

Demonology

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Hoping to finish this subsection today, Demonology, we have dealt with the good angels, satan, and now demons in our study of Angelology. This means that the next time I'm with you we'll be starting on the Genesis 6 controversy. I know some of you are looking forward to what I might say about that, and I'm looking forward to what I might say about that as well. I'm still praying about a lot of things in there.

We have gone through all of these things about demons (see Overview Slide):

1. Existence
2. Origin
3. Personhood
4. Characteristics
5. Powers
6. Works
7. Demon possession, and probably at that point in the study, it was overwhelming because we described our enemy in such great detail, both satan and the demons, that you're wondering, 'well, what hope do we really have?' That's when we conclude demonology with ...
8. Defense — where we learn that God has equipped us for the battle.

First of all, there are certain things that God is already doing for us through intercession and divine restraint (see Slides on Christian's Defense Against Satan/Demons: God's responsibility and Believer's responsibility) in spiritual warfare. Then we learned that it isn't just a 'let go and let God' type of thing; we have to play an active part in spiritual warfare in defense, and we've learned about our basic responsibilities.

- We are playing defense
- We should avoid catering to the flesh
- We should resist satan
- We should rely upon the Holy Spirit, and the very last thing on this list [of Believers' responsibilities] may be the most important...
- Put on the full armor of God

We called this section “Dressed for Success!” To refresh our memories, let’s reread Ephesians 6:14-17—Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God. (See Slide on 8 Observations About the Armor)

We’ve talked about how Paul is in prison when he writes these words. He’s most likely chained to a Roman soldier and that’s what gives him the idea to use the different parts of the soldier’s armor as a metaphor for our spiritual defense in spiritual warfare. He describes six pieces of armor. Armor was a big deal in the Greco-Roman world that determined if you won any battle or war.

Paul is reinforcing concepts from earlier in the book of Ephesians; he is mentioning the six pieces of armor, probably in the order in which they’re put on. He is basically giving a command. He says, “Put on the full armor of God.” We are walking through these different pieces of armor, describing them and explaining what they represent and applying them to our lives. The six aspects of our weaponry will summarize the key concepts of the letter and call the church to action. (See Slide on Ephesians: What is Inside?)

This philosophy of teaching the armor of God fits with what we know about Ephesians 4-6 is picking up ideas in chapters 1-3 which is just knowledge where chapters 4-6 is application. We would expect that to continue into the most infamous book of Ephesians, the ‘armor of God’ chapter (Ephesians 6).

See slides on 6 Pieces of Armor (Ephesians 6:14-17)

Here are the six pieces of armor, and we’ve already talked about the belt of truth (see Slide on Belt of Truth Definition) which is the foundation of our defense, which is standing firm in God’s Word as well as walking in personal integrity. There is an objective part of it in the brain believing it is true, but then letting our practice catch up with our position, where we are walking in personal integrity and truth. As we do this moment-by-moment, we are putting on the belt of truth.

Then there is the breastplate of righteousness (see Slide on Breastplate of Righteousness) which is our underlying protection which includes our righteous character stemming from our positional righteousness. In other words, we make decisions in life that are consistent with our position, and we find that satan has only certain inroads into our lives when we do that.

From there, we put on the sandals of peace, (see Slide on Sandals of Peace) and with all of these concepts we are trying to track how the concept is used earlier in the book of Ephesians. Peace essentially refers to the peace we have with God and the peace we have with each other, positionally. So because we are at peace with God, we should pursue peace and unity within the church. As we do that, we are putting on the sandals of peace.

Then comes Ephesians 6:16, the shield of faith (see Slide on Shield of Faith) which is used in this book to describe the content of what the Christian believes. As so it is basically our confident trust in God's ways and promises in the midst of emergencies of life to withstand Satan's attacks. If we don't do that, then we become an 'unbelieving believer,' someone who is saved but not trusting God through the trials of life. When we aren't trusting God through the trials of life by standing on His promises, then we aren't putting up that shield of faith, and we are vulnerable to missing all types of blessings that God might have for us. This has nothing to do with salvation but with temporal blessings.

Then, last time we also talked about the helmet of salvation (see Slide on Helmet of Salvation), the helmet which protects the mind or the head. The Bible says that as a man thinks, so he is. So Satan is always targeting the mind of the believer. Salvation is essentially used in the book of Ephesians to describe the full ramifications of our salvation (see slide on Three Tenses of Salvation). It is maintaining confidence in our past, present, and future deliverance in the midst of battle. We don't allow Satan to talk us into the idea that we maybe we aren't Christians if we had such and such a thought. We also understand that grace is not something that is only for yesterday and for tomorrow but is something that we can appropriate right now: unmerited favor which is the strength we need to handle life's exigencies and problems that come our way. So as we trust in those ways, we are putting on the helmet of salvation.

We just have one more piece of armor to talk about, and that is the sword of the Spirit (see slide on 6 Pieces of Armor—#6 Sword of the Spirit). Let's re-read Ephesians 6:17 which says, And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION [we talked about that last time, and then the last part of it here], and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God.

(See slide on Sword of the Spirit)

A sword obviously would be the quality of the sword having a double edged sword. Armies moving from a single edged sword to a double edged sword was a decisive weapon in victory. Our sword is very important to our victory, and obviously, the sword here is metaphorical because it says 'the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God.' We aren't talking about a physical sword, we are talking about a spiritual sword. The nation of Israel, in God's dealings with them, had physical weapons that they used. They were a nation who had to fight the Gibeonites, and all of the ites, the Philistines. In the church age, our struggle is not against flesh and blood, and the weapons of our warfare, per 2 Corinthians 10:5 says that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal or fleshly. So because we are a spiritual man in the Church, our adversary is described here as spiritual in nature. So this is all metaphorical language for spiritual combat that we are in. It is very clear when he identifies the "sword of the Spirit which is the word of God."

(See slide on Sword of the Spirit)

What does this sword of the Spirit represent? Obviously it represents the word of God because that is what it says right there in the passage. The way to handle these concepts is to back up in

the book of Ephesians to see where the same concepts are used elsewhere. If you go back to Ephesians 5:26, speaking of the marital relationship, it says, "...so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,..." The same word used there for *word* is the Greek word, if I'm not mistaken, *rhema*. So we learn in Ephesians 5 that our relationship to the Lord is analogized to that of husband and wife, bride and groom. One of the things that the groom does for the bride or the husband does for the wife is that he washes her, the sanctifying power, through the word of God. This is what Jesus, our future groom and husband, does for us all the time. He sanctifies us, not in the positional sense which has presumably already happened, but in the daily life sense through the perpetual cleansing through His Word. In fact, in John 17:17, which is Christ's High Priestly prayer, truly the LORD's prayer, the prayer which Jesus Himself prayed for Himself, for His disciples and for His future church that was going to be born on the Day of Pentecost. Then He actually prays for our sanctifying process. He says this in John 17:17, "Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth..."

So when you put John 17:17 right next to Ephesians 5:26, *the* way that God sanctifies us, not just saves us through justification, but corrects us through our daily lives so that He gets us moving in the right direction, is through His word. So if you remove the word of God from the church and from the believer's lives, and if the Bible just sits on the coffee table collecting dust, and you go to a church that has nothing more in mind than to entertain you to get you to return next week, so they can get more of your money and the word of God is almost pushed out of the church, then the reality is that you cannot grow. We are told very clearly here that the process of progressive sanctification takes place through God's Word. That is why Ephesians 5:26 says, "sanctifying her through the word..."

So when Paul, in Ephesians 6:17b is talking about the sword of the Spirit, he is talking about the word of God and about the revealed word of God as we find in Genesis 1:1 all the way through Revelation 22. If that isn't a daily or moment-by-moment part of our lives, then we can't grow in Christ. It doesn't matter how good the smoke and lights show on the stage is or how good the music is. If you don't have the word of God, spiritual growth cannot occur. If you don't have the word of God, actual salvations can't occur either because Paul says in Romans 10:17, that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of Christ. So the word of God is a very big deal not only in terms of our justification but in terms of our growth in Christ.

That is when all those promises that when the word of God is taught, Isaiah 55:10-11 says that the word of God does not return void. Then Paul makes that great statement at the end of his life in the last letter he wrote in 2 Timothy 3 (I'll make a reference to that passage in a moment about how all Scripture is God-breathed and is profitable for doctrine, correction, reproof, training in righteousness, so that the man of God [or woman of God] might be equipped for every good work). These are the promises of God's word that He promises to do when we avail ourselves to the word of God and come to the Bible not with an attitude of trying to correct the Bible. Many people are trying to correct the Bible, but here at Sugar Land Bible Church, we aren't here to correct the Bible, we are here to open the Bible, read the Bible, trust the Bible, and the

Bible is here to correct me. So if there is some wicked way in me, we want the Lord to deal with us as we avail ourselves to His Word. So I think this is how Paul is using this concept of the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God.

So what does the sword of the Spirit represent? Before we get to that, notice at the bottom of the screen that the Spirit has been revealing to Paul all the way through this letter mystery truths. Truths about the Body of Christ and truths about the church that for the most part, haven't received a full treatment anywhere else in the Bible, even in some of Paul's writings. See how the Spirit keeps revealing to Paul even when he was in prison, different aspects of truth. This is how Paul, I think, is using the sword of the Spirit called this because it is the Spirit through inspiration that is leading and guiding Paul about what to write. If that process wasn't occurring in Paul's life, we wouldn't have the book of Ephesians nor the 13 books total that the apostle Paul also wrote. That is what he meant by the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. There is a mentality out there that says, 'Well, you know, the word of God is one thing, but I'm not really into the word of God; I'm just into the Spirit.' They try to drive a wedge between the word of God and the Spirit of God as if it can be done. It is an impossibility because the last time I checked, it is the Spirit of God that inspired the word of God. So the Spirit of God has no intention of giving you some kind of auxiliary experience or manifestation that has nothing to do with God's word. Everything the Spirit of God is doing in someone's life will always revolve around the word of God in some way.

When going through Ephesians 1:8-9,13 (see all verses on Slide of the Sword of the Spirit — Represent), see that the Spirit is gradually revealing different things to Paul, allowing him to explain these mystery truths. This is a doctrine that we call inspiration, where 2 Timothy 3:16,17 is so helpful because it says, "All Scripture is inspired by God..." [in brackets there is the Greek word for inspired by God is *theopneustos*, which is two words: *theos* + *pneuma* making up one word, a compound word. To my knowledge, this is called a *hapax legomenon* which means this: *hapax* in Greek means *once*; *legomenon* means *spoken*. It is a very unique word because it is spoken only a single time [*inspired*] in the entire Greek New Testament. As far as I know, it is the only place where this word translated, 'inspired by God' is used. Notice that Paul makes the claim that the doctrine of inspiration applies to *all* of Scripture. *All* Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, reproof (sometimes that hurts), correction and training in righteousness. Notice that the word of God will correct us but it won't leave us cut up and bleeding, and it will put us on the right path.

This is one of the reasons that some stay away from church as they like the darkness rather than the light for their deeds are evil and they know that if they come to the light that their deeds will be exposed. So it is always a hurtful process to expose one's life to God's word, yet is absolutely necessary for growth in Christ. It is like when Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost and he wove together all of those Scriptures in Acts 2 where he spoke of Psalm 16, Psalm 110, Joel 2 — a masterpiece of expository teaching coming from an ignorant and uneducated fisherman. It was so good they couldn't believe he was saying it, and when they heard this, around Acts 2:37,

it says that they were cut to the heart, which is what the word of God will do, it will cut you wide open, *if* you will let it. Then, it doesn't just leave you bleeding, but it will train you in righteousness, then continuing on, so that the man or woman of God may be adequately equipped for *every* good work.

This is what the word of God does, and we wouldn't have the ability to experience this had God not *breathed* the original manuscripts of Scripture. We don't have the original manuscripts today, and thank God for that because if we had the original manuscripts of Scripture, people would worship the original manuscripts. That is what people do when they think they've found a splinter of the cross; they make all these pilgrimages to bow down. That is why God never allowed us to keep the original manuscripts. If we had the original manuscripts and they were damaged then Christianity is destroyed. So God has allowed us to preserve copies of the manuscripts; the copies we have are more numerous than any other work of antiquity and they are closest to the original writing than any other work of antiquity. So if you throw out the Bible since we don't have the original manuscripts, then you have to also throw out every work of antiquity ever known to man because *our* case for accuracy of the copies is better than every other work of antiquity. Those manuscripts agree with each other 99% of the time; there are some slight variations. That's the difference between the New American Standard Bible and the King James Bible, but those discrepancies never relate to a major doctrine and their minutia. So we have excellent copies and translations of the original manuscripts which are very good representations of the originals which, in fact, were inspired by God. So if you give yourself to the word of God, it will change you because that is its enduring quality.

The apostle Peter spoke of this, and we will be dealing with this passage Wednesday night; as 2 Peter 1:20-21 says, But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, (isn't that interesting, when you read the Bible, you aren't getting a collection of the opinions of man; this is not the editorial or opinion section of the newspaper; this is what God thinks). So as ministers, to be quite frank, we aren't ever called to get up and give our own opinions, as if the world needed another opinion, it doesn't; it needs God's opinion. So our calling and responsibility is to figure out what God says and be faithful in our communication of that because no Scripture is a matter of one's own private interpretation. Peter doesn't say, 'Hey I have got some thoughts to share with you,' no, he says, 'this is not my personal belief system that I'm writing to you about.'

2 Peter 1:21 — "...for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved [*pherō*] by the Holy Spirit spoke from God." The Greek word for moved is *pherō* and is the same word used in Acts 27:15,17, of a sailboat. Just as wind comes upon a sailboat and fills the sails with wind, and the boat is propelled, in the same way, the Holy Spirit, also analogized to wind in the Bible, came upon the writers of Scripture in such a supernatural way respecting their individual gifts, styles and temperaments, not overriding who they were but using them through the miracle we call dual authorship. As this process happened, men were being moved and they wrote down God's very own message. So that is what we have in 2 Peter 1:21: "...for no prophecy was ever

made by an act of human will, but men moved [*pherō*] by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.” They were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

This is the very thing that the apostle Paul is speaking of when he refers to the sword of the Spirit. He calls it this because he is making reference to things that he would talk about later in 2 Timothy — things that are spoken of in 2 Peter 1 concerning the divine inspiration of the Scripture. So when Paul speaks about the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, this is what he is referring to.

Therefore, having said all this, and let me throw one more thing at you before I give you a definition of the sword of the Spirit, the sword of the Spirit represents communication by the Spirit through the word of God. Now, the word here for *word* in Ephesians 6:17 is not *logos*, which essentially means *written word*. It says here, *rhema*, which is *spoken word*. So using the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, involves speaking what God has declared in His written word.

With that in mind, the definition of the sword of the Spirit is the specific skillful speaking and application of God’s written revelation in order to overcome Satan’s schemes, and that is what he is speaking of here. So if you come across a problem in life and go to a part of the Bible that deals with that situation and skillfully speak the truth of God’s Word and apply it correctly, you are learning how to wield the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Or if you are in a conversation with someone and a situation arises that the word of God addresses, and you skillfully remember the part of the Bible that deals with this, and you skillfully speak God’s word so that it applies beautifully to the situation, you are suddenly exercising well the sword of the Spirit. When you do this, be sure that the Scriptures are in context as many people grab verses that have nothing to do with anything and throw them out there. That is like taking your sword and missing by a good 2-3 feet. We aren’t called to that; the Bible talks about the appropriate and fitting word. Proverbs speaks of apples of gold in pitchers of silver is like a word aptly spoken. This is what is meant by the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God.

I’m getting this from the word, ‘*rhema*’ which is speaking. This has nothing to do with what is in Tulsa, OK — where there is prosperity and claim your promises and speak your bank account into existence, and they have a big Bible school there called Rhema Bible College, and it is all about prosperity gospel. If you know anything about the Bible, you know that the prosperity gospel is unbiblical. They have taken a wonderful concept, *rhema*, sword of the Spirit, and have abused it to make it sound like man is in control of God, and that once he speaks something into existence, then God is commanded as a cosmic bellhop, to fill your body and your bank account with money, etc. Unfortunately, those who use the word *rhema* the most are the ones who most often misuse the sword of the Spirit.

Do we have any examples of someone in the Bible who modeled for us how to successfully wield or exercise the sword of the Spirit? I’m so glad you asked that because in Luke 4:1-13, there is a

good role model, Jesus on how this is to be done. As you are turning to Luke 4:1-13, jot down 1 John 2:16 because this says, temptation only comes in one of three ways:

1. lust of the flesh,
 2. lust of the eye, or
 3. the pride of life.
- Lust of the flesh is an appeal to use one's body contrary to the will of God.
 - Lust of the eye is covetousness.
 - The pride of life is a spirit of pride independent of God.

Those are the three avenues promoted to Eve in Genesis 3:6. "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, (#1—lust of the flesh, Genesis 3:6), and that it was a delight to the eyes, (#2—lust of the eyes, covetousness) and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, (#3—the pride of life) she took from its fruit and ate;... Her husband didn't even have to be deceived; it just says that he just took it and ate it with her. So don't pile too much onto Eve, she had to be deceived first. It looks as though the man didn't even have to be deceived.

These three avenues were presented to Eve, our forebearers, and she failed as did Adam, and in Luke 4:1-13, Jesus is standing up against those same 3 avenues. See Jesus being tempted here with lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, and the pride of life. See Jesus wielding the sword of the Spirit three times, the *rhema*, the spoken word of God to overcome each of those three temptations. This is important because it reveals to us the sufficiency of the sword of the Spirit. Jesus was pushed to the furthest degree that any human being has ever been pushed in these three avenues: lust of the flesh, lust of the eye and the pride of life. That's why Hebrews 4:15 says that He was tempted in all ways yet was without sin. Why does it say that He was tempted in all ways? Because the Bible says there are only three ways in which temptation comes: lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, and the pride of life. He was pushed furthest than any human being has ever been pushed. Yet He overcame these three temptations, unlike Eve, because of His very effective use of the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

The reason I chose Luke 4:1-13 rather than Matthew 4:1-11, which tells the same story to explain this morning, is because I think that Matthew gives the story in the chronological order that it occurred. I don't think that is happening in Luke because notice how Luke inverts temptations #2 and #3 compared to Matthew's account. Matthew provides one sequence, and Luke takes the last two temptations and interchanges them. Luke does that because unlike Matthew's purpose, Luke's purpose is to show that Jesus is the Son of man, and Luke tries to demonstrate that Jesus overcame temptation in every area where Eve failed. Eve received these temptations in a certain order because Jesus succeeded where Eve and Adam failed: lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, and the pride of life. Luke is providing these temptations in the order that Eve received them.

Notice Luke 4:1-3 about how to wield the sword of the Spirit— Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led around by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being

tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days, and when they had ended, He became hungry. ³And the devil said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.” That is an appeal to lust of the flesh. It was not the will of God the Father for Jesus to consume food at this point. Satan is trying to get Jesus to exercise His own will independent of God the Father, and you can see how vulnerable Jesus would be to that temptation given the fact that He had fasted for forty days and was hungry. Satan is trying to drive a wedge in the Trinity here. Imagine the pressure that Jesus is under to succumb here; imagine how the bodily appetite is kicking into high gear as Satan tries to get Jesus to exercise His own power independent of the will of God the Father. Watch Jesus’ use of the sword of the Spirit here: And Jesus answered (it is *rhema* because He is speaking) him (Satan), “It is written, ‘MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE.’” He is quoting there Deuteronomy 8:3, using the book of Deuteronomy in all three temptations to overcome the greatest temptation a human being has ever experienced. That is complete and total confidence in the sufficiency of the Scripture as the word of God. In fact, the book of Deuteronomy, and let’s be honest, most Christians have never read the book of Deuteronomy, have spent zero time in the book, and are shocked to discover if there really is a book of Deuteronomy in our Bible. Yet that somewhat obscure book was enough as Jesus effectively wields the sword of the Spirit, was enough to ward off and to help Him overcome the three greatest temptations any human being has ever experienced in the lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, and the pride of life.

This takes us to Round 2 in Luke 4:5-7 — And he (Satan) led Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, “I will give You all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.” This is lust of the eye, because it says here that the devil showed Him — an appeal to the eyes. When the woman saw that the tree was good for food and a delight to the eyes, where Eve failed, Jesus is about to succeed. A visual appeal was given to Him for all of the kingdoms of the earth. Satan said that they had been given to him and that he could give them to whoever he wants. Who gave them to Satan? Adam did because God’s design was for Adam, under the authority of God the Father, to rule the earth. When Adam listened to the voice of creation, a talking snake, instead of ruling over creation, Satan used that situation to assert his authority as the prince and power of the air, and Satan has remained the god of this age right up until the life of Christ, right up into the present time, and that won’t change until the events of the book of Revelation that we have been studying during the main service.

Luke 4:6-7 — And the devil said to Him, “I will give You all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore if You worship before me, it shall all be Yours.” ‘I’ll give You the whole thing in exchange for a moment of worship.’ What Satan is essentially saying to Jesus is that he knows why Jesus has come into the world — to redeem the world. ‘And I know the route that God the Father has picked for this redemption of the world to take place: through the cross, a terrible death. You don’t have to go to the cross to redeem the world; You don’t have to go through the agony of the cross; You can have the whole ball of wax

right now.’ In essence, what satan is offering Jesus here in the second temptation, is an end run around the cross. Can you imagine if any of us were in that situation how fast we would fold and give into that? This is a powerful temptation that Jesus is under, and this one is lust of the eyes as He is being shown the kingdoms of the world.

Here comes Jesus wielding the sword of the Spirit — Jesus answered (*rhema, speaking*) him, “It is written, (so He is not just giving something that came into his own mind, He is giving the written word of God in [response to] all of these [temptations]) ‘YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD AND SERVE HIM ONLY.’” This is a citation from Deuteronomy 6:13, and it is arguably being conflated with Deuteronomy 10:20. The reality is that Jesus is coming back at this very powerful temptation with the sword of the Spirit, one of the most powerful temptations that a person has or will ever go through, showing us the sufficiency of the sword of the Spirit. So He isn’t just throwing Scriptures out there, He is dealing with and speaking Scriptures that relate to His predicament. That is how familiar with the word of God that He was. He hit a situation and would know which Scripture would apply to which circumstance. You say, ‘That’s an unfair standard, He was God in human flesh.’ He *was* God in human flesh, but He was the God man, and He had to go through the exact same learning process that all of us have to go through. You ask, ‘How do you know that?’ Well, a couple of chapters earlier in Luke 2:52 — And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men. So He had to intellectually and spiritually grow in His understanding of the Bible just as we do. All of this is happening because it demonstrates to us that He is our faithful and sympathetic High Priest; He knows what it is like to be tempted, and He is also going through this to show us how we are to wield the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

And now in Round 3 beginning in Luke 4:9, And he [satan] led Him to Jerusalem and had Him stand on the pinnacle [the tippy top] of the Temple, and said to Him, “if You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here; [wow look at this in Luke 4:10] ... for it is written, [now satan is quoting the Bible, it is like a Scripture-quoting contest here], ‘HE WILL COMMAND HIS ANGELS CONCERNING YOU TO GUARD YOU,’ and, ‘ON their HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, SO THAT YOU WILL NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.’” That is Psalm 91:11-12. The problem is that when you study those verses, you learn that satan is taking Psalm 91:11-12 out of context. He is making it sound as if we are to *intentionally* put ourselves into harm’s way, testing God to see if He will come through for us. So this verse is really about God protecting us but now satan pushes it a little further and twists it to make it sound as if we should go ahead and lay down on the freeway to test God to see if Psalm 91 is true. ‘Go ahead and attend a church that handles poisonous snakes, via Mark 16 allegedly, and put your hand in there and test God to see if He will protect you.’ That is an abuse of the Scripture, and notice that with the kingdom of the cults that when they quote the Scripture, and even the Rhema Bible Institute are quoting but twisting the Scripture. That is how satan always works with the Scripture because he is the father of lies. So just because someone quotes the Scripture doesn’t necessarily mean that is good. Are they using the Scripture in context?

This is temptation number 3, an appeal to the pride of life, and that's why he is standing on the tippy top of the Temple, saying that 'If You throw Yourself down and the angels will catch You per Psalm 91, think how popular You will be, how successful You will be; about the messianic following You can have in a nanosecond.'

How does Jesus ward off this temptation? Luke 4:12, And Jesus answered (*spoken, rhema*) and said to him, "It is said, 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.'" 'So satan, you are misusing the Scripture because you are making it sound as if I have to intentionally place Myself in harm's way to see if God's miraculous hand will come through for Me, and you are contradicting what the Lord actually said in Deuteronomy 6:16.' So while He is probably quoting Deuteronomy 6:16 in such a skillful way, so as to ward off Satan's abuse of Psalm 91:11-12. In other words, He knows the word well enough to know when it is being abused, and then He knows it well enough to understand how to correct that abuse of Scripture. That is the sword of the Spirit. That is the skillful speaking and application of God's written revelation to overcome Satan's schemes. This is what we are called to do. When Paul tells us to put on the full armor of God and to take up the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, this is the example we are to follow.

I like Luke 4:13 — When the devil had finished every temptation... [why does it say 'every temptation?' — because he doesn't have anymore in his bag of tricks, because he had pushed Him to the furthest degree that anyone has ever been pushed in those three avenues in which temptation comes: lust of the flesh, lust of the eye and the pride of life], ... he left Him until an opportune time. Notice that satan is very resilient. You may ask, 'Well, isn't there anything about satan that you respect?' I respect that satan is a hard worker, he doesn't give up and he will come back at a more opportune time. That is what he did with Christ and what he does with us. So we are in an ongoing conflict with satan and it will be like this until he is finally bound during the Millennial Kingdom. That would be a positive example of wielding the sword of the Spirit.

'Well, do we have a negative example of someone who didn't quite get the job done?' That would be Eve. Go back to Genesis 2:16-17 and contrast Christ's positive example with Eve's negative example. This is the original command, and the key words are underlined: The LORD God [originally] commanded the man, saying, 'From any [important word, *any*] tree of the garden you may eat freely [important word, *freely*]; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.'" That is the original command, and here comes the temptation to Eve. You know the story in Genesis 3:1, what satan said and how he began to tempt Eve. Notice how she is not wielding very well the sword of the Spirit. She is certainly not doing as Jesus did where He gave the Scripture back verbatim! ²"The woman said to the serpent [at least she is trying to wield the sword of the Spirit], 'From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat... [what words did she leave out there from the original command? She left out both *any* and *freely*. She bought into an idea that God is more restrictive than He actually is, and those two words are just omitted when she paraphrased back to satan the original command.

So Eve has a devotional understanding of the Bible, but she doesn't have a doctrinal understanding of the Bible. She has the version of the Bible that gives the liver quiver of the day, but that won't help in the midst of warfare; we have to know it cold]; ...³but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will [surely] die.'" Now she not only leaves things out (Genesis 3:2) she added something. In the original command, God never said, 'Don't touch it.' So Eve is moving into legalism. Legalism is building a fence around the Law; it is what the Pharisees did. That is why Jesus is always in conflict with the Pharisees. Building a fence around the Law is the idea that you are so afraid of breaking God's Law, that you add additional commands that God never gave to keep yourself away from breaking God's Law. 'Oh my goodness, God said to have a pure thought life, and I want to do that, so what am I going to do? I'll start passing a bunch of regulations and rules concerning what rated movies I can see and all of these kinds of things.' In reality, what happens is the tail starts to wag the dog, and the man-made rules sometimes become more important than the original commands. That is Jesus' whole point with the Pharisees: 'You have made null the word of God through your traditions because they didn't want to go back into the seventy years of captivity. They knew that violation of the Sabbath is what sent them into captivity, so they began adding all of these commands during the intertestamental period, to honor the Sabbath such that it got to the point where if Jesus allowed His disciples to eat on the Sabbath, they thought that was a violation of the Sabbath. If Jesus healed a man on the Sabbath, they thought *that* also was a Sabbath violation. When, in reality, the rules were superimposed over the original command. That is why Jesus said, 'I am LORD of the Sabbath; I know a little something about the Sabbath. The Sabbath was meant to bless man, so if I heal or feed a man on the Sabbath, if you understood the original intent of the Sabbath rather than the fence you built around the Law, then you would have no problem with what I am doing.' Here, in the Bible was the very first example of someone building a fence around the Law; that is how *fast* legalism can come into someone's life and into a church. You and I both know countless churches that are more wrapped up in the rules they've created rather than what God originally said. So, what we see with Eve is that she is not wielding the sword of the Spirit very effectively and that is why she goes down in flames here, where Jesus, by contrast in Luke 4, the exact opposite happens. So Jesus is our positive example, and Eve is our negative example. All the men here are saying, 'I knew it was the woman's fault, gosh, those women mess everything up.' You have to be careful with that because going back to Genesis 2, here is the order:

Adam is created out of the dirt in Genesis 2:5-15. Eve doesn't exist yet.

Then, in Genesis 2:16-17, God gives the original command concerning the tree of knowledge.

Then, in Genesis 2:18-25, Eve is created from Adam's side as God put Adam to sleep. In other words, Eve was not there when the original command was given. So, if I am not reading too much into this, the only way she could have known anything about the original command, would be from her husband. Perhaps, it wasn't only Eve's fault, there is a reasonable case to be made that the husband was not leading his wife in spiritual things. 'Because after all, Andy, you know that

the Super Bowl is on today, and I can't watch just the game but the pre-game and the pre-pre-game. This is Texas, after all, and you can't expect me to go to church on Super Bowl Sunday.' That is your typical man in the US. He isn't leading his family in spiritual things; he is not doing what Ephesians 5:26 says: '...washing his wife through the word.' Is that what you are doing as a husband? That is what you ought to be doing. You ought to be leading your family in Scripture, family altar, leading the way to church, and leading in service to Christ. Adam is not doing that, and that could be why Eve had a floundering understanding of the word of God. Anyway you cut this, she is not wielding the sword of the Spirit so she goes down in defeat here where there could have been a tremendous victory.

That concludes our study of the Armor of God, today focusing on the sword of the Spirit. Next week we will be getting into the Genesis 6 controversy.

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