

INTRODUCTION

- * Approximately one month ago, we began considering this last section of Paul’s second epistle to the church of Corinth. This last section deals specifically with the affliction that comes with “spiritual warfare.” We are told in God’s Word that we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.” (Eph 6:12)
- * As we have seen, this battle is primarily directed against the glory of God by attacking the truth of His Word. This attack is two-fold: attacking the message itself and then, also the messenger. We have considered the attack on God’s message and our responsibility to clothe ourselves with the armor of God, the weapons of our warfare, in order to defend the truth and to disarm the attacks against it.
- * Today, we begin to consider the attack upon the messenger of the truth. If Satan can silence the messenger, he hinders the proclamation of the truth. In warfare, the first two targets are the communication lines and the supply lines. Individually, that is prayer and reading God’s Word. As a body, that is the preaching of His Word and the provoking of one-another in the body.
- * As our ministry is attacked, how should we respond? Paul provides an example in these final four chapters of this letter.

INSTRUCTION**I. THE S _____ OF OUR MINISTRY**

A. The H _____ of Christ (10:1-2; Matt 11:28-30; 1 Peter 2:21-23)

B. The H _____ of Christ (10:7-8; Matt 28:18-20; 1 Cor 11:3; Eph 4:11; 1 Pet 5:1-9; Heb 13:17)

II. THE S _____ OF OUR MINISTRY

A. The E _____ of Those With Whom God Has Placed Us (10:8-11,13-15)

B. The E _____ of Those Who Need to Know Him (10:16; Matthew 28:18-20; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20)

III. THE S _____ OF OUR MINISTRY

A. Your R _____ with God (10:17)

1. KNOWING GOD S _____ ALL SELF-A _____ (cf. Jeremiah 9:23-24; Philippians 3:1-14)

2. KNOWING GOD P _____ ALL SELF-B _____ (cf. Ephesians 2:8-9)

B. Your R _____ of God (10:17-11:13; Matthew 7:21-27; 25:14-30)

1. WILL YOU RECEIVE THE C _____ OF GOD? (10:12,18)

2. WILL YOU RECEIVE THE C _____ OF GOD? (11:13-15; James 3:1)

INTROSPECTION

- * Do you see yourself as a “Servant of God”? Do you recognize your role as an “Ambassador of God”?
- * Who tends to receive the “glory” when you accomplish something? What was your honest intent?
- * What do you talk more about: your accomplishments, or God’s?
- * Is there a need to change the way you think ... and therefore act?

INTERACTION ... Thoughts & Questions to ponder for later discussion

It may be helpful to re-read the passage before the discussion.

- * Read Matthew 5:11; 10:16-33. How do these passages apply to the discussion regarding the attack on our ministry?

Matthew 11:28-30²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

1 Peter 2:21-23²¹ For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: ²² "WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH"; ²³ who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;

Matthew 28:18-20¹⁸ And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

1 Corinthians 11:3 But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

Ephesians 4:11-12¹¹ And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ

1 Peter 5:1-9¹ The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: ² Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; ³ nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; ⁴ and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away. ⁵ Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "GOD RESISTS THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE." ⁶ Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, ⁷ casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. ⁸ Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. ⁹ Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

Hebrews 13:17 Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

Matthew 28:18-20¹⁸ And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

2 Corinthians 5:18-20¹⁸ Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹ that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. ²⁰ Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

Jeremiah 9:23-24²³ Thus says the LORD: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, Nor let the rich man glory in his riches; ²⁴ But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows Me, That I am the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight," says the LORD.

Philippians 3:1-14¹ Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you is not tedious, but for you it is safe. ² Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation! ³ For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, ⁴ though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: ⁵ circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. ⁷ But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. ⁸ Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; ¹⁰ that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, ¹¹ if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. ¹² Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. ¹³ Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, ¹⁴ I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 2:8-9⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast

Matthew 7:21-27²¹ "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²² Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' ²³ And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!' ²⁴ "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: ²⁵ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. ²⁶ "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: ²⁷ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

Matthew 25:14-30¹⁴ "For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. ¹⁵ And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. ¹⁶ Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. ¹⁷ And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. ¹⁸ But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. ¹⁹ After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰ "So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' ²¹ His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' ²² He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' ²³ His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' ²⁴ "Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. ²⁵ And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.' ²⁶ "But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. ²⁷ So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. ²⁸ So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. ²⁹ 'For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. ³⁰ And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'