

Prayerful Boldness

I. Overview of Ephesians

The main character in Ephesians chapter 1 is God the Father. In chapter 2 it is Jesus Christ and in chapter 3 it is the Holy Spirit. God makes the plan, the Son executes the plan, and the Holy Spirit reveals the plan. The plan that is revealed in the book of Ephesians is called “the mystery”, which is the Church. God held the plan for the Church in His heart since before the foundation of the world.

Chapter 3 explains the mystery. The mystery is not something that we do not understand. The word “mystery” actually means “something that was hidden in ages past but has now been revealed.” We are living in the dispensation when God’s revelation is being poured out like never before. Although the Church was unknown to the Old Testament writers and other people of that age, it was known in the heart of God.

Chapter 4 presents the five-fold ministry offices and explains that the New Testament church receives revelation through these offices. The ministry gifts are God’s gift to the Church to bring revelation of His Word, His power, and His strength to edify, build up, and prepare the Church to face the world. With that revelation, the Church will win the lost, lay hands on the sick and see them recover, cast out demons, and cause God’s power to be demonstrated in the earth.

Chapter 5 is instruction about the Spirit-filled life. Verse 18 says, *“Be filled with the Spirit, speaking among yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.”* The chapter continues about the Spirit-filled, Word-filled life as demonstrated in everyday living. Paul addresses husbands, wives, and children.

In Chapter 6, Paul addresses employers and employees and then instructs about the spiritual weapons God has given and how to use them. Toward the end of the book of Ephesians Paul exhorts believers about going into the world to share the gospel with those who are lost.

II. Witnessing

God has called every believer to win souls, but the best soul winners are those who are mature in the Word. Adults produce babies; babies do not produce babies. The same applies to spiritual things. The more mature we become, the better able we are to be a witness to those in the world. It is wrong to only take in the Word of God without putting it out. The main reason we share the Word is so that others can be won to the kingdom of God. Our job in witnessing is to preach the Word. The Holy Spirit's anoints the Word and draws them to a place where they receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. He is the One Who gives eternal life.

Witnessing is not arguing. It is called good news not bad news. Jesus never argued with anyone to win him or her to the Lord. He presented the gospel very simply and He knew how to answer every man. Colossians 4, verses 5 and 6 says, *“Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.”* When our words are filled with the salt of God's Word, we will know how to answer every man. Paul is saying, to bring the sinner into God's kingdom, “Be filled with the Word and be filled with the Spirit.”

Witnessing is simply sharing what God has done for you; it is not sharing the whole realm of doctrine found in the Bible. Witnessing is not debating about the rapture or about the tribulation coming. One minister debated with an unbeliever and when he was finished, the sinner commented, “Man, you know a lot about the Bible”. He had won the debate but had lost a soul. The Bible says that we overcome Satan by the blood of the Lamb and *the word of our testimony* (Revelation 12:11).

Paul gave his testimony repeatedly throughout the book of Acts. He told others about what God had done for him. Sinners can relate to the fact that you go through problems just like they do, but they are looking for answers. When believers share what Jesus has done in their lives, they are presenting the answer. We should not try to force someone to receive Jesus. If, after we share, a sinner is not ready to receive Him as Lord and Savior, we should walk away and pray. It is the Holy Spirit Who draws them to the Lord.

III. The Armor of God

Ephesians 6

vs. 11 *“Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the strategies of the devil.”*

We are to live balanced lives. We are to put on the *whole armor*. We should not become so wrapped up in our righteousness that we forget about the gospel of peace. We should not become so involved in the gospel of peace that we forget about the helmet of salvation or the shield of faith. Every part of the armor of God is vital.

vs. 12 *“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”*

vs. 13 *Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”*

When is the evil day? The evil day is the day that you are under attack. God wants us to be able to stand up in the evil day.

vs. 14 *“Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;”*

The loins are the emotions. I Peter 1:13 says that we are to *“gird up the loins of our mind.”* Our emotions are guarded with the truth of God’s Word.

The “breastplate of righteousness” is understanding who we are in Christ.

vs. 15 *“And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;”*

This is referring to reconciliation. Jesus was in the world reconciling the world to Himself and has committed to us the Word of reconciliation. We have been given the same ministry that Jesus had. When Jesus ascended into heaven, a gap was left and believers have filled that gap in the earth.

vs. 16 *“Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench (extinguish) all the fiery darts (flaming missiles) of the wicked.”*

Every piece of armor is stationary except the shield of faith. The shield is moveable. It is able to operate in cooperation with every other piece of equipment. Faith can work in cooperation with the gospel of peace. It can work in cooperation with the breastplate of righteousness. Faith will work with every other weapon.

vs. 17 *“And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God:”*

The word for “word” is the Greek word “*rhema*”, which means the spoken or communicated Word of God. When Jesus was led into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit, Satan came to tempt Him three times. Each time Satan came at Jesus with a temptation, Jesus came back with the spoken Word of God. He said, “It is written, it is written, it is written.” Before we can say, “It is written”, we must *know* that it is written. We cannot say what we do not know. It is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaks.

The problem with many Christians today is that they are speaking forth things that are not in line with God’s Word. That is the reason they are defeated day after day. Our mouth should be as the sharp, two-edged sword.

In Revelation 19 we are told that when Jesus returns to establish His kingdom on this earth, He will return with ten thousands of saints. Even though He will return with the armies of heaven, Jesus alone will slay all the armies of the earth that have come against the Israelites, Jerusalem, and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. The sharp, two-edged sword that will proceed out of the mouth of our Savior will devour the enemy. Again, that two-edged sword is the Word of God.

It is no different for us as believers. We are to fight spirit beings with the Word of God. He said, “My words are Spirit and they are life” (John 6:63). The Holy Spirit desires to speak forth the Word of God through our mouths. When we are filled with the Spirit, we speak. *“Be filled with the Spirit, speaking...”* (Ephesians 5:18-19). The Word of God and the Holy Spirit that are in us will cause that sharp, two-edged

sword to come out and we can say to Satan with confidence, *"It is written."*

Believers often ask, "How do I deal with temptation?" *"IT IS WRITTEN."* After Jesus spoke "It is written" three times, the Bible says that Satan departed for a season. During the season when Satan has departed, we need to continue to be built up in the Word of God so that we are even more prepared the next time he attacks. Peace is the time to prepare for war.

IV. Offensive Weapons

Ephesians 6

vs. 18 *"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit..."*

A. The Spoken Word of God

Verse 18 is attached to verse 17. We could read it as *"...the sword of the Spirit, which is the spoken Word of God, with all prayer and supplication."* We are to speak God's Word but the sword of the Spirit can also be released from our mouth in the form of prayer. Every piece of the armor of God is a defensive weapon except the sword of the Spirit; it is an offensive weapon.

B. Prayer

One translation says, "At all seasons praying in the Spirit." There are specific times for specific prayers. Praying in tongues is often emphasized as a prayer that covers everything. Each part of the armor was to protect a specific part of the body. I would not use the helmet of salvation to protect my feet. The helmet is designed to protect a specific part of the body. It is the same with prayer. Prayer is used as an offensive weapon against Satan. However, praying in the Spirit is not directed toward Satan, it is directed toward God. I Corinthians 14:2 says, *"For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God."* Every type of prayer has a particular function, and every prayer must be energized with God's Word.

Often believers will sit back and think, “Well, if God wants to do something about the government, He’ll just do it!” That is the same as saying, “If God wants to win souls, He will just do it!” God works through man. We are his hands, we are His feet, and we are His mouth in the earth. Why does He tell *us* to lay hands on the sick? It is because His desire is to work through our hands and our lives.

For every circumstance that comes against us in life, we should use the Word not only to speak to the circumstance, but also to pray God’s Word. Prayer energizes the Word of God.

V. Praying in the Spirit

Again, verse 18 has been translated, “At all seasons praying in the Spirit.” There is not any one particular season that is better than another to pray in the Spirit. We can pray in the Spirit at all times. When we pray in the Spirit, we will keep ourselves sensitive to the will of God in directing our prayers. When we practice intercessory prayer in behalf of another, we often pray in tongues and then quit, claiming that we have received the answer to our prayer. I believe that praying in the Spirit is one step away from intercessory prayer. Praying in the Spirit should be for the purpose of finding God’s will on how to pray. In other words, praying in the Spirit is a means to an end. When we are praying in the Spirit only, we are directing our prayer toward God and opening ourselves to the revelation of God so He can begin to minister how to use prayer in behalf of the other person. We should wait for revelation about what to take authority over, what kind of demon is coming against them, what the specific problem is, and what we can use from Word of God to aim at the problem in the other person’s behalf.

Ephesians 6

vs. 18 *“...and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;”*

The word “and” at the beginning of this phrase is mistranslated. This word comes from three words in the Greek language and would be better translated, “and unto this very thing” or “with the end result”. Verse 18 could read, *“...with all prayer and supplication, praying at all times or all*

seasons in the Spirit, with the end result, watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”

VI. End Result of the Armor and Prayer

Beginning with verse 11 of Ephesians 6, we are instructed about how to handle the attacks that come against us from Satan. The real purpose of the armament that God has given us is ultimately to help others. How can we help others if we cannot help ourselves? It is when we learn how to use the weapons of our warfare against the negative circumstances in our lives that we can be a blessing to others. How can I effectively pray for another's need to be met when I am in the middle of the same need? We can always use God's Word, but there is a power and reassurance in prayer when we have come through victoriously in the same area where another needs prayer. God's compassion is able to flow forth toward others when we have seen God work in our lives to meet our own needs.

We are to have the same fervency with which we pray for ourselves and with the same earnestness, begin to lift the needs of others around us. The end result of prosperity, of righteousness, of health, and all of God's promises is not to heap them upon ourselves. The end result is that we learn to freely give what we have freely been given. But we cannot freely give until we learn how to freely receive. We must learn the lesser blessing of receiving before we can receive the greater blessing of giving. We cannot give what we have not received.

VII. Prayer for Boldness

Ephesians 6

vs. 19 *“And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel.”*

Paul is saying, “I have something in me that needs to be delivered, and what helps me to deliver it is the prayer of the saints. One of the greatest things a congregation can do for their pastor is pray for him. Pray that the Word and message that is inside of him will come forth clearly and that

the hearts of the people will be open to receive it. When we pray for pastors or other ministers, we are actually asking God to bless us as well, because we will benefit from what is coming forth.

The boldness that Paul is referring to in this verse is the anointing. The anointing is directly related to prayer.

VIII. An Ambassador in Chains

vs. 20 *“For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”*

“For which” is a reference back to the gospel. It is because of the gospel that Paul says he is *“an ambassador in bonds”*. The word *“bonds”* is actually the Greek word *“chains”*. Ambassadors are never supposed to be put in chains. Ambassadors are never supposed to be put in prison. Paul is pointing out that he is actually a citizen of heaven. He is an ambassador for the Lord Jesus Christ in this earth, but he has been put in prison.

Typically, ambassadors are very successful people. They are often wealthy. They are rooted deep in the country they represent. They are honorable and respected in their home country. When an individual is selected to be an ambassador, they are trained concerning their own country so that they will positively represent their nation. The country receiving an ambassador is still a citizen of the country from which they come. The country to which they are assigned receives them as nobility.

When we are born again, we become ambassadors from heaven in this earth. We are representatives of a royal family, a holy priesthood, a unique people, and for the true and living God. Even though we are ambassadors, the world often receives us in chains because they are ignorant and blind to who we really are in Christ. The Bible says if the princes of this earth would have known that Jesus was the Son of God, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory (1 Corinthians 2:8). They did not know Who He really was.

Paul is a representative of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is an ambassador for the Lord, he is chained to the wall, and he

says, *“I am an ambassador in chains.”* While Paul is in prison, he may be cut off from society, but he is never cut off from prayer. Prayer knows no distance; it knows no boundaries.

IX. Sent by Paul

A. Tychicus

vs. 21 *“But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things.”*

Paul says, “Not only am I asking you to pray for me, I am also going to share with you about what is going on with me while I am in prison.”

vs. 22 *“Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts.”*

The type of prison that Paul was in was a type of a house. It was not bars and chains. At times Paul was chained, but visitors were allowed to come in to visit him. Tychicus was one of Paul’s visitors while he was in prison. Paul entrusted both the Ephesian and Colossian letters to Tychicus and he delivered both of them.

B. Onesimus

Onesimus was a slave who lived in Colosse. His name is found in both the book of Colossians and in the book of Philemon. Onesimus was actually of slave of Philemon. Philemon was a very rich businessman who lived in Colosse and the church of Colosse met in his home. One day Onesimus stole a large sum of money from Philemon, ran to Rome, and spent all of the money. By the time the money had been spent, he was thrown into prison. This is where his path crossed with Paul’s and Paul led him to the Lord. After Paul led Onesimus to the Lord, he sent the letter to Philemon by his hand. It is interesting that the theme of the book of Philemon is forgiveness.

Both Tychicus and Onesimus were used by Paul to deliver the books of Colossians and Epheisans.

X. Tychicus' Twofold Message

A. Sharing Paul's Activities in Prison

Tychicus shared what Paul was doing while in prison and that even though Paul was in prison, his words were not bound and the Spirit was not bound. Tychicus encouraged the saints concerning the effectiveness of their prayers in Paul's behalf. He shared how Paul was winning souls while in prison and that Onesimus was fruit from Paul's ministry.

B. Bringing Comfort

The comfort being brought to the heart of the Ephesians was that actual epistle that was written to them by Paul.

XI. Why Tychicus?

In Acts 20:4 we learn that Tychicus accompanied Paul on his third missionary journey, and that along with Trophimus, he was originally from Asia. In Acts 21:29 tells us that Trophimus resided in Ephesus and it is assumed that Tychicus did as well. Since Tychicus was from Ephesus, he was the perfect person to take the epistle to the Ephesian saints. He was familiar with many of the people from that area.

XII. Paul's Mistake

Paul was human, and just like all of us, he made some mistakes. One of the greatest mistakes he ever made was going to Jerusalem against the will of God. He was warned chapter after chapter in the book of Acts that he was not to go to Jerusalem. He was warned by Agabus the prophet. He was warned by Phillip's daughters through prophecy. He was warned time after time not to go to the city of Jerusalem. But Paul had made a vow in his heart to preach in Jerusalem because of his love for the Jews. Because of this vow, he would not be persuaded to change his mind. Tychicus was

with Paul in Miletus and Ephesus and stayed while Paul went on to Jerusalem. Tychicus later learned that Paul was imprisoned in Jerusalem for two years and was later taken to a prison in Rome. It was in Rome where Tychicus visited Paul, and it was also in Rome that Paul gave Tychicus the letter to the Ephesians (Ephesians 6:21), and the letter of Colossians for him and Onesimus to carry back to Ephesus and Colosse (Colossians 4:7-9).

XIII. Tychicus Sent to Assist Timothy

In Titus 3:12 we are told that Paul had purposed to send Tychicus to the Island of Crete to assist Titus. Later we learn that Tychicus did not go, but instead, Paul sent him to Ephesus to assist Timothy. (II Timothy 4:12). From this point in time, we are never told in scripture what happened to Tychicus.

XIV. Closing Salutation

Ephesians 6

vs. 23 *“Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

vs. 24 *Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.”*

A. Peace

Notice, Paul said, “Peace to the *brethren*”. Peace is a monopoly for believers only. Paul did not say, “Peace to *everybody*”. Jesus said, “My peace I give, not as the world gives” (John 14:27). The peace gives peace, but it is not a lasting peace. Jesus give peace and it is a peace that passes all understanding; a peace that will be with us today, tomorrow, next week, and next year. Peace is able to grow. As we grow in God’s Word, His peace increases in our lives.

B. Love with Faith

Love and faith work together. Galatians 5:6 says, "*Faith worketh by love.*" We need both faith and love working in conjunction with each other. The Word of God is a sword; a sword that we are to use on the devil, not on each other. It is faith and love working together that brings success. Faith will work if we put love with it; love will work if we put faith with it. There are many times that faith works along with our love, and also many times that we have to love by faith! Both love and faith come from God. Jesus said, "Have the faith of God" (Mark 11:22) and we know that God is love (I John 4:16).

The word "*sincerity*" is the Greek word "incorruption". It means that we are to love the Word and to love God with an incorruptible love and that incorruptible love comes from a knowledge of God's Word.