

# Christian Warfare

## Lesson 7: Satan's Resources Which He Uses Against Us *The World*

Besides the strength which Satan has himself, he has the help of other enemies, who are no less dangerous and are led by him under the conduct of two Captain Generals: the World and the Flesh.

- I. By the *world*, we mean impious, ungodly, and unbelieving men, with all their baits and enticements to vanity, and all their discouragements and afflictions by which they hinder and persecute God's children on the paths of righteousness, Eph 2.1-2; 2Tim 2.25-26; Jn 15.18-20; 16.1-3, 33. This wicked world is the devil's chief champion and it assaults us on both sides.
  - A. On the right hand, it entices us with favor, prosperity, and pleasure, that it may allure us into the ways of sin, hinder us from running the Christian race, dishonor God, and forsake Christ. It is a hard thing to resist the world when it fawns upon us. But however hard it is, we must oppose this enemy as well.
    1. However it fawns upon us, it's a mortal enemy which fights against us under Satan's banner, Jn 12.31. There may be honey in its mouth, but there's a deadly poison in its tail, because the end of its sins is always destruction, Rom 3.23. All its allurements are baits to bring us into Satan's net of perdition. It may be beautiful, but it's a Sodom of sin that God will one day destroy, 1Jn 5.19.
    2. Therefore, to arm ourselves against the flattery of the world:
      - a) We must flee out of it like Lot. There's no way to love both the world and God, 1Jn 2.15-17; Js 4.4. There's no way to keep both the world and your own soul, Mk 8.35-36.
      - b) Let us remember that the world's shallow pleasures will plunge us into a bottomless hell, and that the world's songs are but siren's songs, alluring us to shipwreck our souls on the rocks of sin.
      - c) Let us remember that to lay in the world's lap is to wake up like Samson, with all our strength gone and ourselves in bondage.
      - d) And let us remember that for the short, empty, momentary pleasures of the world, we must forego an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison and plunge ourselves into grievous and endless misery, Mk 8.36.
  - B. On the left hand, the world turns her smiles into frowns, her allurements into threats, her pleasures into afflictions, her honors into shames, that she might terrify us and persuade us to make shipwreck of our faith and good conscience or, if possible, cause us to turn and go back to Egypt, where there were no troubles or afflictions, and so much ease and pleasure. But though the world is more terrifying when it frowns than when it fawns, yet it's far less dangerous. That is to say, believers manage adversity better than prosperity.
    1. For oftentimes the sufferings and afflictions found in this world are tempered by God with the means to strengthen our faith, hope, patience, and humility, so that instead of destroying us, they work, in God's all-powerful hands, to purge us of our dross.
    2. Though the world beats us, yet God uses it to correct us and make us better. Though it burns us in the fires of affliction, God uses it to refine us. Though it shakes us with its storms, God uses it to blow away our chaff and cause us to take deeper root. Thus the Lord uses the world as a schoolmaster to teach us more about Him, our own hearts, and the world's vanities, so that we'll labor for a more permanent happiness in God.
    3. But though adversity often has these good effects on us, in itself it's a strong temptation to draw us from God by causing us to murmur and complain and, if possible, to curse Him to

- His face, cf. Job 1.11, to envy all who seem happier than we are, Ps 73.1-5, to despair of God's mercy, Ps 10.1, and to use unlawful means to better our condition, Lk 22.55-60.
4. Therefore it behooves us to arm ourselves against the violence of the world no less than against the flattery of the world. To do this we must:
- a) Remember that our fatherly corrections are testimonies to assure us:
    - (1) that we're not illegitimate, but are instead God's dear children, whom He gently chastens in order that we might not be judged with the world, 1Pet 4.17; Heb 12.6-8; 1Cor 11.32;
    - (2) that Christ has chosen us out of the world, seeing as the world hates us, Jn 15.19;
    - (3) and that we're friends of God, seeing as the world is our enemy, Jn 15.19.
  - b) Remember the recompense and reward that await all who love Jesus, Heb 11.25-26. Then we'll gladly endure, with Moses, to be tried and purified in the furnace of afflictions, because we know that after we're proven to be true gold, the Lord will take us up into His treasure of everlasting happiness, Job 23.10; 1Pet 1.6-7.
  - c) Remember that eternal blessedness is promised to those who mourn with a godly sorrow and eternal woe is pronounced against those who live for the world, Mt 5.4, 10; Lk 6.21, 25.
  - d) And remember that however great your troubles are, they are but light, momentary afflictions that, in God's hands, for all His people, are working an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, 2Cor 4.17. "Why, then, should this little spot of foul weather cause us to stand still or go out of the course which leads to everlasting happiness?"