

Spiritual Warfare 3 Jim Logan: Armor of God

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Context and Opening

- The pastor opened with a lighthearted observation about buildings named “Apartment A” and “Apartment B,” humorously connecting them to “Missionary A” and “Missionary B” from Bible college days, to honor unsung missionary heroes.
- The sermon’s central pastoral question is: How do we help someone who is clearly losing? What happens when you’re not winning? How does the Christian live on the “winning side” when life feels like defeat?

Recommended Resources on Spiritual Warfare and the Demonic

The pastor commended several resources to equip believers:

- **Neil Anderson:** “Victory Over Darkness” and “The Bondage Breaker”
 - **Application:** These books address one’s identity and position in Christ, and how to deal with darkness and bondage from that position.
- **“Demonism” (pamphlet):**
 - **Application:** Provides simple, practical accounts addressing Christians and spiritual affliction.
- **Dr. Fred Dickason (Moody Bible Institute):** “Demon Possession and the Christian: A New Perspective”
 - **Note:** The title was chosen by the publisher, and conservative pushback led to a change of publisher.
 - **Application:** Offers a heavy theological treatment of New Testament texts and Greek studies on Christians in the demonic realm.
- **Dr. Merrill (Merle) Unger (Dallas Theological Seminary):** “Biblical Demonology” and “What Demons Do to Saints”
 - **Note:** Unger’s initial book, “Biblical Demonology,” claimed Christians cannot have demonic problems, but he later corrected this error in “What

Demons Do to Saints.” The pastor regards the latter as a classic, which is returning to print via Moody.

- **Application:** Emphasizes pastoral realism—Christians can face real spiritual oppression, and there is a need for biblical, experiential wisdom.

Foundational Principle of Allegiance

- **Key Assertion:** Any area of life I refuse to let God control becomes vulnerable to Satan’s influence.
- **Implication:** There are only two ultimate influences—God’s Spirit or the enemy. The call is to yield all areas to the Holy Spirit.
- **Application:** This calls for regular self-examination and surrender to God’s Lordship in every domain of life.

Transition to the Armor of God

- **Concern:** Reading widely on the armor can be confusing, as different authors assign varied meanings.
- **Pastoral Approach:** To offer general, integrated guidance rather than one-off symbolic specifics.
- **Examples of Practice:**
 - Warren Wiersbe reportedly “puts on” the armor daily and has an “armor prayer.”
 - Charles Stanley humorously says he puts the armor over his pajamas before getting up.
 - **Takeaway:** Mature leaders engaged in effective ministry make intentional use of the armor and daily spiritual warfare disciplines.

The Danger of Deception

- **Analogy (Cereal Box):** The sermon used a relatable analogy: the disappointment of opening a new cereal box to find it only half full because the contents “just settled.” This feeling of being short-changed illustrates the much larger, more dangerous spiritual reality of deception.
- **Scriptural Warning:** The pastor referenced Paul’s warning to the Corinthian church (likely an allusion to **2 Corinthians 11:3**), expressing fear that their minds would be led astray from sincere and pure devotion to Christ, just as Eve was deceived by the serpent’s cunning. The warning is to be careful not to be “beguiled or deceived.”
- **Analogy (The Fishhook):** To illustrate the nature of Satan’s deception, the pastor shared an analogy of a father fish warning his son about worms. A worm

on a hook looks appealing but conceals a deadly danger. Similarly, Satan's deceptions are often wrapped in a lot of truth, making them appear appealing, but they contain a "hook" of falsehood designed to ensnare us.

The Nature of Satan's Attack: Deception in Daily Life

The enemy's deceptions often manifest in our thoughts, creating internal turmoil over small matters.

- **Example (Passing in the Hall):** You greet someone in the hallway, and they don't respond. Immediately, a cascade of negative thoughts can begin: "Who do they think they are?" This internal narrative is fueled by the enemy to create division and bitterness.
- **Example (The Wycliffe Missionaries):** The pastor recounted a story of two female Wycliffe missionaries. One became increasingly irritated with her partner over seemingly minor issues: she always unpacked first, took the non-leaking side of their dwelling, and was always first to the river. These small grievances were "fanned" by the enemy, creating a fire of resentment that nearly destroyed their partnership. The lesson is to be vigilant against deceptive thoughts that breed conflict.

The Attack on God's Word

A primary target of the enemy's deception is the truth and authority of God's Word.

- **Example (The Young Missionary):** The pastor shared a sobering story of a brilliant, "outstanding student" from a conservative Bible college who went to the mission field and returned within a year completely liberalized and spiritually devastated.
 - When asked what he would say to a dying person with ten minutes to live, he replied he wasn't sure but thought he'd talk about loving one another and keeping the Beatitudes. He came to doubt the reality of salvation and the inspiration of Scripture.
 - The pastor calls this a tragic case of being "terribly deceived" by the enemy, resulting in wasted years of spiritual struggle.
- **The Internal Question: "Is This Really True?":** The pastor notes that many Christians face nagging thoughts questioning the Bible's truthfulness ("Did Jonah really get swallowed?" "Was there really a global flood?"). These doubts are a direct attack from the "father of lies." If we entertain these deceptions without standing firm in the truth, we are heading for "severe troubles."

The Reality of the Spiritual Battle

The pastor illustrated the reality and intelligence of the demonic realm with a personal story.

- **Example from the Pastor:**
 - While praying with a young man 1500 miles away from his home church, demonic spirits spoke through the man.
 - These spirits knew the pastor's name (Logan), the specific name of his church, and the names of men within the church. They were aware of internal conflicts and financial struggles among the pastor's supporters—details that were not public knowledge.
 - This experience served as a stark reminder that the spiritual enemy is real, knowledgeable, and actively working against believers. The enemy is "the accuser of the brethren."

How This Teaches Us About God, Ourselves, and Life

About God (Who He Is and How He Responds)

- **God Equips and Protects:** God equips His people with grace and armor; He anticipates daily spiritual conflict and provides protection. He does not ask us to *get* the victory but to *stand* in the victory He has already secured.
- **God Values Truth:** He counters the enemy's lies with His Word and Spirit. His promises are true.
- **God Provides Righteousness:** God has given believers the righteousness of Christ. This is not our own righteousness, which is "filthy rags," but a perfect righteousness in which the enemy can find no fault.
- **God is Victorious:** The war against the enemy has already been won by Jesus Christ. In Christ, there is nothing Satan can lay his finger on. Jesus stated in the Gospel of John (likely a reference to **John 14:30**) that the ruler of this world was coming, but "he has nothing in me."
- **God Uses Suffering for His Glory:** God allows believers to go through "fiery trials" for purification. In our suffering, when we draw on His grace, His presence is manifested to others.
- **God Is Trustworthy:** When He says He will get us "to the other side," He will, regardless of the storms or circumstances. He is worthy of our faith.

About Us (Who God Says We Are and How We Are to Live)

- **Our Identity in Christ:**
 - In Christ, we have a secure position and imputed realities (first three armor pieces). We are called to live under God's rule in every area, not leaving footholds for the enemy.

- We stand in the righteousness of Christ. Our standing before God is not based on our own goodness but on Christ's perfection.
 - We are victors in Christ, sharing in His victory over sin, death, and the enemy.
 - We are called to be reflectors of Christ's light. The pastor used the example of the name "Cynthia," meaning "moon," to illustrate this. A Cynthia spiritually reflects the light of the Son.
- **How We Are to Live Now:**
 - **Engage in Spiritual Battle:** We must be aware that we are in a spiritual battle and actively put on the spiritual armor God provides.
 - **Daily Practice and Surrender:** Practice "putting on" the armor intentionally. Surrender all domains of life to the Holy Spirit.
 - **Establish Disciplined Rhythms:** Resist the flesh and prepare for spiritual battle. The pastor shared a personal testimony of transitioning from a night person to a morning person to meet ministry demands at 5:00 AM, avoiding "eating the bread of sorrows" (**Psalm 127:2** implied). Warren Wiersbe's first step of victory is simply getting out of bed.
 - **Be Biblically Informed:** Be discerning about spiritual warfare, avoiding extremes and remaining rooted in Scripture and tested resources.
 - **Endure Suffering with Grace:** We are called to rejoice in trials and draw on God's grace, knowing that through our endurance, Christ can be seen by others.
 - **Live by Faith, Not Sight:** We must choose to believe what God has said in His Word over our circumstances, feelings, or the accusations of the enemy.

The Armor of God: Putting on Our Protection

- **Primary Text:** Ephesians 6:10-18 — The Armor of God.
- **Emphasis:** "having done all, to stand." God gives grace (empowering) and armor (protection). Neglecting any piece leaves a vulnerability.
- **Structure and Theological Note:**
 - The pastor's study indicates the first three pieces are "imputed" (given, belonging to us in Christ); we stand in them.
 - The last three must be actively "taken up."
- **Correct Image of the Armor:** The pastor corrected a Sunday school illustration of English knight armor, replacing it with historically accurate Roman soldier gear to clarify its function.

Piece 1: Belt of Truth

- **Scripture: Ephesians 6:14** — “Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth...”
- **Application:**
 - **Foundational:** The belt is first because other elements fasten to it.
 - **Counter to Deception:** The believer faces “the father of lies” (**John 8:44** implied). We must put on truth first to resist deception.
 - **A Fourfold Cord:** The “belt of truth” is comprised of four cords that are difficult to break:
 - a. **The Person of Truth:** The Lord Jesus Christ (**John 14:6**).
 - b. **The Word of Truth:** The Scriptures, the Bible.
 - c. **The Spirit of Truth:** The Holy Spirit who indwells every believer.
 - d. **The Pillar of Truth:** The Church, the community of believers.
 - We must “put on truth every day” and “stand in the truth,” being “in love with the word of truth” for our personal stability. If you don’t stand in truth, you will not be able to stand at all.

Piece 2: The Breastplate of Righteousness

- **Scriptural Context:** The breastplate was a vital piece of armor that protected the heart and other vital organs.
- **Spiritual Application:**
 - This piece guards our heart and emotions, particularly against feelings of unworthiness and accusation from the “accuser of the brethren.”
 - We cannot stand in our own righteousness. We must consciously declare our position: “I am coming against you in the righteousness of Christ.” The enemy can find no fault in Christ’s righteousness.
- **Pastor’s Personal Testimony (Post-Ministry Depression):**
 - **The Pattern:** Major spiritual attacks often follow significant spiritual victories, like Elijah on Mount Carmel.
 - **The Victory:** The pastor described a powerful ministry tour in Australia, New Zealand, and Fiji, where he felt he was “flying.”
 - **The Attack:** Upon returning, he was plunged into a severe, three-month depression with irrational fears. It never occurred to him that it could be a spiritual attack.

- **The Lifeline:** During this dark period, the one truth that sustained him was the **breastplate of righteousness**. He felt intensely unworthy but clung to the truth that Christ had given him *His* righteousness, which guarded his heart.
- **Example (The Demonized Youth Pastor):** The pastor briefly introduced a recent and severe case of demonization. A young man staying with a medical doctor 1,500 miles away recognized something demonic was happening and asked for prayer, highlighting the reality of the spiritual battle.

Piece 3: Shoes Fitted with the Gospel of Peace

- **Scriptural Context:** Proper footwear was crucial for a firm footing in battle.
- **Spiritual Application:**
 - The enemy tries to make us lose our spiritual footing by causing us to doubt our salvation or believe we have committed an “unpardonable sin.”
 - **Example from the Pastor:** A high-level Campus Crusade director suffered multiple breakdowns. After failed treatments, prayer revealed demonic influence (sobbing, crawling like a snake). He had lost his footing.
 - The “sandals of peace” come from knowing that the ultimate victory is already won. We are not fighting *for* victory; we are standing *in* the victory Christ won.
 - **Corrie ten Boom Analogy:** Life is like a needlepoint. From our side, it looks like a tangled mess, but from God’s side, there is a beautiful design with the words “Christ is Victor.”

Piece 4: The Shield of Faith

- **Scriptural Context:** A shield is a defensive tool used to block incoming “fiery darts.”
- **Spiritual Application:**
 - i. **What is Faith?** Faith is simply believing what God has said.
 - ii. **What does Faith do?** The shield of faith “quenches all the flaming arrows of the evil one”—the lies, accusations, and doubts the enemy uses.
 - iii. **How to Use the Shield:** We must actively take up this shield by choosing to believe God’s Word over what we see, feel, or think.
- **Biblical Example: Jesus and the Disciples in the Storm (Mark 4:35-41)**
 - **Context:** Jesus told the disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” A furious storm arose while Jesus was asleep.

- **The Disciples' Failure:** They cried out, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" Their focus was on the storm (circumstances), not on Jesus's promise.
- **Jesus's Rebuke:** After calming the storm, Jesus rebuked them for their "little faith." He had already told them they were going *to the other side*.
- **Application:** The enemy will always try to get our eyes on our circumstances. We must raise the shield of faith, get our eyes back on the Lord, and believe His promises.

Key Points

1. Any area we withhold from God becomes vulnerable to satanic influence.
2. The armor of God is necessary daily; neglect of any piece creates specific vulnerabilities.
3. The first three armor pieces are imputed realities in Christ; the last three must be actively taken up.
4. Truth is foundational—belt first—because our enemy is the father of lies.
5. Spiritual disciplines (including an "armor prayer" and wise daily rhythms) are practical steps for victory.
6. Sound, biblical resources help navigate complex questions about Christians and the demonic.

Concluding Encouragement

- If you are experiencing defeat, ask: Am I daily putting on the armor? Do I understand and stand in what it means?
- Stand in your position in Christ; take up what God has given for today's battles.
- Have such confidence in God's Word that you are not shaken by circumstances.
- Hold on to the truth that God will never leave or forsake you and will equip you for victory in every trial.
- Walk as a reflector of Christ's light, fully surrendered to God, and fortified by His truth.