE DEVIL

We need to put on the whole armor of God so that we “may be able to stand” (v. 11). In chapter six the word stand is crucial. In chapter two we sit with Christ in the heavenlies (v. 6), and in chapters four and five we walk in His Body on the earth (4:1, 17; 5:2, 8, 15). Then in chapter six we stand in His power in the heavenlies. To sit with Christ is to participate in all His accomplishments; to walk in His Body is to fulfill God’s eternal purpose; and to stand in His power is to fight against God’s enemy.

By putting on the whole armor of God, we are able to stand against the stratagems of the Devil. These stratagems are the Devil’s evil plans. Not only does the Devil have an evil will, but he also has subtle stratagems to work out his will. Even now Satan is busily working and plotting to carry out his evil, subtle stratagems.

V. OUR WRESTLING

A. Not against Blood and Flesh

In verse 12 Paul goes on to say, “For our wrestling is not against blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies.” “Blood and flesh” refers to men. Behind men of blood and flesh are the evil forces of the Devil, fighting against God’s purpose. Hence,

our wrestling, our fighting, must not be against men, but against the evil spiritual forces in the heavenlies.

We in the Lord’s recovery should realize that spiritual warfare is not a matter of fighting against men. Even if men cause damage to the recovery, we should not fight against them. Behind them and over them is the evil power. For example, when Saul of Tarsus was desolating the church, he was under the influence of the power of darkness. The reason certain people and religious organizations oppose the Lord’s recovery is that they also are being utilized by the evil power that is over them and behind them.

B. Against the Rulers, the Authorities, the World-rulers, and Spiritual Forces of Evil

The principalities, the authorities, and the world-rulers of this darkness are the rebellious angels who followed Satan in his rebellion against God and who now rule in the heavenlies over the nations of the world, such as the prince of Persia and the prince of Grecia in Daniel 10:20. This indicates that the Devil, Satan, has his kingdom of darkness (Matt. 12:26; Col. 1:13). In this kingdom, Satan is at the top, and under him are the rebellious angels.

“This darkness” refers to today’s world, which is fully under the dark ruling of the Devil through his evil angels. The world-rulers of this darkness are the princes Satan has set up to rule the various nations. According to the book of Daniel, the Jewish nation was the only nation that was not under Satan’s power. This nation was ruled over by Michael, the archangel who fought on behalf of Israel. All the Gentile nations, however, are ruled by devilish, rebellious angels under the administration of Satan. Therefore, in the eyes of God, darkness covers the earth and fills the atmosphere around the earth. Only God Himself remains in the light. Because of the working of Satan, who is the authority of darkness, the earth and its atmosphere have become “this darkness.”

In verse 12 Paul also speaks of “the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies.” The heavenlies here refer to the air (2:2). Satan and his spiritual forces of evil are in the air. But we are seated in the third heaven above them (2:6). In fighting a battle, the position above the enemy is strategic. Satan and his evil forces are under us, and it is their fate to be defeated by us.

We need to be reminded again and again that our warfare is not against human beings, but against the evil spirits, the spiritual powers in the heavenlies. The rebellious angels are the evil spirits in Satan’s kingdom. Thus, the warfare between the church and Satan is a battle between us who love the Lord and who are in His church and the evil powers in the

heavenlies. Apparently it is people of flesh and blood who damage the church. Actually it is Satan and his evil angels working behind them who cause the damage. Therefore, we must fight against these spiritual forces.

VI. ABLE TO STAND IN THE EVIL DAY

Verse 13 says, “Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day.” In verse 11 we are told to put on the armor of God, and in verse 13 we are charged to take it up. We have seen that the armor of God is prepared and provided by God for us. But we need to take it up and put it on; we need to use and apply God’s provision. Some items of the armor, such as the sword and the shield, we take up. But other items, such as the breastplate, the helmet, and the shoes, we put on. Whether we put on the whole armor of God or take it up, we must exercise our will in a strong way.

Paul specifically mentions “the whole armor of God,” not just a part or some parts of it. In order to wage the spiritual warfare, we need the whole armor. This requires the Body of Christ, not only individual believers, to take it up.

By taking up the whole armor of God, we shall be able to withstand in the evil day. To withstand is to stand against. In fighting the most important thing is to stand. In 5:16 Paul says that the days are evil. In this evil age (Gal. 1:4), every day is an evil day because Satan is at work every day.

VII. HAVING DONE ALL, TO STAND

Paul concludes verse 13 with the words, “Having done all, to stand.” In fighting we need to stand to the end. Having done all, we still must stand. As we shall see in the next two messages, verses 14 through 16 are a modifier describing how to stand.

[Section 3]

[Now] we will consider the items that make up the whole armor of God. The first three items—the girdle, the breastplate, and the shoes—form a group. By means of these three things we are able to stand. Along with these three items, we need to take up the shield of faith and receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:16-17).

Soldiers in ancient times fought with a shield in one hand and a sword in the other. A shield is a defensive weapon, whereas a sword is an offensive weapon. Actually, of the six items of the whole armor of God, only the sword is an offensive weapon. All the other aspects of the armor are for defense. Let us first consider the girdle, the breastplate, and the shoes.

VIII. THE GIRDLE OF TRUTH

The first part of 6:14 says, “Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth.” For us to gird our loins is to strengthen our entire being. Our whole being needs to be strengthened with truth. This strengthening is not for sitting but for standing.

According to the way the word truth or reality is used in chapter 4 (vv. 15, 21, 24, 25), truth here refers to God in Christ as reality in our living, that is, God becoming our reality and experience in our living. This is actually Christ Himself lived out by us (John 14:6). Such truth, such reality, is the girdle that strengthens our whole being for the spiritual warfare. Our living must have a principle and a standard. This is nothing less than God Himself expressed in our living in a practical way. When such a truth girds our loins, we are made strong for the purpose of standing.

Suppose, however, that your daily living is far below the standard of the reality as it is in Jesus. Instead of being able to stand and to withstand in the evil day, you will flee. Because in your daily walk there is no testimony and no expression of God, you do not have the strength to stand against the stratagems of the devil. If our daily living is loose, we are not able to stand against the powers of darkness. In order for us to stand, our daily living must be according to the principle of the truth and up to the standard of the truth. As we have pointed out, this truth is God Himself expressed as the principle of our daily walk, as the standard of our daily living, and as the pattern of our life.

Those who have such a living certainly have their loins girded with truth. These are the ones who are able to face attack and opposition. Because they are girded with truth, they can stand before the opposers. But if God is not expressed in our daily life and walk, we will not have a girdle about our loins, and we will have no strength to stand against the enemy. We will not have the power to face opposition or controversy.

The truth with which we are girded for spiritual warfare is actually the very Christ whom we experience. In Philippians 1:21 Paul says, “To me, to live is Christ.” This Christ whom Paul lived was his girdle of truth. This Christ was God expressed and revealed in Paul’s daily walk. Because Paul’s daily living was conformed to the pattern of Christ, he had the strength to face all opposition and adverse circumstances. Because Paul had been girded about with truth, he had the strength to stand.

IX. THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

In Ephesians 6:14 Paul goes on to say, “Having put on the breastplate of righteousness.” To put on the breastplate of righteousness is to cover our conscience, signified by the breast. Satan is the one who accuses us. In fighting against him we need a conscience void of offense. Regardless of how clear we feel our conscience is, it needs to be covered with the breastplate of righteousness. To be righteous is to be right with both God and man. If we are just a little wrong with either God or man, Satan will accuse us, and there will be holes in our conscience through which all our faith and boldness will leak out. Hence, we need the covering of righteousness to protect us from the enemy’s accusation. Such righteousness is Christ (1 Cor. 1:30).

If in anything we are not righteous, our conscience will be a conscience with offense. But if we are to engage in spiritual warfare, we must have a conscience void of offense, a conscience without holes. When our conscience has holes in it, our faith will leak out through the holes. If accusations and offenses remain on our conscience, faith will disappear. Therefore, we need to deal with our conscience in order to have a good conscience, a conscience void of offense. In addition, we need to put on the breastplate of righteousness to cover our conscience.

Whenever we are about to fight the spiritual warfare, Satan, the accuser, attacks our conscience. He does not trouble us so much in this way at other times. Satan knows when there are offenses on our conscience. When he accuses us with respect to these offenses, we are immediately weakened.

Revelation 12:11 says, “They overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb.” To be covered by the blood of the Lamb is mainly to have upon us the breastplate of righteousness. Righteousness is in the blood, and the covering of the blood is the breastplate. Although this may be difficult to explain doctrinally, we can understand it experientially. Whenever we intend to fight against the powers of darkness, Satan, through his accusations, causes our conscience to become very sensitive. These feelings actually are not the sensitivity of the conscience but the result of Satan’s accusations. Immediately, our response should be, “I overcome Satan, the accuser, not by my perfection and not even by a conscience void of offense but by the blood of the Lamb. I am defended against his accusations by the breastplate of righteousness.”

The righteousness that covers our conscience and that guards us from Satan’s accusations is Christ Himself. He is our righteousness. Thus, Christ is the truth that girds our loins and also the breastplate of

righteousness that covers our conscience. We are covered not by our own righteousness but by Christ as our righteousness. Some may wonder how the breastplate of righteousness can be related both to Christ and to the blood. In experience we cannot separate the blood from Christ. Apart from His blood, Christ could not cover us. Under the cleansing of His blood, He becomes our righteousness. Whenever we are about to take part in the spiritual warfare, we need to pray, “Lord, cover me with Yourself as my righteousness. Lord, I hide under Your blood.” Furthermore, we must tell the accuser, “Satan, I overcome you, not by my merit but by the prevailing blood of the Lamb.”

[Section 4]

X. THE FIRM FOUNDATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE

Ephesians 6:15 says, “Having shod your feet with the firm foundation of the gospel of peace.” Our feet must be shod in order to strengthen our stand in the battle. This is not for walking a way or running a course but for fighting the battle.

The phrase the firm foundation of the gospel of peace means the establishment of the gospel of peace. Christ has made peace for us on the cross, both with God and with man, and this peace has become our gospel (2:13-17). This has been established as a firm foundation, as a readiness for our feet to be shod with. Thus, we will have a firm footing that we may stand to fight the spiritual warfare. The peace for such a firm foundation is also Christ (v. 14).

Most translations render the Greek here as “readiness” or “preparation” rather than “firm foundation.” Readiness or preparation indicates preparedness to put on shoes. Many readers of Ephesians think that in 6:15 Paul is charging us to be always ready and prepared to put on the shoes of the gospel. But this is an incorrect understanding derived from an inaccurate translation.

In order to understand Paul’s thought in this verse, we need to see that here the gospel is not the gospel of grace, or the gospel of the forgiveness of sins, or even the gospel of the unsearchable riches of Christ. Here the gospel is the gospel of peace. According to 2:15-16, on the cross Christ accomplished peace so that the Gentiles can contact the Jewish believers and so that we all can contact God. This peace is glad tidings, good news. In other words, it is the gospel. For this reason 2:17 says that Christ announced peace as the gospel.

We also must announce this peace as the gospel. The gospel of peace spoken of in 6:15 is the peace accomplished by Christ on the cross for us to be one

with God and for the Gentile believers to be one with the Jewish believers. This peace is our gospel. With this peace there is preparation, readiness. The Greek word actually means “a firm foundation.” This firm foundation is a secure footing for our standing. Therefore, the peace accomplished by Christ on the cross is a firm footing, a firm foundation. As we fight against the evil powers, the peace that Christ has accomplished is a firm foundation for our feet. To take part in the spiritual warfare, our feet must be shod with this firm foundation.

In the past most of us thought that the shoes of the gospel were for us to walk or to run in our preaching of the gospel. However, the firm foundation of the gospel of peace is not for running but for standing. For running we may have a pair of lightweight shoes, but for standing we need a pair of sturdy shoes.

In fighting, the crucial thing is to stand. We must be able to stand and to withstand the attacks of the enemy. Those who are defeated will run, but those who are victorious will stand. As we wrestle against the enemy, we will find that Satan does not run away. Even when we are victorious over him, he keeps on wrestling with us. Therefore, we need to be able to stand. Spiritual warfare is not a boxing match but a wrestling match. If we would wrestle against the enemy, we need a firm footing. Hallelujah, in the Lord’s recovery we have such a foundation! Because there are those who have their feet shod with the firm foundation of the gospel of peace, they can withstand any attack of the enemy. Because they have such a firm footing, nothing can shake them. No matter what happens, they can stand and withstand in the evil day.

Usually peace is the opposite of warfare. When we have peace, we do not fight, and when we fight, we do not have peace. But here we fight with peace and in peace. We fight by standing in peace. If we lose the peace between us and God or between us and other believers, we lose the standing. Christ is the peace for us to be one with God and to be one with the saints. This peace is the firm foundation that enables us to stand fast against the enemy.

The three aspects of the armor of God covered in this message—the girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, and the firm foundation of the gospel of peace—are all Christ. He is our truth, our righteousness, and our peace. Christ is God expressed and revealed, Christ is the righteous element that covers us, and Christ is the peace that enables us to stand. Therefore, we can stand in peace to fight the spiritual warfare. If we would be victorious in the spiritual warfare, we need Christ as our girdle of truth, as our breastplate of

righteousness, and as our peace. By means of such a Christ we have the strength, the covering, and the firm footing. Then we are able to fight against the enemy.

References:

Life-Study of Ephesians msg. 63 & 64