

November 2015

From the Pastor



## A Living Sword

For the last six months I have been talking about the armor we need to wear because of the spiritual battle that we are in. I have been writing about armor in the order that it is given in Ephesians 6:13-18. We have looked at belts, breastplates, foot gear, shields and helmets. All of these items are things that protect us. The next item is different.

It is the first item that is primarily an offensive weapon; it is a sword. Look at how it is described.

*...the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, (Ephesians 6:17b ESV)*

It would seem unusual for the Bible to be considered a weapon, but we have a good example of God's word being used in a spiritual battle. Jesus showed us how to use the Bible in His battle with the devil.

In Luke 4:1-13 we find a record of when Jesus was being tempted by Satan. He had been fasting for forty days.

Satan tempted Jesus first by telling Him to end His fast by doing a miracle to create food. Jesus replied with these words:

*"It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'" (Luke 4:4b)*

Jesus was quoting a passage in the book of Deuteronomy that speaks of God's provision for the children of Israel.

## Sword of the Spirit



*And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. (Deuteronomy 8:3 ESV)*

Jesus was telling Satan that the Father was in control of His life on earth. He could trust the Father for all His needs. Satan wanted Jesus to move outside the Father's will. Jesus, using scripture told Satan who was in charge.

Satan then took Jesus to a place where He could see all the kingdoms of the world, and Satan told Jesus that he would give Jesus all the kingdoms. This was a temptation, because there was going to come a time when the world would be given to Jesus. However, now was not the time. As He was tempted, Jesus again quoted the book of Deuteronomy.

*It is the LORD your God you shall fear. Him you shall serve and by his name you shall swear. (Deuteronomy 6:13 ESV)*

Jesus was telling Satan that Satan is not to be feared or followed. It is God who is in control; it is God who puts us in leadership.

Satan was not finished. He then took Jesus to the top of the temple at Jerusalem. He told Jesus to throw Himself down so that the angels who serve God would catch Him. Satan even quoted scripture. He quoted the book of Psalms that speaks of how God cares for His children.

<sup>11</sup> *For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.*

<sup>12</sup> *On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.*

*(Psalm 91:11-12 ESV)*

Jesus retorted with another quote from Deuteronomy.

*You shall not put the LORD your God to the test, as you tested him at Massah. (Deuteronomy 6:16 ESV)*

Jesus told Satan that we are not to put God to the test. God is not to be at our beck and call. At this point Satan left Jesus. There are a few things we can learn from Jesus about using the sword of the Spirit from Luke 4:1-13.

First of all, and most obvious, know God's word. Jesus knew the word of God. In His case these were His very words. You and I need to know God's word. We need to regularly read it and study it.

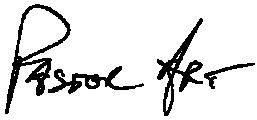
Second, when quoting God's word, make sure you are using it correctly. Satan even quoted God's word to Jesus, but he used it wrongly. He was trying to get Jesus to command God to do something because of what the Bible said. Jesus corrected Satan by showing through other Bible passages that God is in command. People do that today. They find a passage that says God blesses people, and they command God to bless them because of what the Bible says. It is a wrong use of the word of God. It is putting us before God. We are to get so familiar with the scriptures that we are able to handle it correctly.

And third, we are to know scripture well enough that we will be capable to use it when in spiritual warfare. Jesus knew the word of God so well that when tempted, He was able to defend Himself. God wants us to call scripture to mind when being tempted. I want to add a caveat to this final point and that is this. You are not alone. When in spiritual warfare, you have the Holy Spirit right there with you. Look at what Jesus said about the Holy Spirit.

*But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. (John 14:26 ESV)*

Trust in God; use His word in this spiritual battle that we are in.

In Him and for His glory,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pastor Jeff". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "P" and a long, sweeping underline.