



Spiritual Warfare: Pulling Down Strongholds

EPHESIANS 6:17; HEBREWS 4:12
LESSON 17 – THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT
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The Sword of the Spirit

- ▶ Ephesians 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armor 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. 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 the 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 perseverance and supplication for all the saints—

A Defense against Disobedience

- ▶ Hebrews 4:11 Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. 12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.
- ▶ Sin starts in the heart and mind – the Word guards our hearts and minds.
- ▶ Psalm 119:11 Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You.
- ▶ Psalm 19:14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.
- ▶ Jeremiah 13:10 This evil people, who refuse to hear My words, who follow the dictates of their hearts, and walk after other gods to serve them and worship them, shall be just like this sash which is profitable for nothing.

Qualities of the Sword of the Spirit

- ▶ The Word of God is inspired, infallible, inerrant, complete, authoritative, effective, sufficient, and clear.
- ▶ Inspiration refers to the process by which God has revealed Himself (2 Cor. 2:6-16).
- ▶ 2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.
- ▶ 2 Peter 1: 20 knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, 21 for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.
- ▶ Zechariah 7:12 Yes, they made their hearts like flint, refusing to hear the law and the words which the Lord of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets. Thus great wrath came from the Lord of hosts.

Qualities of the Sword of the Spirit

- ▶ Inspiration deals with the means of revelation being given, inerrancy and infallibility deal with the quality of that revelation – it is true, absolutely and completely, without error.
- ▶ Infallible - the Scripture is unable to fail in accomplishing its divinely intended purpose.
- ▶ Inerrancy - the Bible is without error in its original autographs (at the time of its writing).
- ▶ Jesus and the Apostles both held to a view of inerrancy concerning the Scripture, and while we look to the New Testament to serve as the ultimate interpretation of Old Testament passages, we never see New Testament writers correcting the Old Testament. When Jesus corrected the Jewish teachers, He was correcting their traditions and mishandling of the Scripture and not correcting the Scripture itself.

Qualities of the Sword of the Spirit

- ▶ Psalm 19:7 The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; 8 The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; 9 The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.
- ▶ Proverbs 30:5 Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. 6 Do not add to His words, Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar.
- ▶ Matthew 5:18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

Qualities of the Sword of the Spirit

- ▶ Complete – God’s nature dictates that what He has said to us and when He has said it is sufficient at that time. He tells us not to add to His Word, yet when He speaks (again) He is not adding to His Word, but communicating more of it to us. Don’t add to His Word.
- ▶ Deut. 4: 2 You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you.
- ▶ Deut. 12: 32 “Everything that I command you, you shall be careful to do. You shall not add to it or take from it.
- ▶ Prov. 30: Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. 6 Do not add to his words, lest he rebuke you and you be found a liar.
- ▶ Rev 22:18 For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

Qualities of the Sword of the Spirit

- ▶ Authoritative - “the power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience.”
- ▶ From a Biblical worldview, original and ultimate authority resides with God and God alone. God did not inherit, receive, win, or seize His authority but has authority by the very nature of His being.
- ▶ Romans 13:1 Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.
- ▶ 2 Chron. 20:6 “O Lord God of our fathers, are You not God in heaven, and do You not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations, and in Your hand is there not power and might, so that no one is able to withstand You?”

Qualities of the Sword of the Spirit

- ▶ Effective – God's Word never fails.
- ▶ Isaiah 55:11 So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.
- ▶ 1 Thess. 2:13 For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.

Qualities of the Sword of the Spirit

- ▶ Sufficient - "Scripture contains all the words God intended His people to have at each stage of redemptive history, and that it now contains all the words of God we need for salvation, for trusting Him, and for obeying Him." – Grudem, pg. 127
- ▶ 2 Timothy 3:14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it 15 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.
- ▶ 1 Peter 1: 22 Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, 23 since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; 24 for "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, 25 but the word of the Lord remains forever." And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

Qualities of the Sword of the Spirit

- ▶ Clear - The clarity of Scripture is referred to as “perspicuity.” We may not understand every word of Scripture but the Scriptures do clearly and plainly articulate God’s truth. We be diligently study the Word to understand it and confess that our understanding requires the work of the Spirit.
- ▶ Psalm 19:7 The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; 8 The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; 9 The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.
- ▶ Psalm 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.
- ▶ 2 Timothy 3:15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Qualities of the Sword of the Spirit

- ▶ The Holy Spirit provides a receptivity to the authority of God's Word. On our own we naturally rebel against this truth.
- ▶ The Spirit provides a conviction that the Word is truthfully the Word of God.
- ▶ The Spirit provides a capacity to discern the true meaning of the Word of God.
- ▶ See: Eph. 2:1; Rom. 3:10-18; Psalm 51:5; Eph. 4:18; Rom. 8:7; 1 Cor. 2:14; John 3:3; Eph. 2:4-5; 1 John 2:20, 27.
- ▶ The Sword our Source of Truth (John 17:17), Happiness (Prov. 8:34; Luke 11:28), Power (Hebrews 4:12), Growth (1 Peter 2:2), Guidance (Psalm 119:105), Comfort (Romans 15:4), and Victory (Eph. 6:17).

Take Up and Use God's Word

- ▶ The Word Reveals Truth about Us - John 8:47 He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God.
- ▶ Defensive Use – Luke 4:1-12
- ▶ Against the Lust of the Flesh
- ▶ 1 Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, 2 being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry. 3 And the devil said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.” 4 But Jesus answered him, saying, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.’ ”

Take Up and Use God's Word

- ▶ Against the Lust of the Eyes
- ▶ 5 Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. 6 And the devil said to Him, “All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. 7 Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.” 8 And Jesus answered and said to him, “Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.’ ”
- ▶ Against the Pride of Life
- ▶ 9 Then he brought Him to Jerusalem, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here. 10 For it is written: ‘He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you,’ 11 and, ‘In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.’ 12 And Jesus answered and said to him, “It has been said, ‘You shall not tempt the Lord your God.’ ”

Take Up and Use God's Word

- ▶ Offensive Use – James 4:7; Luke 4:13; 2 Cor. 10:3-5
- ▶ James 4:7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.
- ▶ Luke 4:13 Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.
- ▶ 2 Cor 10:3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,
- ▶ Our weapon is the Word of God!

Take Up and Use God's Word

- ▶ How Do We Use the Word?
- ▶ Read It
- ▶ Listen to It
- ▶ Memorize It
- ▶ Pray It
- ▶ Sing It
- ▶ Meditate Upon It
- ▶ Know It
- ▶ Obey It (Do It)

Next Week

- ▶ Lesson 18 – The Warrior and His Arrows – Psalm 127:3-5