

Sunday, September 22, 2013—The Battlefield of the Mind—Victory is a Prayer Away

### **Introduction/Review**

- II Corinthians 10:5—Paul instructs us to bring every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.
- Last week we followed up on our study titled “Every Thought Captive” by looking with a message looking at Philippians 4:8 titled “Think on These Things”
- Philippians 4:8—these are the things Paul tells us think on. Here the divine checklist for “brining every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.” When thoughts come into your mind ask yourself: is it true, is it honest, is it just, is it pure, is it lovely, is it of good report, is it virtuous, is it worthy of praise? If it is not cast it down and get rid of it. If it meets these standards think on it, meditate upon it, and praise God for it.
- This morning we want to bring closure to this series by looking at the role prayer plays in the battlefield of the mind.

### **Prayer the Forgotten Piece of Armor**

- II Corinthians 10:3-4—throughout this series we spent a lot of time stressing the spiritual nature of our warfare as well as looking at the nature of the spiritual weapons Paul speaks of. We did this by studying each piece of the armor of God in Ephesians 6.
- Ephesians 6:11-13—please recall the following points from or studies in Ephesians 6.
  - We are instructed to put on the whole armor of God (verse 11).
  - We are to put on the whole armor of God so that we can “stand against the wiles of the devil (verse 11).” Remember Satan’s three-fold attack against the church the body of Christ:
    - Attack the Message
    - Attack the Messenger
    - Discourage or Discredit the Messenger
  - We are not wrestling with flesh and blood but with spiritual wickedness in high places (verse 12).
  - We are to take the whole armor of God so that we might be able to “withstand in the evil day” “having done all to stand.” (Verse 13)
- Ephesians 6:14-17—lists the armor of God that we are to put on.
  - *Belt of Truth*—midsection or core (the loins of your mind)
  - *Breastplate of Righteousness*—the vital organs i.e., your heart and lungs
  - *Sandals of Peace*—footwear to anchor, ground, and provide proper footing
  - *Shield of Faith*—protects the whole body and quenches the fiery darts of the wicked

- *Helmet of Salvation*—protects the head/brain the command center of the body
- *Sword of the Spirit*—is two-edged and defeats the enemies attacked when quoted in the heat of battle. Needs to be hid in the believer’s heart that he/she might not sin against God.
- In surveying the armor of God we observed that each piece of the armor is related to the person and work of Jesus Christ.
  - Christ is the truth (belt of truth)—John 14:6
  - Christ is our righteousness (breastplate of righteousness)—I Corinthians 1:30
  - Christ is our peace (sandals of peace)—Ephesians 2:14
  - Christ’s faithfulness i.e., the faith of Christ (shield of faith)—Romans 3:22, Galatians 2:16, 20
  - Christ is our hope (helmet of salvation)—I Timothy 1:1
  - Christ the living word is equal to the written word (sword of the spirit)—Hebrews 4:12-13
- Ephesians 6:18—there is one aspect of the armor of God and our spiritual warfare that I purposefully did not discuss when we studied Ephesians 6 because I was saving it for the end. Prayer!!!
- *Praying always*—in the midst of the battle we need to constantly praying. Prayer should be an active and ongoing activity in the life of every believer.
  - I Thessalonians 5:17—the instruction is very clear. Pray without stopping. This verse challenges traditional conceptions about prayer.
  - Romans 12:12—the Greek word “continuing instant” is also variously translated: continue steadfastly (1), attend continually (1), continue (4), wait on continually (1). The idea is to unrelenting attention to a thing i.e., continue doing it without stopping.
- Ephesians 6:18—we are to pray “with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit.” Supplication means: need, want, privation, a seeking, asking, or entreating of God or man.
  - Philippians 1:4—“requests”
- Notice that that continues life of prayer and supplication takes place “in the Spirit.” Not only is this in keeping with the nature of our spiritual warfare but prayer is the point of contact in the life of the believer. Prayer is what activates the word of God in the believers life.
- Romans 8:26-27—the Holy Spirit makes intercession for us according to the will of God. How do we know the will of God? In the Word of God. Who moved upon the authors of Scripture to write God’s Word? The Holy Spirit. Who resides within and seals every believer unto the day of redemption? God the Holy Spirit. When believers pray a spiritual nerve fires in their inner man that connects God’s written word with the spirit of believer.

- Ephesians 1:9—the revelation of the mystery to and through the Apostle Paul has revealed the mystery of God’s will.
- A life of continuous instant prayer keeps the believer plugged into the activity of the Spirit of God in his or her inner man.
- Ephesians 6:18—Paul goes on to say that we are to be “watching thereunto.” What does this mean?
  - Watch—1) Forbearance of sleep. 2) Attendance without sleep. 3) Attention; close observation. 4) Guard; vigilance for keeping or protecting against danger. 5) A watchman, or watchmen; men set for a guard, either one person or more, set to espy the approach of an enemy or other danger, and to give an alarm or notice of such danger; a sentinel; a guard. He kept a watch at the gate.
  - Watching—1) Being awake; guarding; attending the sick; carefully observing.
- Matthew 26:36-41
- Matthew 27:65-66
- Colossians 4:2
- Ephesians 6:18—I think what this means is that prayer serves as the watchman of our minds. The guardian or protector of our inner man as it were. Prayer working in conjunction with the word in the believer’s inner man warns of danger. Prayer alerts us to improper thinking. Prayer exposes attitudes and actions that are not being taken captive to the obedience of Christ. Paul instructs us to be actively “watching thereunto” because of the important function prayer plays in our spiritual warfare.