

EPHESIANS: THE BUILDING AND COMPLETING OF THE CHURCH

Part III: The Construction of God's Church, Ephesians 2:1-6:20

C. God's Church Organization for Christian Unity, 4:4-16

6. "Truthing" In Love About The Angelic Conflict, 6:10-20

(Ephesians 2:1-6:20, 4:4-16, 6:10-20)

I. Introduction

- A. There are times when believers attempt to follow God's guidelines in Ephesians for unity and STILL find themselves up against enormous obstacles to unity. There is a REASON for this problem, and Paul addresses it with a solution in Ephesians 6:10-20:

II. "Truthing" In Love About The Angelic Conflict, Ephesians 6:10-20

- A. When the believer 'wrestles' in the areas Paul has addressed in Ephesians, this struggle involves much more than mere difficulties in human relationships; **it involves a struggle with evil angelic beings behind these problems**, Ephesians 6:12.
- B. Accordingly, having DONE all that Paul has suggested so far regarding unity in the church, marriages, families, businesses, etc., we are to be **strong in the LORD**, Ephesians 6:10. What this means follows:
1. Paul's references to the armor of God in Eph. 6 contain several quotations from the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament in Paul's day, UBS Greek New Testament, p. 679.
 2. These references mainly come from Isaiah 59:16-18. This Old Testament text pictures Messiah taking on a soldier's garb to intercede for Israel as charges against the nation's sins make the nation ripe for divine punishment. Note a similar case where the Angel of the Lord, the pre-Incarnate Christ, defends the High Priest from SATAN'S charges of sin in Zechariah 3:1-5. Thus, the atonement of Messiah works to cover Israel's sin from God's punishment as a DEFENDER would protect one from attack.
 3. In applying this Old Testament text to Paul's Ephesians 6:10-20 section on the angelic conflict, we see that **being strong in the Lord** means **using God's forgiveness that is ours in Christ** through confessing our sins **to avoid punishment**, cf. 1 Jn. 1:9;2:1-2! If we do not confess our sins, but hold onto them, we become targets of Satanic accusations, and must suffer God's discipline to Satan's glee!
- C. As we **depend** on GOD'S forgiveness, we are equipped and led by the Holy Spirit. Then WHEN problems in relationships arise that tempt us to take action in the sin nature's power, by God's Spirit as Messiah did for Israel in Isaiah 59 (cf. Isa.11:1ff), we are to use God's armor, Eph. 6:13-18.
1. We must be HONEST at all times as dishonesty will leave us open to accusations by Satan that bring divine judgment, v. 14a.
 2. Depend on God's cleansing for past sins, v. 14b. **Do not defend sins, but rather CONFESS them!**
 3. Stay ready to evangelize as Satanic attacks may come just before or after opportunities for outreach come our way. These come in order to catch us off guard to make us poor witnesses, v. 15.
 4. Trust God's promises in Scripture to offset the hurt the Evil One wants to inflict upon us, v. 16
 5. Rely on the positional truth of God's salvation to offset Satanic efforts to intimidate us, causing us to think we are unsaved or too worthless, and lead us to suicide, v. 17a. (compare 2 Cor. 2:10-11)
 6. Use SCRIPTURE as this is God's offensive weapon against Satanic attack, v. 17b.
 7. Always pray for divine intervention regarding attacks, and that for all who are involved, v. 18-20.
 8. Having done these things, we must not RETREAT or ATTACK, but **STAND**, v. 13b. The Evil One desires that we act apart from the will of God by **retreating** OR by taking **assertive action**, for then we are on our own where he can harm our efforts. Satan cannot do our efforts harm if we are in the will of God in our lives (compare with 2 Tim. 2:24-26).

Lesson: Any time we have done what we are supposed to do to create unity in marital, family, job and church relationships, and we STILL run into trouble, assume that our real problem is conflict in the angelic realm. As such, we should assume a posture of hiding in God's grace, equipping and will for our lives, **STAYING THERE** with much prayer and use of Scripture on specifics of the circumstances we face. As we rely on the Spirit's cleansing and enabling ministries, God will bless us where we face trouble.