

February 2011

“*You may say to yourself, ‘My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.’ But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant...***”**

Deuteronomy 8:17-18

Our Mission Statement

Our passion is to help small and mid-size companies grow and produce wealth with the hope that it will result in more humanitarian acts and honor to God.

This email is never sent unsolicited and American Business Advisors keeps all our subscribers' information strictly confidential. You have received this special offer by voluntarily providing your email information to us personally or at our website.

If you have any questions about our Privacy Policy or this email, feel free to call us directly at 303-335-4218.

Spiritual Warfare

A Cosmic Battle Over Your Soul between God and Satan

Part VI, The Full Armor of God – The Sword of the Spirit

By Robert C. Benson, President

*“When we come to the phrase, ‘the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God,’ we’re talking about a special application of the Word of God. Seen as a belt the Word is something we believe in, something that we rely on and that comforts us. **But seen as a sword it (the Word) becomes a weapon, something that not only helps us to stand against Satan, but, when properly wielded, can put him to flight.**”* Shafer Parker, Jr.

A. Situational Analysis Summary

“Seen as a sword it becomes a weapon, something that not only helps us to stand against Satan, but, when properly wielded, can put him to flight,” says Pastor Shafer Parker, Jr. We are writing a series of articles on Spiritual Warfare to encourage Christians to update their awareness of the Cosmic Battle they are engaged in and the enormous power God has to protect them in their daily lives. The Bible tells Christians they can be protected from and overcome Satan and the forces of darkness by putting “on the full Armor of God” because *“each piece has divine power to demolish strongholds.”*

Remember that Pastor Parker at Hawkwood Baptist Fellowship **reminds Christians “that we believe in a personal God.”** He continues with **“The Bible also teaches that a personality lies behind the evil in this world. The devil is as real as God, although he is not the same as God...he, like us and like all the angels, is a created being, dependent on God for his continued existence. But for all that, never forget he is also a personal being. He communicates with us, after a fashion...he can develop special strategies for individuals. There are people in which he takes special interest. And he is constantly seeking out those whom he can devour, metaphorically speaking.”**

To battle Satan, the Apostle Paul instructs Christians to “put on the full armor of God, so...you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand” (on its divine power).

To date we have published Spiritual Warfare articles on the following topics:

- Part I, What You Need to Know About Satan and his “Schemes”
- Part II, How to Take Your Stand Against the Devil's Schemes
 - The Belt of Truth
 - The Breastplate of Righteousness
 - How to Stand Firm After You Put on the Armor of God
- Part III, The Armor of God - The Gospel of Peace
- Part IV, The Armor of God - The Shield of Faith
- Part V, The Armor of God - The Helmet of Salvation

If you didn't have a chance to read them, you can find them at www.ABAdvisors.com, eNewsletter link.

The purpose of this article is to help you understand how to use “The Sword of the Spirit” so Satan can't derail you from becoming a mature Christian or being effective with building Christ's Church - The Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20). And for those who desire to build and lead a Kingdom business you would be wise to know the enemy and how to defend yourself against Satan or he will make your life miserable.

B. The Sword of the Spirit

What is it? Why use it?

“Therefore put on the full armor of God so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then...Take the sword of the Spirit...” Ephesians 6:13-17

Except for my “Notes,” the information in this Section B is from Bible Study Guides at <http://www.freebiblestudyguides.org>).

The sword is the only item listed by Paul that serves in an offensive capacity. Even if we have all the rest of the armor equipped perfectly, without our sword, we amount to little more than heavily armored moving targets.

What purpose did the sword serve in the Roman army? The Roman *gladius* has become known as "the sword that conquered the world." Adapted from a Spanish design, the prowess of the *gladius* in close range combat made it a fearsome tool in the hand of a skilled Roman warrior. When sharpened, its dual edges wreaked havoc on unarmored foes, while its tapered point could pierce through even heavy metal armor.

What is the Word of God? God's Word—the Holy Bible—illuminates. It reveals to us the good and the bad, the wise and the unwise. It is the ultimate tool in learning how to

live the best possible life, free from the restraints of stumbling in darkness. *"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path"* (Psalm 119:105).

God's Word is truth, plain and simple. We can have perfect confidence in the fact that His words are accurate, true and unerring. When followed, they guide us without fail in the paths that we need to walk. *"Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth"* (John 17:17).

We can be destroyed by lack of the knowledge of God (Hosea 4:6), but we will be blessed if we hear and keep the Word of God (Luke 11:28). And the knowledge is not just for us. We are to be ready to answer others who ask us (1 Peter 3:15).

Why a sword? The all-powerful sword of the living God is able to cut through every defense our enemy can raise—down to the very division of bone and marrow. *"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"* (Hebrews 4:12). When wielded by a servant of God, nothing can withstand its ability to cut straight to the core of a matter and uncover the truth. As soldiers in God's army, it is our responsibility and duty to use His Word to discern the truth and then follow it. When God's Word shows us something wrong in ourselves, we can use this spiritual weapon to "surgically" remove the offending thoughts and actions (2 Corinthians 10:4-5).

Unlike all other pieces of the armor of God, which are solely defensive, the sword is uniquely suited for both defensive and offensive roles. A solid defense is invaluable, but the sword is the only way we can complete the work we have been given to do. Notice that Jesus Christ used the Bible to counter Satan's attacks (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10). We must also learn to live *"by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God"* (Matthew 4:4).

Swords are used for close combat, not long-range warfare. Could this imply the nature of the battle a Christian fights? ...Paul only lists one weapon because we only need one weapon: There is no enemy the Word of God, coupled with His Spirit, cannot defeat. And so, armed only with our sword, we step out to fight our enemies head-on. The struggle is real. It is immediate, and it is in front of us. Our future in God's Kingdom is on the line, and we take up the battle so that we may hold fast to the future He has promised us... *"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us"* (Romans 8:31)? So take up your sword. The battle is ours.

[Except for my "Notes," the information above, in this Section B, is from Bible Study Guides at <http://www.freebiblestudyguides.org>.]



2010 DAWN BOOTH

C. Take the Sword of the Spirit

The Power of Your Offensive Weapon

“The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”

2 Corinthians 10:4

Pastor Shafer Parker says “When we come to the phrase, ‘the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God,’ we’re talking about a special application of the Word of God. Seen as a belt the Word is something we believe in, something that we rely on and that comforts us. **But seen as a sword it becomes a weapon, something that not only helps us to stand against Satan, but, when properly wielded, can put him to flight.**”

Let me ask you two questions. As a born again Christian, who are you? And, what are you?”

As a born again Christian, the Bible says you are a child of God forever, both here and in heaven. This is an absolutely amazing reality and I recommend you spend time to get “your mind around it.” The Apostle John expresses his wonder in 1 John 3:1 “*How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!*” The Apostle Peter expands that understanding “*you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God*” (1 Peter 2:9). You are “a holy nation,” that is, you all belong to one nation and are citizens of the Kingdom of God.

As such, you are a soldier while on earth, an enemy of Satan and the forces of evil. Pastor Parker explains “That Christians are to put on spiritual armour and gird on a sword for fighting means that in this world we are soldiers. In heaven we will be the church triumphant, or the church at rest, but now, in this life we are the church militant. Christ has won for us a Kingdom, but He is waiting for us to go out in faith to take that Kingdom. That means that in this life every born-again child of God is a soldier, from the youngest, sweetest little seven-year-old girl who just invited Jesus to come live in her heart, to the oldest, weakest little grandmother who can’t even get out of bed without assistance.”

However, “*The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ*” (2 Corinthians 10:4).

Parker continues “Because our chief weapon is the Word of God empowered by the Spirit of God, every true Christian is carrying devastating firepower. Because we fight with Spiritual weapons...every Christian is potentially a powerful soldier against spiritual opposition, against the devil...When we fight and win against Satan, angels rejoice. When we take heaven, the very battlements of heaven ring with joy... And when Satan loses a soul to the Kingdom of God, that lost soul (that is a lost soul from Satan’s point of view, not God’s) is the biggest winner...So let us resolve to be

soldiers. Let us resolve to fight for the Kingdom, to see it spread and grow. Let us resolve to take prisoners of war out of the devil's camp and set them free. To do that we need to understand the sword of the Spirit."

Who is the Holy Spirit? According to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit is ***"the Counselor...whom the Father will send in my name"*** who ***"will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you"*** (John 14:26). So yes, God does communicate with you! Christ continues his instructions about the Holy Spirit in John 14 and 16: ***"When the counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me"*** (John 15:26), ***"Now I am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief. But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned. I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. **But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you"***** (John 16:5-15).

If you are among those who are puzzled when people say God talks to them, then you are missing out on a key component of the personal relationship God intended for you in order to teach you, guide you, and empower you to live and walk in your "new nature" while helping to build Christ's Church. Most importantly, for the purpose of this series of articles on Spiritual Warfare, you are easy prey for Satan and his forces of darkness. Of course, as indicated in the introduction, Satan and his servants are also communicating with you and trying to "teach" you (See John 10:1-18) as he "masquerades as an angel of light." ***"For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve"*** (2 Corinthians 11:13-15).

Following are five ways the Spirit helps you use the Sword:

1. **The Holy Spirit inspired men to write Scripture** and once understood, it is clear that part of his plan in doing so was to equip God's children with truth to counter every one of the devil's attacks. ***"Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit"*** (2 Peter 1:19-21).
2. **The Holy Spirit leads us to "all truth"** (see quotes from John 14, 15 and 16 above).
3. **The Holy Spirit enables us to understand Scripture.** ***"However, as it is written: 'No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him'— but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.***

For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words” (1 Corinthians 2:9-13).

4. **The Holy Spirit reminds us of appropriate passages in times of need.** “...*the Counselor...whom the Father will send in my name” who ‘will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you’” (John 14:26), “do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you” (Matthew 10:19-20).*
5. **The Holy Spirit empowers the Word as it is spoken** to accomplish His intended effect, either for judgment or salvation (John 16:8). ***“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).***

Following are four ways you can sharpen your Sword:

1. **“Know what the Bible says well enough to know where it says it”** (Pastor Parker). Therefore, it is imperative that you read God’s word so the Holy Spirit can teach you and remind you of “truth” when you need it.
2. **“Use it or lose it.”** As the old saying goes, like anything else you want to learn, it is not enough to just read the Bible. In order to “understand” it you have to use it in making your daily decisions and in holding off Satan’s attacks. **By doing so you develop judgment**, through practice, in knowing Christ’s voice (the Holy Spirit) from the voice of Satan (“the thief” in John 10). And you also develop judgment as to “what time it is,” i.e. knowing which spiritual principle to apply in each life situation. ***“If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:31-32).***
3. **“Pray for grace to love God’s Word**, to learn to make it matter to you more than anything else, more than life itself” (Shafer Parker). Why, because God’s Word provides you with “life itself!” ***“Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD” (Deuteronomy 8:3).*** Jesus quoted this Scripture to Satan because He understood that these words were the very life of God. Consider the following Scripture, ***“The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous. They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb. By them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward” (Psalms 19:9-11).***
4. **“Be filled with the Spirit.** Remember, He is the one who will give you what to say – if you are in a position to hear Him. Listen, all you have to do is read the book of Acts to see that those early disciples who turned the world upside down were filled with the Spirit – filled, and refilled. The Holy Spirit was the source of their power” (Shafer Parker).

Compare Ephesians 5:1 - 6:9 with Colossians 3:1 - 4:1. You will find that the only fundamental difference in those two passages is that one instructs you to *“be filled with the Spirit”* and the other instructs you to *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.”* **In other words, the one concrete action we can take to encourage the filling of the Spirit is to make sure God’s Word is fundamentally the basis for all we think and do.**

D. How to Stand Firm After You Put on the Armor of God

“Therefore put on the full armor of God so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm...” Ephesians 13-14a

Note that Paul says “when” the day of evil comes, not if. When the devil tempted Christ in Luke 4:1-13, Christ ALWAYS used Scripture, and ONLY Scripture, to take his stand against the devil. Knowing God is much more powerful than Satan and that Scriptures’ *“divine power to demolish strongholds..., demolish arguments..., and...take captive every thought,”* Jesus simply stood His ground with only Scripture as His weapon!

Why? Because Christ knew Satan fears God the Father and that if He stood on (had faith in and obeyed) the truth of God’s word, Satan would give up and go away, *“When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time”* (Luke 4:13). “Is that it?” you ask. “Is that all I have to do?” Yes, that’s all there is and that’s all you have to do! Do not battle with people. Do not battle with your flesh. Just quote Scripture to Satan, believe the Scripture and then trust in God’s power and obey God. *“I will deliver this vast army into your hands, and you will know that I am the LORD,”* (1 Kings 20:28).

Following is a brief Action Plan:

1. **Read** the Bible regularly so the Holy Spirit can “remind you” of what Scripture says during Satan’s attacks, 2 Corinthians 10:3-5.
2. **Obey** Scripture in your daily life, see verses above.
3. **Allow** the Holy Spirit to sanctify you and teach you obedience, 1 Peter 5:8-9.
4. **“Resist** the devil, and he will flee from you” James 4:7. Resist means to repeal, not to agree with, not to receive his thoughts into your mind and soul and not to entertain anything that is contrary to the Word of God!
5. **Quote** Scripture back to Satan as Jesus did. Memorize a few key verses for this purpose, such as 1 John 5:11-13, 1 John 1:9, Galatians 2:20-21, John 15, John 15:9-12, and others as the Holy Spirit instructs you to memorize.
6. **Focus** on overcoming the World and Satan, 1 John 5:4-5.
7. **Unity** with other Christians. Make a declaration of interdependence with true “believers” and work together. Satan uses the age old strategy of “divide and conquer,” Ecclesiastes 4:9-12.

And remember that sanctification is a process, not an event! *“For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin — because anyone who has died has been freed from*

*sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him” (Romans 6:5-8). **To succeed in sanctification rely on the power of Christ living in you,** “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body (of sin), I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!” (Galatians 2:20-21).*

If you don’t have a Bible, you can go online to www.netbible.org. And if you want someone to talk to about the things in this letter, call us at ABA!

In the next issue of *The Spirit Led Business™*, Part VII, we will finalize the series on Spiritual Warfare with insights on **how to pray in the Spirit** to take your stand against the devil’s (Satan’s) schemes.

Note: All Bible verses are from the New International Version unless otherwise noted.

Permission is granted to copy or distribute the Spirit Led Business™ in its entirety, and is not to be sold or used for commercial venture. The Spirit Led Business is published by American Business Advisors, Inc. to provide business and personal improvement information and ideas. All material is presented to provide general and broad information only. The information found in this publication does not constitute business, tax, financial, or legal advice and should not be acted upon without seeking the counsel of a professional advisor.

American Business Advisors, Inc.

www.ABAdvisors.com

6635 South Dayton Street, Suite 210

Greenwood Village, CO 80111

Phone: 303-335-4218, Fax 303-220-1937, Toll Free: 877-902-3600

© 2003-2011 American Business Advisors, Inc. – All Rights Reserved