

The Believer's Warfare

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[0 : 00] I think what we did last week, we got all the way through submission of the slave slash employee to the master slash employer.

And that's very important for us to note that when it comes really not only to the employee, but also to the boss, the employer or the master in the case of the master slave kind of relationship, that each one is to serve the Lord.

And when we serve the Lord, then these other relationships have a tendency to work out all right. Plato wrote that the treatment of slaves is the test of a character because a man may so easily wrong them with impunity.

Now think about that. So it's a little difficult for us to think in these terms, but we do know, don't we, that where there is slavery, where there has been and still is today slavery, that the masters ruled their slaves and could do with them whatever they wanted.

And with impunity, that is with no thought of ever being punished for it or criticized for it because they had sovereignty over their slaves.

[1 : 49] And so I think pretty good quote from Plato. It's a test of character. How a master treats his slaves is a test of his character because he can easily do whatever he wants to that slave without any criticism or any punishment to himself and so forth.

All right. So the first principle, there's a principle here of mutuality, the principle of mutuality. And that comes to us in verse nine, first part of it.

He said, and you masters do the same things to them. Who's them? The slaves. All right. It's a mutual kind of thing. So even though God, the Holy Spirit, inspiring Paul to write in this letter, even though we only have one verse about the masters and we've got all these verses about how the slaves are to relate to their masters.

And just one final verse to deal with the masters. And we might think that's, you know, inequitable. It doesn't seem fair. And yet with just a few words, he's applying everything I've already said to the masters as well.

So do the same things to them. And the idea, of course, is to apply to the masters the same basic principles given to the slaves. If a master wants respect, for example, then he should show respect.

[3 : 20] I mean, it's just plain common sense, isn't it? If a master wants service rendered to him, then he should give service. You know, it's mutuality.

And so here's the principle. However masters hope their slaves will behave towards them, they must behave towards their slaves in the same manner. That's the principle that Paul is teaching here.

So there's the principle of mutuality. And then there's the principle of civility. Civility, verse 9, latter part of verse 9. And you, masters, do the same things to them.

Giving up threatening. Giving up threatening. And so the same principle that was given to the fathers back in verse 4. You remember?

You know, and you fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath. That same principle is what Paul is putting here and giving to the masters.

[4 : 22] He's speaking about the abuse of authority. He's cautioning them about the abuse of their authority as masters, as slave owners.

Now, in the context, or rather the application to the employer-employee kind of relationship, the same thing holds.

The abuse of power, the abuse of authority over those who are under you. This is what Paul is talking about. And so he's forbidding a relationship that is built solely on the threat of punishment.

That's the idea here. That you do what I say or else kind of thing. Now, I, you know, I just give my own personal testimony or admission or confession.

I've used that with my kids over the years. Okay? It's wrong. It's not, it's not, well, you know, I think there should be a consequence for disobedience.

[5 : 29] Don't misunderstand me. And I do believe in authority, the authority of the parent and father. And actually, I don't have to tell my kids why they have to do a certain thing.

They have to do it because I'm their father. You know, I get amused sometimes. Well, I don't know if amusement is right. Sometimes I'm amused. Sometimes I'm shaking my head and I just can't believe this.

How parents, how young parents go, you know, jump through so many hoops, feeling like they've got to explain to their kids why they must obey. And now there's an appropriate time for that. And there are things that we might want our children to do or and such. And it's a teachable moment. We want to teach them some of the reasons why and the wisdom that comes, that will come later.

I mean, there are times for that. But not every time. And when the child says why, and I say because I told you to, that's enough. It's enough.

[6 : 34] And that in itself is not an abuse of power. But I'm talking about always threatening punishment in order to bring about obedience.

Always using that over their heads. And it's exasperating for a child. It provokes them to wrath. And in that sense, the word wrath is kind of a broad term that means that it provokes them to discouragement and anger.

And all those things are wrapped up in that. And so the same kind of instructions are given to masters in relation to their slaves or bosses in relation to their employees. So a relationship that is based on threats is not a human relationship at all.

There is no inner personality there. There's no love. There's no coming together and seeking in oneness and unity and peace, which is what a relationship should be built upon.

And then one more, the principle of impartiality. So the latter part of verse 9, knowing that your own masters, deliberate choice of word, your own master rather.

[7 : 51] And I say it's a deliberate choice because now he's causing the master to look to his master. So knowing this is how you ought to treat your slave, knowing that your own master also is in heaven and there is no partiality with him.

All right. So Paul then is talking about equality in the body of Christ. And I close with a quote from MacArthur. I really like this quote. Employers and employees are to be mutually submissive because they are equally loved, equally cared for, and equally subservient to a common master, their savior and Lord Jesus Christ.

So what Paul is actually doing is he's infusing the relationship that a believer has with the father. He is infusing that into every other relationship we have, every other interpersonal relationship.

And so it's that relationship we have with the father that should not only guide us, but also should be exemplified in how we relate to others on this plane or on this plane.

Those who are servants of ours or work for us and so forth. So that completes then that part on relationships. Actually, it doesn't as we're going to see tonight.

[9 : 18] But so we want to move to the other sets of notes because we're going to move on to chapter six, verses 10 through 20.

And it'll take us a little while to deal with this passage. It's a key, very significant portion of Paul's letter to the Ephesians.

I guess it's been, I look back over my notes and actually over the file that holds all of my sermon notes and teaching notes.

And it's been clear back to the middle of June that we've been working our way through this, this kind of really what is the final portion or segment of the Paul's letter to the Ephesian church.

Where he's been giving, you know, these commands and also instructions regarding relationships or how to be right in our relationship. So we started way back in the middle of June.

[10 : 19] You say, well, preaching, I knew that. It's been a long time. Actually, I thought it was further back than that. But anyway, so we've been on this for a while. Wives and husbands, children and parents, slaves and masters, or the application, employees and employers.

And, of course, again, all of it within the context of the church body. Church body, because I've said this a number of times. This is a church epistle. Paul wrote it to the church.

He wrote it about the church. He wrote to instruct the church. And his goal, if I might remind you, is unity, purity. We could add the word harmony.

Also, integrity, as we think about what we've just been studying about the workplace relationship.

All these things, this is what Paul is wanting to accomplish in the church.

Because these things are essential for a healthy and effective church. Now, right relationships, then, is crucial to this. I've said this a number of times.

[11 : 25] And we surely want it to sink in. Right relationships is crucial to the health and effectiveness of the church. And so, that's true as it applies in the church house.

That's true as it applies to your house and my house. It's true as it applies to the work house. And so, we might put it this way. A healthy church, healthy and effective church, depends upon unity and purity in the membership, harmony in the home, and integrity in the workplace.

And that's kind of the scheme we've followed and the substance of what we've been learning. So, as we come then to the last portion, major portion, really the last portion of Paul's letter.

Because this will take us all the way, pretty close to the end of the letter. And then we've got a few little things that last few verses. But this is the last major section. And so, he is, Paul is, in this sense, still talking about relationships.

As we get to this kind of famous portion of the letter about putting on the armor, spiritual warfare, and so forth. He's still talking about a relationship, in a sense. Now, it is not to be a relationship of harmony, this relationship we're now going to be talking about.

[12 : 53] It's not a relationship of harmony. It's a relationship to be a relationship of hostility. That's kind of interesting. A relationship of hostility. It's not to be a relationship characterized by peace.

It is to be a relationship characterized by warfare. Warfare. If we think about it, I think you would agree. Because here in this passage, in Ephesians 6, 10 through 20, Paul tells us how to be, how we are to relate to the devil.

Or Satan. How we're to relate to him. You say, are we supposed to have a relationship with him? Well, in a sense, yes, we do have a relationship with him.

We relate to him in a certain way. And in a way that Paul instructs us here in this famous passage.

All right, so having kind of introduced that, let's read.

Let me just read the entire text so that we can have it all in our minds to begin with. And then we'll start to work our way through it. All right, so chapter 6, starting with verse 10.

[14 : 08] Paul says, finally, and this time he really means finally. This is the last part. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.

Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For 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.

Therefore, take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day. And having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shot your feet with preparation of the gospel of peace.

Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.

[15 : 23] And for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that in it I may speak boldly as I ought to speak.

All right, so I'm going to stop right there. In these verses and in this portion of Paul's letter, he reminds us of the opposition.

The opposition. And we need that. We really do. We need that. We need to be mindful of the opposition that is there, always there, that we face every day.

Even if we don't realize it. And so we are to know the opposition. The enemy. We have to know the enemy.

And so we need to be prepared for the opposition. And, therefore, we need to know how to deal with the opposition.

[16 : 32] That's Paul's intent here in this passage. To know our enemy. To be prepared for him. And know how to deal with it.

So there's a preparation involved. There's an action that is taken to deal with the opposition. And, you know, it's interesting. Paul wrote to the Corinthians about this ministry, his ministry in Ephesus. And it's interesting. He said in 1 Corinthians 16.8, he said, But I will tarry in Ephesus until Pentecost, until that feast. For a great and effective door has opened to me.

Which is exciting, isn't it? And that means the gospel was flourishing. And God had opened a door for the gospel. But then he ended with this.

And there are many adversaries. He's talking about his ministry in Ephesus. And it was to this church in Ephesus that he wrote, obviously, we know, this portion of the letter concerning spiritual warfare.

[17 : 35] Or about the opposition. About the enemy. And this, you know, is an important point of instruction for God's people.

This instruction concerning the opposition. The enemy. I mean, first of all, because since the church of God is a new creation. The church is a new creation.

I've mentioned this a couple of times as we've been studying through Ephesians. Remember, it's a church epistle. And it's all about this new people that God has created. This new society. We can even call it a new society.

Here on planet Earth. And so since the church is God's new creation in Jesus Christ, then the opposition, of course, is going to do everything he and they can do to destroy it.

And they are doing that. Or attempting to. Though they can never really destroy the true church.

And we could also say that since God intends for his people, people of this new society or new creation, to live in unity.

[18 : 42] He intends for us to live in unity. To live in harmony. Purity. All of these things. Then the powers of wickedness are going to do whatever they can do to sow the seeds of discord.

And that is disunity and sin and rebellion. To do everything they can do to plant that in the church in order to destroy it.

And we could also say that since God intends for his church to be healthy and effective in this world, then it is against these powers that we must wage war.

That are trying to disrupt that. Trying to stop that. And so here I got to thinking it's rather interesting, maybe even ironic, that the peace which we have through Christ, the peace we have in our relationship with him, is experienced in this world in the midst of hostility.

That peace is in the midst of hostility. It's all around us. You know, we sometimes tend to be a little oblivious about it. It's going on all around us.

[19 : 50] This hostility. So this peace that we have is protected, yes, but it exists immersed really in a world of warfare and hostility with the enemy.

All right. So looking at the text, we can divide what Paul writes here into three parts. We'll get through one part here tonight. So the first one is this, our warfare.

Our warfare, which in this case is kind of a general description of it or an introduction to it. He begins with kind of an overview of our warfare, but that doesn't mean that what Paul writes here isn't specific and substantive.

It certainly is. So we can spend a little time on this. But just kind of in a broad sense, kind of in an introductory sense, our warfare.

And there are three things to consider. And I really want to take these in a little bit different order in which they appear in the text. If you're just kind of reading through the next several verses, then you're going to realize that I'm actually kind of skipping around.

[21 : 02] I'm going to take it in kind of a little different order. These are three things to consider in regard to our warfare. And the first one is this, the principalities of Satan against whom God's people wrestle.

That's the first thing we know. It's the principalities of Satan against whom God's people wrestle.

Wrestle. That's A, I guess on your, I started to say that's number one, but it's not a one, it's an A.

All right. Sub point under the Roman numeral one. Verse 11, says, or the latter part of verse 11, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

The wiles of the devil. Then verse 12, for we wrestle against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Now, it's all about the principalities of Satan against whom God's people wrestle. We constantly wrestle. And so, what's the idea?

[22 : 13] Well, or Paul's intent. It is for us to know our enemy. Paul wants us to know our enemy. When you think about it, how can any soldier or army expect to achieve victory over an unknown enemy?

It's part of the problem we have over in the Middle East, isn't it? I mean, there's no conventional warfare going on in part of the world. We don't know who the enemy is. And that's why it's very hard to win the battle, isn't it?

And so, Paul wants us to know our enemy. And you think about it very logically, how can any general devise an effective strategy for battle if he knows nothing about the enemy?

He doesn't know anything about their numbers, nothing about their location, nothing about their strength, nothing about their methods and their weapons.

I mean, if you go on and on with the list, a general needs to know as much as possible about the enemy in order to devise a strategy that will bring about victory. That's just logical.

[23 : 22] And so, Paul wants us to know why we must be strong in the Lord, verse 10. I mean, that's what he has said. that we're to be strong in the Lord.

Well, why? He wants us to know who it is we are to stand against, in verse 11. And he wants us to know what it will take to stand against the devil, verse 11.

Why we must be strong in the Lord, who it is we're standing against, and what it will take to stand against it, or the devil. And, by the way, it's not just the devil. That is in the person, the devil.

He's the head honcho, as we're going to see. but the devil has many that work for him. And, and so we'll talk about principalities here in just a minute. All right, so Paul reveals, then, a number of things about our enemy.

First of all, the enemy is scheming. A scheming enemy. It talks about the wiles. That's the New King James Version.

[24 : 32] I think also the King James uses that word. It's kind of an old English word. We don't use very much. I like the way some of the more modern translations, New American Standard, for example, uses instead the word schemes.

So, the schemes of the devil. It's an interesting word. There in verse 11. The Greek word is methodeia. Methodeia. And you can hear the word method in there, can't you?

And that's where we get our word. Word method, methodology, so forth. So, and yet, in our usage of the word method, I mean, it can be evil, it can be good.

It's kind of a, a moral type of word. It depends on how you use it. But the word here, methodeia, as it relates to Satan, that is Paul's usage of the word, conveys the idea of cunning.

Or you can put this word, deceitful. Or you can put this word in the blank, crafty. Or scheming. I mean, any number of those words.

[25 : 39] Those are all kind of negative, aren't they? And, and, and diabolical, in a sense. And really they are. And that's the idea here. Satan is, a methodical, and a diabolical, enemy.

And he cannot be defeated, by just simply figuring him out. Alright. Don't ever think you can figure him out. Well, you know, I know the depth, that Satan well enough.

I know, all of his, his ways, all of his strategies. And, so he can't, he can't pull the wool over my eyes. Don't ever approach, uh, our battle against Satan, in that, with that kind of mindset.

He is diabolical. In fact, the very use of the word devil, uh, here, uh, which comes from the Greek word, diabolos. We've heard that word before, have we?

Diabolos. And, uh, that's where we get our, our English word, diabolical. So, he's methodical, and diabolical. It's a diabolical methodology, that, uh, the devil uses, or Satan uses.

[26 : 44] All right, so again, I would say that simply knowing this about Satan, even though Paul wants us to know this, is simply knowing that about him is not going to bring about our victory. Uh, well, Paul's not finished yet.

Because Paul reveals, I think, this about Satan right here, kind of at the beginning of his, his instructions on spiritual warfare. He reveals this about Satan, so that we may know the importance of putting on the whole armor of God, when we do battle against him.

And, uh, Paul, uh, Paul is going to, uh, tell us all about that eventually. We won't get that, to that tonight. A second thing, that Paul reveals about our enemy.

The enemy is spiritual. We know this, don't we? Paul says very clearly there in verse 12, we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. That's how it's translated in the New King James. All right, so our enemies are not human. Oh, sometimes we think they are, don't we? I'm talking about enemies to the church, all right?

[27 : 57] Our enemies are not human. They are demonic. They are demonic. Paul's readers, uh, would have understood this. Um, in fact, almost firsthand, uh, about the, about demonic activity.

In Acts 19, 13, 17, I gave that verse, I think I printed those verses there in your notes. And, um, and, and, it's interesting.

He said, and you remember this story, then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists, I just love, love that description. Itinerant Jewish exorcists.

And these are freelancers. All right. They're freelancers in the business of exorcisms, you know, and, and it was business. All right, so they took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits.

You know, I'm sure they're thinking, well, it worked for Jesus. I mean, it worked for Paul. And, uh, you know, we're looking for some new tools to add to our repertoire, you know, and, uh, and so they started using the name of Jesus.

[29 : 10] And so they would say, we exercise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches. Also, there were seven sons of Sceva, Jewish chief priest, who did so.

And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus, I know. Paul, I know. Who are you? I just love, love that. Then the man in whom the evil spirit was, evil spirit was, leaped on him.

The man leaped him, overpowered him, prevailed against him, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. This became known both to all Jews and Greeks dwelling, where?

Fear. In Ephesus. And fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. All right, so God turned it for his glory.

But, so, the people of Ephesus, they, they kind of understand this, you know, we're not dealing with flesh and blood here. Okay, this is something very spiritual. And I think, you know, we could spend a lot of time maybe making an application that, there's a lesson here, I think, for the church, that our struggles are not with one another.

[30 : 27] You know, struggles with disunity, and struggles with infighting in the church, and where we suddenly are just at each other's throats, and at odds with one another.

It would be good for us to just stop a minute and wake up and say, wait a minute, there's something else going on here, behind the scenes. And it's, it's not flesh and blood. It is, uh, uh, Satan's, uh, desire to destroy the church.

All right, number three, the enemy is structured. Structured. The devil, verse 12, the devil, he mentions the devil here, principalities, or rulers, as it's translated in, some of the more modern translations, versions, powers, rulers, rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual wickedness in the heavenly places.

All right, so what's Paul doing? Is, uh, is he just repeating himself and saying the same thing several times, or is there some kind of, uh, well-organized, structured force out there that stands against us, that has built into it a, a hierarchy of authority.

That's exactly what he's talking about. Very organized. By the way, how did Paul know that? Because it's not something you can see. Well, divine revelation.

[32 : 00] God imparted this knowledge to him. Now, this hierarchy of, uh, of, of the demonic, uh, forces that, uh, stand against us. And, uh, and, and so Paul could see that.

He is, he's informing us about it. Now, each word in the text, then describes, uh, a, a strata, uh, of, of, of authority, or ranking, in Satan's army of evil.

From the top down. So he starts at the top, and works his way down, in Paul's description of this hierarchy of, of, of authority. And, uh, you know, Satan's pretty smart, and, uh, he knows what works.

Uh, he learned it from, from God. Uh, this principle that, uh, the Bible teaches, and good principles about, about authority, and hierarchy of authority, and responsibility, and so forth.

And so Satan, to begin with Satan, he's the prince of the power of the air. Paul's already identified him in, uh, chapter two, verse two. Then, under Satan, we have principalities.

[33 : 09] Or, again, rulers. This, I think, would be the, highest order, among the demons. Uh, the, the leadership under Satan.

Uh, his generals, in a sense, or, whatever. Uh, and, and, you know, this is a copy, from, from God. I mean, God has his, archangels.

And so, Satan has his, archdemons, or archdemons. Uh, then, under that, powers. That would be, the next, kind of, rank under rulers.

I don't know how you would describe it any other way. They would just, be under them. So, kind of like a pyramid. In fact, we have Satan, his, the principalities, the, highest order, to the powers. and then, we get down to the rulers of the darkness of this age. Now, we're getting, really, more down here, uh, on, the planet. Uh, New American Standard, uh, translates this more literally, by the way.

[34 : 17] World forces of this darkness. This being, this darkness, this world. The world forces. So, uh, it is believed that we're talking here about a rank of demons that have infiltrated the earthly governments of our world.

You think, think there's demonic activity in the, uh, political systems and, and, and governments in, uh, on this planet? I, you, you bet there is.

And Satan has, his demons that are in those places. That's their responsibility. And, kind of in the pecking order. And then you get down to the bottom, the spiritual wickedness.

That's, again, identifying the, a strata, albeit possibly the lowest strata, of, uh, this hierarchy of leadership. And, uh, and this would be, you know, just the wording itself.

Uh, it's talking about what we would consider the vilest of demons. Uh, that, that work among the extremely perverse and immoral, in this world.

[35 : 25] Pornography, pornography, and child molesters, and, and murderers, and, you know, all, all, all those that, that, uh, for the most part, kind of slink in the back alleys, and dark places.

And, uh, uh, and yet, uh, even in our culture, kind of out on the main streets as well. But, uh, this would be the basis, the lowest, the, the most vile, uh, of, uh, sinful activity.

All right, so it's a hierarchy of demonic forces that's being described here with Satan, of course, as the supreme commander. Uh, you know, we could think of it this way. Satan is the general, general of the demon army.

And, uh, and then the principalities would be, you know, the colonels and captains and lieutenants under the general, and then the powers, maybe the sergeants and corporals, and then we get down to the rulers of the darkness.

That would be maybe, maybe the specialists. And then on down, spiritual wickedness be the privates. Uh, just on down in their rank. Uh, but the idea is not to try to identify, uh, you know, just what each level consists of.

[36 : 37] Paul's point is that they're organized. Very organized. There's a hierarchy of leadership. Uh, there's a pecking order. There's a supreme leader who works through, uh, through his principalities and on down, uh, in a very organized, very methodical, uh, very, uh, in, in one sense, very effective way.

Uh, Satan is, is, is, wise, uh, in, in this sense, of course, not the wisdom of God, of course. All right, then number four, the enemy is supernatural.

rulers of darkness, hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. So those two words, darkness and heavenly places.

You know, Satan and his demons, hate the light. They're rulers of darkness, rulers of darkness. They don't want to be seen.

In fact, you can't see them. darkness. And so it's darkness, not only in the physical sense. I mean, we know that many things are done in the dark. In fact, I remember, uh, uh, when I was just a kid, uh, and I would spend, uh, all three, four weeks every summer with my grandparents.

[38 : 00] And, uh, my grandpa was the mayor of the city, a little, little community up in Missouri.

And, uh, my grandmother worked at my uncle's grocery store and they were all on the same street.

So we had the courthouse and then on down was the grocery store. And, uh, so I'd spend several weeks there with them and I'd kind of go back and forth and spend some time with my grandpa and his office and then sometimes at the store.

Uh, sometimes I walk across the street, you know, there was a drug store over there and buy some things and such. But right next to the drug store was a, was a saloon or a liquor store.

I mean, I'm not a, where they sell a bottle, but you sit, sit in there and drink and play pool and all those kinds of things. And, uh, I just remember as a kid knowing what that place was. And when I

would walk by, I would look in and it was so dark and couldn't see anybody in there. And it has always stuck with me that, that, uh, sin and simple activity. People who do that kind of thing like to do it in the dark, uh, to be obscured.

[39 : 06] And that's what Satan does. So it's not, but it's not just, uh, the idea of an actual physical darkness, but it is a darkness in a metaphorical sense in that his activity is veiled.

You can't see him. It's like he operates in the darkness, in the shadow land, and you, you can't see him. You don't know he's there or the demons or whatever, uh, the, the spiritual principalities, uh, they operate in the darkness.

and it's because they are not natural. they're supernatural. Their habitation is the darkness of falsehood and sin. And they're, they operate in the realm of the supernatural.

heavenly places is, uh, what is said here. We might get the idea that this means they're up in heaven. Well, in a sense, uh, uh, Satan is in the heavenlies.

Uh, uh, uh, uh, uh, but, but it's not talking about heaven in heaven. It's, it's actually referring to the realm of the spiritual, the invisible.

[40 : 14] So we're not talking about, uh, anything natural here. We'll talk about Satan and the principalities and the powers and rulers and, and so forth.

Uh, it is supernatural. They're unexplainable by natural law. So that we need to know our enemy. He's supernatural, not in the same way that God is supernatural, but in the sense that it is above, he is above beyond what is natural and cannot be explained by any natural law or observation. He's supernatural. And then lastly, the enemy is sinful. We, we knew that, didn't we? It's spiritual hosts of wickedness, wickedness.

And, uh, so we can just say Satan is into all things wicked. Uh, he is, uh, wicked, uh, to his very core. Uh, there's no good in him.

All right. So we're talking about our warfare and, uh, and first the principalities of Satan against whom God's people wrestle. Second, the province of the spiritual, in which God's people war.

[41 : 31] God's people war in the province of the spiritual, not in the physical. And I've already said this a little bit. Uh, two things are revealed here in the text.

One, God's people war against mighty unseen powers. God's people war against mighty, strong, unseen powers.

We do not wrestle against flesh and blood. So there's a struggle. There, there, there's a strength implied here. And we're warring or wrestling against them, but it's not flesh and blood.

They are unseen powers. We've already talked about that. And the second one is God's people war in multiple unseen places, multiple unseen places, but against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

I want to emphasize again, this heavenly places kind of expand our understanding of, uh, what, what, uh, is being talked about here. The designation heavenly places or high places.

[42 : 40] If you have a King James, uh, you'll see that high places refers to the unseen world. Of course, the unseen world. And, uh, like way it was explained by one theologian.

I have this commentary, uh, Dr. Moore, uh, it's, it's good commentary, uh, Ephesians. But anyway, it's what he, how he explained to the church is to be viewed.

As being engaged in combat with agents of evil, occupying a sphere of action, invisible and practically boundless.

What does he mean? Well, our enemy is unseen. All right, we know that. And he's everywhere. Boundless. He's everywhere.

We war in multiple unseen places. He's everywhere. In the white house, the courthouse, the schoolhouse, the church house, your house. Everywhere else.

[43 : 44] And, I mean, you know, and we can identify some of those other places, you know, in the back alleys, the main streets, in every nook and cranny, everywhere you go, in this country, every country, uh, is everywhere.

He is, we, we battle, uh, against an evil that occupies an unseen realm, but it is boundless, uh, practically boundless.

I mean, he cannot, uh, obviously, it's not in the abode of God. All right, so our greatest struggle, then, is not with the world we see, but with the one we cannot see.

A world of iniquity. All right, so the principalities of Satan against whom God's people wrestle, that's number one, or A. The province of the spiritual in which God's people war, that's B.

And then one more, the provision of the Savior in whom God's people win. And this really just kind of a, whet our appetite for what comes next in verse 14 following.

[44 : 45] The verse 10 says, Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. The power of his might. Now, the Greek word, and it's just one word, it's translated into two words, be strong, is an imperative.

And we can kind of pick that up just in the English. This is a command. The command is not to strengthen yourself. Or, define the strength within your own flesh.

You'll not find it there. And when you think that you have the strength, that you found there, when you think that's strong enough, then you'll find out that it's not. That strength will always fail.

It's always impotent. With Satan. And so, the key is found in the oft-repeated phrase, in the Lord. In the Lord.

And Paul uses it 35 times in this letter to the Ephesians. 35 times. In the Lord. And it's used in a number of contexts, or to make a number of different points.

[45 : 50] It speaks of salvation. Of course, in the Lord is a, is one of Paul's favorite ways to describe the relationship of the saved. When you're saved, you are in Christ, in the Lord, in the sphere of Christ.

We are in him. But it also speaks of our submission. Submitting to the Lord. We're in him and living like we're in him.

As we are obeying him, and subjection to him, and honoring him, and living for him. And so, to be strong in the Lord, not only means you're saved, there's no way to defeat Satan, unless you're a born again believer, in the Lord.

But also, no way that you're going to be successful in combating Satan, if you're not living a life of submission to the Lord. And then it also speaks of sanctification.

Of our sanctification. Our becoming more like Christ. And that brings in all, many other things like disciplines, spiritual disciplines, and so forth.

[47 : 06] Now, the provision of the Savior then is his strength. His strength. And so, his strength is operational through the armor of God. And that's where we're headed here.

And we'll get to it next week. And we're to take it up, that armor of God, and we're to put it on. Thank you.