

**“The Power and Place of the Word of God -  
Grace Reigns”**

**Review: Last time we looked at "The Power and Place of the Word of God - The Larger Picture"**

- ***Now we enter into our main teaching this morning. What we have been seeing in our studies here recently is that a great spiritual warfare has been raging in the heavens between God and his spiritual hosts and Satan and his spiritual hosts. The effect of this on our world here has been very great as we have seen in our last several fellowships here. Our goal has been to see the essence of what true spiritual warfare is as the Word of the Living God presents it. We have consistently seen how in the last analysis it is presented as an ongoing relentless battle between spiritual forces where in every case the Lord is always victorious through his word. Through that alone victory in spiritual warfare was gained -- and only through that.***
  - ***Recently we considered Job, a believer singled out by God for the example of believers who are under the evil one's attacks, no matter what their time or place. We saw that Job's great testimony under spiritual attack by Satan's forces arrayed against him on every side never failed. The enemy's attacks were never direct, person to person, but Satan's world system was where those attacks came from and they came fiercely and relentlessly. Job suffered very greatly as a result, but it was all for a great and Godly purpose we found revealed in this great book. But his faith never failed and after suffering great personal loss of family and possessions, he maintained his testimony as written in chapter 1 of Job:***

***Job 1:20-22***

***20 Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,***

***21 And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.***

***22 In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.***

- ***We also saw how in Daniel's life it was revealed that Satanic forces in the heavens were working destruction on this earth like what Job had experienced under Satan's testings. The spiritual warfare raged about them all and the faithful knew God's promises and care for them had never been compromised even when great trials had***

**overcome them personally or their nation had been driven out of the land of promise and into foreign enslavement.**

- **Of course, this was all before the cross. However, even after the cross, as we shall see today, spiritual warfare though changed, is still in many ways the same as before the cross, UNTIL, THAT IS, THE DISPENSATION OF THE GRACE OF GOD BEGINS. AT THAT POINT THE NATURE AND ESSENCE OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE CHANGES IN ACCORD WITH THE CHANGES IN HOW GOD IS NOW WORKING UNDER GRACE.**

**I. Before Grace, God's Power Through His Word Was Evident:**

- **Now we shall begin to see dispensational changes in how the power of God is displayed under grace. Let's begin though with a quick look at the Pentecostal period immediately after the Cross and the Glorious Resurrection:**

- **We see that even after the cross, the battle continues between the power of God and the enemy forces of Satanic evil:**

**[READ ] Acts 4:27-30 [Miracles in his name]**

**27 For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together,  
28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.**

**29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word,  
30 By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.**

- **There is surely here a great contrast with how God is working today under the fullness of God's grace. And, in addition, it is clear that there is a different work of the Lord here, after the cross (and therefore a different and conflicting work of Satan as well) than before the cross, though when Christ sent out his 12 and his 70, there were somewhat similar evidences of the power of God at work with signs and wonders worked by God in confirmation of his Gospel of the Kingdom.**

- **For the preaching of the kingdom was always accompanied by signs, wonders and miracles, wasn't it:**

**[READ ] Lk. 10:1-3, 8-11**

1 After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.

2 Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly [is] great, but the labourers [are] few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.

3 Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.

. . .

8 And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you:

9 And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

10 But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say,

11 Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

**[READ ] Lk. 10:17-20**

17 And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

20 Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

**[READ ] Mk. 16:14-20**

14 Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

20 And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with [them], and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

- ***We see here in these passages several features of the spiritual warfare commanded of the disciples and demonstrated in the early days after Pentecost. These are very different from today under the fullness of God's grace and the dispensation of the grace of God. We cannot fail to see that there are dispensational changes due to what God is doing at the time and Satan's response to that, but in all cases it is the power of the Word of God, even when delivered by the apostles and other believers as seen here, that God's work and will are always accomplished. Satan opposes with everything he has in his arsenal, but the Lord is always victorious in the end. But when the kingdom is being preached, both before and after Pentecost, the signs and wonders are a critical central and authenticating feature.***

## **II. Today Under Grace, God's Power Through His Word is Still Effective:**

- ***God's work today is to manifest his glory and his grace through the completed work of our Lord Jesus Christ. So Satan will always attack through his lies and deceptions. False teachings with their dangerous and deceptive false doctrines, called by Paul even "the doctrines of demons" [1 Tim. 4] are his natural domain. His desire is to lead astray for the saints of God and unbelievers. So the teachings of grace will be perverted and a religious system of works presented in its place. For unbelievers, a false gospel will be a central feature. But for all, "lying wonders" and signs will be prevalent, worked out NOT by the power of God, but with Satan's enabling powers.***
- ***So as a result false teachers have and will continue to abound and Paul's letters are nearly all written with that as a central focus.***
  - ***Now, we have already seen in our studies in the Long War Against God that Satan often seeks to counterfeit the work of God in order to capture the hearts and minds both of believers and unbelievers. One central teaching on this is found in 2 Thess. 2:***

**[READ ] 2 Thess. 2:7-10**

**7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth [will let], until he be taken out of the way.**

**8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:**

**9 [Even him], whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,**

**10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.**

- **So we must conclude that spiritual warfare TODAY is not [normally] waged DIRECTLY against spiritual PERSONS but against “spiritual” DOCTRINES. So again, as always, spiritual WORDS are the only true antidote to EVIL AND SATANIC WORDS AND TEACHINGS:**

**[READ ] 1 Tim. 4:1** Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.

- **Again, it is the power of God’s Holy Word (here providing the true teaching so desperately needed as false and demonic doctrines abound) that makes the difference in spiritual warfare! Our greatest enemy today is just that since the power behind false doctrine is of Satan himself, called here “seducing spirits”.**
  - **So when Satan promotes and empowers the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom and the very authenticating works previously certified as being of God himself, but does it today when that gospel is no longer in effect, we have a serious problem. Both 2 Thess. 2 and 1 Tim. 4 provide strong warnings about the necessity of spiritual discernment regarding these Satanic deceptions. Indeed, they are critical to the spiritual warfare we are involved in today.**
  - **What must we know regarding these deceptions: The whole subject of spiritual discernment is a large and very important one indeed. Some key questions would include these:**
    - **Their extent**
    - **Their focus**
    - **Their goal**
    - **Their method**

- ***The premier scripture dealing directly with spiritual warfare today is found, as we have already seen, in Eph. 6. This warfare is profoundly unique for this dispensation of the grace of God as revealed here through the apostle Paul. Note the distinctions from what we have see in other dispensational frameworks:***
- ***But first let us recall some clear contrasts we have already seen:***

Grace	Kingdom	Comments
The preaching of the good news concerning the grace of God	The preaching of the good news concerning the Kingdom of the Heavens (the Millennial Kingdom) with signs and miracles accompanying this preaching	Note: There are no accompanying signs and miracles (the “signs and lying wonders” of 2 Thess. 2:9) associated with the preaching of grace. The false teachers abound in their denial of this basic principle.
The believer is encouraged to receive the abundance of grace and to bear the fruit of the Spirit in the realm of newness of life.	The believer is encouraged to keep the entire law (as enhanced and intensified appropriately for the Kingdom ministry) and manifest good works accordingly.	Note: The fruit of the Spirit is not to be equated with the Kingdom notion of good works. The fruit many manifest itself in good works, but that is not the only way the spiritual gifts believer’s possess today may be used.
The believer is encouraged to reckon on the completed work of Christ for our sins and our identification with him in his death, burial, and resurrection.	The believer must endure to the end <i>to be saved</i> whatever the challenges, even if persecution to the death and martyrdom seem near.	Note: Under the preaching of the kingdom, the believer is to look forward to the blessing, under grace we look by faith to their present reality.
Salvation is a free gift and a current possession of all believers.	Salvation is to be gained by enduring to the end and is not a current possession by the believer.	Note: Assurance of salvation is not possible under the preaching of the Kingdom as it is today under grace.

Grace	Kingdom	Comments
Resting in the sufficiency of God's grace is the essence of Christian living today.	Resting in the reality of God's presence as proven by his miraculous working is the essence of living under the kingdom rule.	Note: Victory in spiritual warfare today is entirely based on resting in the sufficiency of God's grace; under the kingdom rule faith plus miraculous signs provide the victory.

- **Now, let us look in closing at the Ephesians 6 exhortation to spiritual warfare:**

**[READ ] Eph. 6:10-19**

**10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.**

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

**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].**

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

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

**15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;**

**16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.**

**17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:**

**18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;**

**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,**

- Verse 10: Strength and power for the spiritual struggles ahead
- Verse 11: The point of it all - standing against the wiles of the Devil. And how is he working today? It makes such a difference that we know well how he works today and that requires that we know well what God is doing today - under grace! The devil will always try to minimize or entirely destroy the work of Almighty God. So he will oppose true grace always adding works though false doctrine.

- **Verse 12: Our spiritual battles are indeed “heavenly” in origin.**
- **Verse 13: Times of great spiritual peril are common in life and the world is our great enemy in this. It sometimes seems so good and beneficial but is a sly foe indeed in Satan’s hands.**
- **Verse 14: Truth, the truth of grace, the truth of God is our main enabler in this struggle. Righteousness, the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ that has been imputed to our accounts is our energizer. Resting in the realm of POSITIONAL TRUTH AS OPPOSED TO CONDITIONAL EXPERIENCE is MOST ESSENTIAL for spiritual victory.**
- **Verse 15: The gospel of peace [with God and Satan] is our guide.**
- **Verse 16: Our shield against the attacks of the enemy is faith through the context of his truth for today, under grace. And do not forget, faith is always through God’s word. It is never in a vacuum. Faith is not a feeling or an emotion. It is not something that**
- **Verse 17: The KEY to spiritual victory today is the Word or utterance of God; it shall protect our minds as they are being renewed by the teachings of grace hour by hour. Satan will want to add or to remove this most critical word of God by substituting “words” that are NOT OF GOD BUT THAT ARE SATANIC IN ORIGIN. Poor quality translations are constantly to be noted and refused. They are destructive clearly to spiritual maturity and victory in spiritual warfare.**
- **Verses 18 & 19: Prayer should be always focused on the saints and those that minister the word of grace - that is the work of God that is so critical today - and it is centered on gospel ministry. Amen.**

### **Conclusions and Application**

- **The word of God is powerful indeed and is in the center of God's working always!**
- **Satan's lies and deceptions are designed to oppose the word of God.**
- **The incarnate Son of God has come forth with redemption by his grace. But the conflict continues and Satan's methods are evolved based on the nature of the conflict. He is subtle and deceptive and often compelling. Many believe him instead of God and live this life for his glory, whether they know it or not.**
- **Turning away from the word of grace during this dispensation of the grace of God will always lead to spiritual failure. That is where the churches are increasingly today as they turn to a new kind of**



***liberalism which is hardly different at all from the social gospel of years past.***

- ***Paul's prayer at the end of Ephesians is telling. To pray for him that he might with boldness proclaim the "mystery of the gospel". Amen.***