

Ephesians XIII

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In verse ten we see the word “finally.” It is begging a question of “When a church becomes the glorious church, what truly happens to it?” It becomes a church that takes on the spiritual warfare. When a church becomes powerful, it demonstrates its power through spiritual battles.

As a part of introduction to Ephesians, I addressed the 19th chapter of Acts which records the disappearance of Artemis from the face of the earth. Artemis at the time was rampant in the Asia Minor. Scholars studied about what had happened to Artemis and several years ago someone wrote a thesis over it in England. Artemis challenged the Ephesian Church and the idol was destroyed from the earth. In the city of Ephesus there was a temple of Artemis which was five times larger than Parthenon. It was growing so huge the priest of Artemis became arrogant and spiritually challenged the Apostle John who was at the time the bishop of Ephesian Church. He invited Apostle John to his temple that was five times larger than the Parthenon and cursed John by Artemis for half the day. John heard all the curses meantime and began to walk slowly and asked, “Are you finished?” The priest replied, “Yes, I am finished.” Then, John lifted both of his hands to the heaven and prayed, “Lord Jesus, reveal the honor of name.” Immediately, the heaven opened up and a hand came down from heaven and split the Artemis temple that was five times larger than Parthenon in half and the hand also split the Artemis priest in half. That is how Artemis was disappeared on the face of the earth. When the saints rise up in a church according to the principles of Ephesians, the characteristic of this church will be the spiritual warfare. In this end time our church should be established as an excellent church in the spiritual warfare.

From the perspective of spiritual battle we can see three stages of churches. First stage is the Egypt Stage Church. Egypt Stage Church is totally bound and it cannot do anything. It is a slave. The goal of this stage church is “Do not let anything happen (to us)!” Everyone is sleeping and it can't do anything. When it awakes from the slumber, it moves on to the next stage, the Wilderness Stage Church. In Wilderness Stage Church, it engages on the spiritual battle sporadically, but it is mostly defensive. It defends itself from the attack.

What is the church we desire ultimately? It is the Rest Stage Church. Joshua enters the Canaan and annihilates the ten tribes of Canaan. It is the church on the offensive and it collects much spoil through spiritual battles.

It is our desire to grow and mature to enter or become the Rest Stage Church. We have looked at the whole book of Ephesians and we should crucify ourselves on the cross. It is about keep getting pure and holy, and letting the Spirit of God seize us 100%. Use the four principles to be filled with the Holy Spirit and expose your soul to the light of God. Work on the Spiritual Disposal to extract the spirit of unbelief, the spirit of worldliness, the spirit of greed, and so on. Mature farther into the next stage for the deep fellowship with God. When a church enters into the Rest Stage as a whole, you can have the powerful spiritual warfare.

For example, one of the things I am still praying for is 300,000 missionaries. After the prayer missionaries are coming to us to this day. I also prayed for the people to study theology in America and now we have people still coming in. I also prayed for the leaders who can transform this nation in economy, politics, society, and culture. These leaders are now rising up. My eyes are seeing them and the church members are also seeing them coming up. People like them are being positioned in Zoe Ministry Network and they are preparing for the spiritual warfare. God speaks to me who needs to be prepared in what ways.

Verse 10 “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might” is the conclusion of Ephesians. The powerful church is the goal. So, what happens next? Paul says in verse 11, “Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.” Satan is incredibly strategic. Suppose Satan uses six different ways, God uses seven different ways. Therefore, Satan cannot act up against God. However, if we are not seized by God, the

schemes of Satan are too great for any man. I have experienced evil spirits in my 18 years of ministry; the dumbest evil spirit has the IQ of 250. The territorial spirit usually is around 500. They are too much for man. Unless we abide in God and minister according to the strategy of God we are bound to get destroyed.

What is the strategy? In order to corrupt a man Satan not only gives suffering to him but he also gives him money to corrupt him, his family, and his church. If that's the devil's goal, then he will give that man much wealth. Pastors should be able to see such strategy. For example, someone is not devoted to God, praying and not walking with God and all of sudden he is making lots of money, his real estate sky rocks and gets blessed, that's Satan's strategy.

Spiritually speaking, when I go to certain areas that have churches involved in such spiritual battles, I can see the movement of the Spirit of God. On the other hand, when I go to areas that are not engaged in spiritual battles, I sense the movement of evil spirits. Satan moves strategically and tries to exhaust all the churches in the area. The Zoe Ministry Network needs to fan the stronger fire and fight the spiritual battles. The spiritual dynamics of any area are determined by the churches that are fighting the spiritual battles. "Strategy" in spiritual battle is very important. A church that has laid the system according to the principles in Ephesians can move according to the strategy of God.

For example, politics, economy, society, and culture are part of "all rule and authority" in Ephesians 1:21 and they are under the authority of church. That's the principle! "Next president is so and so. The economy will now shift in such and such direction. A very powerful hurricane will come next year." This is how God prepares through His churches. In short, when a church is seized by the Spirit of God regardless of any age and generation, it will proclaim this is how God will do in politics, economy, society, and culture instead of addressing them afterward. As we move swiftly according to the powerful strategy of God we can bind up a strategy of Satan thoroughly. Freeze the Satan! That was the Ephesian Church.

In Korea there is a powerful challenge of evil spirits (spirit of idolatry) and no other spirit is greater at work than this. For example, Ye Hwa University which was founded by a missionary has an idol right in the entrance of it. This is not ordinary and it symbolizes the condition this nation is in. Just recently President Bush invited Dalai Rama and commemorated him with gold medal. This did not take place out of random. The celebrities, politicians, and rich people who are seized by Rama Buddhism used their influence to invite him in America. Satan just did a sealing ministry in America. China strongly opposed this, and think about this. What would America benefit from inviting this one monk? This is common sense! I look at the strategy in this spiritual warfare that Satan is moving America to bring forth the work of victory. See how many Buddhist temples will rise up in America with Dalai Rama receiving such recognition in America. Now, California has become a headquarter of the evil spirits. God shows the worldwide strategic movement through the church. This is not a power or perspective given to special pastors. When a church of God is seized normally by the Holy Spirit, God gives His perspective and reveals His strategy to prepare for what is coming up.

In small scale, instead of visiting and comforting a church member who is going through suffering, a pastor should ask "What is the meaning of this member's suffering?" For example, when the influential church members make certain moves, you want to pray and ask "What is this strategy?" with regard to their moves. When God says, "Respond like this," then you respond accordingly. Understand the strategy of God in all matters. This is the reason you should pray for the powerful work of prophetic spirit, wisdom, and understanding in your church and ask for the revelation and the wisdom Lord gave to the Ephesian Church to be full in your church.

In order to fight against the "schemes" we need the full armor of God. The offensive weapon and the defensive weapon must be clear. Paul speaks in verse 12, "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of

this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.” We can fight well if we can see them with our eyes but we fight against the rulers, the powers, spiritual forces of this darkness, and the works of Satan who is controlling the system we call the “world” in the background. Satan is using politics, economy, society, and culture as a system to lure and bind us today. We should pulverize them (Satan’s attempts) so Satan cannot use the politics, economy, society, and culture. Instead, we should use them.

It is no longer true, but for a while America seized the nation in politics, economy, society, and culture by the Kingdom of God. Therefore, God moved politics, economy, society, and culture of America. However, a nation like Korea is becoming system that Satan has overtaken in education and mass media. The glorious children of God’s church should now reclaim them and control the system. We are supposed to prepare for that time. Let our churches prepare leaders that are willing to die for the word of God.

Our fight is not visible to our eyes but it is invisible. It is necessary to train our people to be more spiritual. If they don’t become spiritual, they are bound to lose spiritual battles in their life. It is said that what we see with our eyes is not the true hope but the true hope is invisible. Likewise, the Kingdom of God is not visible nor the battles against the evil spirits are. Hebrews 11:1 “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of thing not seen.” The binding and the release of bondages in spiritual world result in the real world. We should know the spiritual world for the benefit of the conclusive works in the real world. The focus of our training is not for the blessings on this earth but to become spiritual people who attain the power to release and combine spiritual things thoroughly. Becoming a powerful church is totally a spiritual matter.

Therefore, Paul speaks in verse 13, “Take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.” The evil day refers to the war Satan is raging and it also refers to the last battle of *Parousia*. Our Christian walk is a spiritual battle every moment. You are in spiritual battle even during this worship service. If you don’t understand this spiritual warfare, you can’t really have your faith life in the right way. Have you seen a movie “Saving Private Ryan?” How fierce is the battle? Do you know our spiritual battle is even fiercer? You have to understand this warfare and make all the necessary preparations to win this war. That’s the reason Paul says, “Put on the full armor of God.” “Put on” does not mean to be passive. You don’t just sit there waiting for it but rather you gotta go get it. As I proclaim for each piece of armor it (spiritual weapon) should attach it onto you.

The first piece of armor is the belt of truth. Paul speaks of it in verse 14 “Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth.” Paul is perhaps describing a Roman soldier. The belt of truth functions to simply gird up the long cloth.

What is the belt of truth? We want to be simple in our response to the word of God. The Satan’s strategy at the end time is to make thing complicated. According to Daniel’s prophecy the life of believers are so complex, distractive, and busy. In Luke chapter two the reason Joseph and Mary lost Jesus was because they were too busy. If we are too busy whether in life of thoughts, we will always lose in spiritual battles. The simplicity to stay focused on God and to immediately respond to Him is necessary. If your head is heavy, you cannot be good in spiritual warfare. If you are full of your plans, your thoughts, your experience, and your ways cannot fight the spiritual battles. You will always get beaten up! On the same token, if you are easily confused and distracted, you can’t hear the voice of God. Simplified people will hear the voice of God. Becoming simple or simplified does not mean becoming a dumb. It is pruning the complex branches and focusing on Jesus Christ. This is the belt of truth.

Every pastor has faith. Which pastor doesn’t have faith? However, the reason some can’t practice faith is because they are complicated to the point they can’t receive the word of God. We immediately respond to the word of God. When God says, “Go,” we go. When He says, “Give,” we give. When God says, “Do it,” we do it. God told me to give/provide the airplane tickets for the

missionaries for the conference, so we gave. When God says, "Do it," there is no calculation of any sort. You need the simplicity to actively embrace the word of God. Churches like Ephesian Church are willing to die for the word of God. The focus of the church is to train the church members to respond immediately to the command of Jesus Christ.

The Kingdom of God is not built by your experience, your goal, and what you have. Even Apostle Paul said that he doesn't serve God with his knowledge and he considers everything he has like rubbish. Paul had given up everything he had. When the Kingdom of God entered his heart, God told him to use them again. The knowledge, experience, and so on are useful to those who are simplified. They can only be a source of corruption to those who are not completely seized by God; who have not become simplified.

According to Hebrews 12:2 "fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith" we are reminded that all things are possible when we fix our eyes on Jesus. If we don't fix our eyes on Him, we will lose the foundation of all situations we may find ourselves in. Open your eyes to see things from His perspective who is the author and perfecter (NIV renders originator and founder). Hear through Jesus Christ! Israelites did not have the perspective of God, so when they saw Goliath, they called themselves "we are grasshoppers." David, on the other hand, saw Goliath through the perspective of God, so David said to him, "You are my lunch." We should see everything through the perspective of God. I mean everything! People in the world may say, "This is over," but it may not be over when we see with God's perspective. People in the world may also say, "What a blessing!" but we can see a curse when we see with God's perspective. We definitely don't want to be played by the standard of the world. We need simplification to see everything through Jesus. This is critical in spiritual warfare.

The simplification process is not achieved over night. There is a saying that one can see everything through one thing or one aspect. In short, we can see everything through Jesus. If you are not simplified, then you can't do this. In spirituality some people try in many different ways and believe "the more the better." However, the spirituality is seeing through just one. If you work on your spirituality in many different ways, you will be confused. If it is genuine over there, then you do it over there. If it is genuine over here, then you do it over here. The belt of truth requires continuous training.

Next, put on the breastplate of righteousness! The armor Roman soldiers put on is big and it covers from neck to thigh. The purpose of putting on the breastplate is to protect the heart. If an arm is cut off, you can still survive. However, if a heart is pierced, then you can't survive. We put on the breastplate of righteousness to protect our heart. What is our heart? The breastplate of righteousness enables us to live a life that God considers righteous. If you can't live your life according to the word of God, then Satan will capture you all the time. People say, "How can a deacon do that? How can an elder do that?" then, it is pretty much over. If your life are not holy and pure according to the word of God, then Satan takes hold on the ring of your life in spiritual battles. Satan will stir up everything. This is the reason we should be willing to die for what God considers righteous. The breastplate of righteousness refers to the life you live.

A believer reveals three things. First is Presence. It refers to the life we live. If we can't live according to God's words, then we can't reveal Him. Second is Proclamation. A believer who lives his life according to God's word has a power of proclamation. Third is Persuasion. A church consists of believers who have Presence and Proclamation have Persuasion. A church needs to have a power of persuasion. That's right! A community needs to be persuasive. The whole church community should reveal God. That's the reason I say that the breastplate of righteousness is life. We are supposed to believe in the word of God and bear the fruits as a result. Moreover, the faith we have, the righteous, and life must be satisfied at the same time in order for you to have the confirmation of salvation. If you say, "I believe," then through your faith you should become the righteous and live the righteous life. In Book of Daniel, there were three prime ministers and Daniel had "no ground of accusation or evidence of corruption." In order to kill

Daniel, they have to go through God. Satan cannot do anything against someone like Daniel who has no ground of accusation or evidence of corruption. If our life is in a mess, we can't fight the spiritual battles.

The next piece of armor is the shoe of gospel of peace. Peace means *shalom*. After receiving the word of God, you should immediately do all you can to get ready to respond to the word of God. Paul speaks in Ephesians 4:12 "For the equipping of the saints for the work of service." Let the believers be equipped first before they serve. The principle of church is to raise up believers who can always serve as minister, missionary, the authority of word, and contributor. Train the church members to put on the shoe of gospel of peace to go anywhere God wants to use them in. They are not trained to be used as a part of church like "we are preparing this man to become a choir member." The believers in the church of God must become church. Specifically, if someone has gone through training in our church, he should be able to plant a church wherever he is sent to. He is not to be a part but the whole. This is the gospel of peace. It is training someone who can immediately go with the word of God. If God speaks to Mr. Choo, "Go to India," then he goes to India and plants a church. Suppose God speaks, "Deacon Kim, quit your job and go to Nepal," then he should go. The goal of discipleship training is not to become a part of church but the whole church. When the Church of Jerusalem sent Deacon Phillip, revival broke out in Samaria. A lay person builds up the church. This is now possible in Zoe Ministry Network.

Paul speaks in verse 16, "In addition to all, taking up the shield of faith which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one." Not only God has fire but also the evil spirits have fire. The fire of the evil spirits is a match fire. It is nothing; however, we still need to defend ourselves with the shield of faith. I am not talking about a small shield but a big one that can cover up the whole body.

You do not develop your faith, but rather God gives it to you as gift. In order to receive faith all you have to do is just empty yourself. The focus of faith life is keep emptying yourself. As much as you give up you will have bigger faith.

In verse 17 we have the helmet of salvation. The salvation Paul talks about in verse 17 is not a type of salvation like "if you believe, you will go to heaven." The salvation Paul means is "deliverance out of all aspects of life." Helmet is obviously for a head. The control over the thoughts is your fundamental savior in all of your circumstances. Proverbs 4:23 "Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life." You are supposed to control your thoughts. Romans 8 also states that if your mind is on God, the desire of the Holy Spirit will open up and the new man will prosper whereas if your mind is on the world, the desire of the flesh will open up and the old man will prosper. The mind is in neutral state. Satan can use it and God can also use it. Stand up in the direction of God, so God can use you. Regardless of how gigantic things happen, train yourself to fall down before God and ask "Lord, what is Your will?"

So far it has been about the defensive weapons but now let me address the sword of the Spirit which is the first offensive weapon. It represents the word of God. The word in Greek is not *logos* but *rhema*. This is an important revelation. Why is the word *rhema*? Ephesian Church was willing to die for the revelation and wisdom. When God gives you the word, it is *rhema*. It is hearing what is revealed to you. It is not encountering some sort of mountain ghost but *rhema* is reinterpretation of God's word. *Logos* is not an offensive weapon. When you eat the Bible as *logos* all the time, your knowledge of God's word will increase, but that word will not have the power to save you. Whenever you open the Bible, you should understand your mission, your wickedness, weakness, and sinfulness, and receive the word as what God is giving to you. This *rhema* becomes your offensive weapon.

Rhema should be vibrant in a church. Continue to ask the Holy Spirit, long for Him, and tries to listen to His voice and let go of your will and your ways. Do not move when He doesn't move and don't try to do anything when He is not doing anything. When you do them, the

revelation will come alive in you. The Holy Spirit is a Person who has character; therefore, He will honor you and wait for you. He will move when you rejoice over His work and when you submit to work with Him. When you try to do things on your own, the Holy Spirit will never move.

However, when you submit your will to the Holy Spirit perfectly, you will immediately see His revelation according to “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” The pure in heart means one has already submitted one’s heart to God. All your thoughts should be simplified without any compromise and without any impurity like a pure alloy. Get hold of the sword of the Holy Spirit which is *rhema*.

I am not sure how many church members can have their own revelation, but it is impossible. A pastor must penetrate now to activate the revelation. That’s when the revelation will be vibrant in the church. The church members live by that revelation. I am not rejecting the Q.T., but if you continue to have Q.T. from your own perspective, you will end up with your own version of gospel. If I train the church members to read the word in their personal level, they will ruin themselves with their own version of gospel. It is true with the pastors. If you read the Bible from the perspective of a pastor, your soul will be depleted. Please do not read Bible so you can pastor your church. Of course we all do that but at the same time pastors should read from critical level. In order to hear the will of God and the voice of God, your soul must be refreshed. In order to be refreshed, you must have time to eat the word. When pastors preach with the revelation and provide the frame of revelation, the church members have their Q.T. within that.

Prophetic inclination is not speaking about the future. It is speaking about what God desires in that particular circumstance and at that time. That’s prophetic inclination! The praise, the word, and the prayer are done through prophetic inclination “what does God want in that time, in that moment, and in that circumstance?” You don’t just lead the praise according to the contents you have prepared. If God’s inspiration is spiritual warfare, then the praise should carry out the spiritual battle. If God’s inspiration is healing prophecy, then the praise should be about healing. When it comes to the word of God, if there is anyone that needs to hear that message, then you preach that message. After the message, the church members would all say, “Pastor preached to me today!” That’s what we want to hear. We don’t just pray. Ask questions like “What is the Lord moving? What do I specially pray for in terms of what God is moving at the moment? What do I pray for the nation and my people? What is the circumstance of certain church members that the Lord of personal history is touching?” This is the prophetic prayer we want to lift up. Your Christian walk under the influence of such prophetic prayer makes the difference from two dimensional world to three dimensional world.

Finally, Paul speaks in verse 18, “With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints.” Your prayer is the weapon. I call this prayer “missile.” You want to possess this ballistic missile. So, when you pray for a certain area, your powerful prayer should reduce that area to ashes. It is like looking at the coordinate, telling the gunner “to the left so and so and to the right so and so,” and hitting that spot with the artillery even before we make it there. May your prayer become powerful!

In order for the believers to rise up to the authority of heir, their prayer should be powerful. The sound of prayer should loudly echo in the church. It should be so loud in the whole neighborhood that the neighbors can’t live there anymore. The younger son of Pastor Kang went to school as the first grader in elementary school and the classmate that sat right next to him, who doesn’t go to church, said, “Hey, you go to Yulbang Church? Your church is so noisy. Move your church to other place.” May the sound of prayer fill the air!

What is the characteristic of such prayer? Paul says, “Pray at all times in the Spirit.” You pray not according to your will, plan or ways but according to the Holy Spirit’s will, plan and ways all the time. When it comes to prayer, you should force yourself to pray. If you can’t pray, use any means necessary to revive the prayer.

I talked about Whitfield before that he had come up with 10 things to do in his daily life. On his list the top 1, 2, and 3 are about prayer. "Have I diligently labored in prayer? Was my prayer powerful? Did I give everything I had? Did I pray according to the time?" This is the top three things on Whitfield's daily list. In short, when a pastor's prayer dies out, the church will die out as well. When a pastor's prayer is alive, the prayers of church members will be alive.

David demonstrated the power of prayer. David simply relied on God alone. It takes a faith that if God doesn't do it for me; I am just going to die. If not by God, I am dead. You should totally depend on God. I know several pastors who are new to the pastoral ministry. My word of advice is that don't focus on evangelism. Instead of passing out the church bulletin or advertisement, fall down in prayer first. That's right! Prayer is more important. If you witness for one hour, pray for 10 hours. If you do, God will send you His chosen people. They are the genuine! God has to do it for you. When He does, He will send the prepared people to your church from all over the world. It is falling down in prayer. Do not let your prayer die. Let it live! Exert all your energy on the prayer.

Let's make proclamation! Gird up the belt of truth! Put on the breastplate of righteousness! Wear the shoe of gospel of peace! Hold up the shield of faith. Put on the helmet of salvation! Hold the sword of Spirit in your hand! May God empower your prayer! Let this perfect weapon of spiritual warfare penetrate into your church and annihilate your enemy like the iron army that marched into Canaan and annihilated the ten tribes. God has clothed our ministry with His mighty power for the victory. Amen!