

# THE CHURCH MILITANT

**BIBLE TEXT** : Matthew 28:18-20; Philippians 3:7-21; Ephesians 6:10-18; I Timothy 4:1-3; II Timothy 3:1-5; 4:1-8; II Corinthians 4:16-18; 5:1-4.

LESSON 273 Junior Course

**MEMORY VERSE:** : "Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (II Timothy 2:3). .

## **BIBLE TEXT in King James Version**

### **Matthew 28:18-20**

<sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

<sup>19</sup> Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

<sup>20</sup> Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

### **Philippians 3:7-21**

<sup>7</sup> But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

<sup>8</sup> Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ,

<sup>9</sup> And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

<sup>10</sup> That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

<sup>11</sup> If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

<sup>12</sup> Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

<sup>13</sup> Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, <sup>14</sup> I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

<sup>15</sup> Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any

## **BIBLE REFERENCES:**

### **NOTES:**

#### **Good Soldiers and Their Armour**

The Apostle Paul compared the Christian life with that of warfare, or a battle. The power of evil is strong in the world, and the Lord wants His people to be mighty and courageous to fight against it. He wants His children to be good soldiers.

To help us to overcome the enemy, the Lord gives us an armour. Paul said: "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" (Ephesians 6:13). A soldier in a natural army is equipped with clothes suitable to the climate where he will fight; he is given a gun and hand grenades with which to defend himself, a steel helmet for protection, a canteen of water and field rations for food and water during battle; and then he is sent forth to meet the foe.

The armour of the Christian is something that you cannot see, but you can recognise by the way he lives that he has it. The Spirit of God, truth, righteousness, and salvation are parts of his equipment.

Paul's comparison was with that of an old-fashioned soldier who carried a sword and shield. He said that faith is our shield, the Spirit of God is our sword, righteousness is our breastplate, truth is our girdle, and the preparation of the Gospel is our shoes.

#### **On the Alert**

Putting on that armour is not all that a Christian needs to do to fight a successful battle. He must keep praying, and watching. Satan is very clever, and he is doing all he can to ruin the good soldier. The only way we can defeat him is to keep ourselves alert, ready to fight back with the Word of God whenever he sends his fiery darts of doubt, unbelief, criticism, or sinful desires.

Satan once took Jesus into a high mountain to tempt Him. He wanted Jesus to bow down to him and worship him. Can you imagine such boldness? But Jesus knew how to fight a winning battle against him. He quoted Scripture – and Satan had to give up. We can do the same thing Jesus did. If we study diligently the Word of God and believe it all, we will have an answer to give every time we hear a false statement about the Bible, or hear a doctrine that is different from what Jesus has said.

#### **Teaching All Things**

Among Jesus' last words to His disciples before He went to Heaven were: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19, 20). Jesus wanted them to know that it was important for them to teach everything He had taught them.

Some people think that some of the teachings of the Bible are unimportant, and they will talk about only the ones they consider important. Other people have a different idea about what is important. But the strong soldier is the one who considers all the

thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

<sup>17</sup> Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

<sup>18</sup> (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ:

<sup>19</sup> Whose end *is* destruction, whose God *is* their belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

<sup>20</sup> For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

<sup>21</sup> Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

### **Ephesians 6:10-19**

<sup>10</sup> Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

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

<sup>12</sup> 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*.

<sup>13</sup> 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.

<sup>14</sup> Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

<sup>15</sup> And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

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

<sup>17</sup> And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

<sup>18</sup> Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all

Lord's teachings important; and he lives according to those teachings.

### **Satan's Wiles**

Our battle of right against wrong began way back in the Garden of Eden. Satan slyly won his first contest with Adam and Eve. He did not use a gun or poison gas or muscle. He won through propaganda. He deceived our first parents with words.

We can take warning from that and be careful about what we listen to. Satan has had more than 6,000 years of experience since then, and has learned many new tricks. So the Christian must be constantly on his guard lest he be trapped into the ways of sin.

Sinful pleasures and the riches of the world allure many people into the camp of the enemy. But there are some who do not care for such things; so the devil has to use other ways to deceive them. He sends false prophets to pretend that they are ministers of God. Some people believe the lies they are told, because they do not love the truth. They want to keep some sins in their heart.

Paul met some false teachers, and he called them "deceitful workers." But he said it was no wonder that there were such people, if Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. "Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (II Corinthians 11:13-15).

### **Spiritual Wickedness in High Places**

Some of these false teachers, tools of Satan, deliberately set out to bring about man's downfall. They go into the religious schools and mix with the honest students, pretending all the time that they love the Lord. After they are given authority to preach, they go into the churches of our land and stand behind the pulpit to spread their poison to turn the hearts of the people to evil.

But there are other tools of Satan who have been fooled also, and who perhaps do not realise that they have "departed from the faith." It may be that they once knew the Lord and earnestly did His service; but, through neglecting prayer and the study of the Bible, they have lost the Spirit of God. Gradually they have departed from the teachings of God's Word. They have become interested in the things of the world, and have let a love for worldly things come into their hearts. Instead of teaching all the commandments of Jesus, they teach only those which their congregations like to hear. And many congregations are saying as the Israelites did in Isaiah's time: "Prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits" (Isaiah 30:10). They may not say it in those words, but they will ask the preachers to give them an excuse for their sins, which amounts to the same thing.

### **Fighting Sin**

It is the duty of the true Church, the Church Militant, to fight sin wherever it is found. The only way we can do that successfully is first to have the love of God in our own heart, then be sanctified, and then receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost which gives us the Sword of the Spirit.

After we have obtained that much of the armour, we must make continual consecrations of ourselves for service — deep consecrations that cost us something. Satan is fighting an all-out war, and the Church Militant will have to fight just as wholeheartedly if she expects to win.

Some people teach that it is not necessary or possible to live

perseverance and supplication for all saints;

<sup>19</sup> Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel,

### 1 Timothy 4:1-3

<sup>1</sup> 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;

<sup>2</sup> Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

<sup>3</sup> Forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

### 2 Timothy 3:1-5

<sup>1</sup> This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

<sup>2</sup> For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

<sup>3</sup> Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

<sup>4</sup> Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

<sup>5</sup> Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

### 2 Timothy 4:1-8

<sup>1</sup> I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

<sup>2</sup> Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

<sup>3</sup> For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

<sup>4</sup> And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned

above sin. Why, living above sin is the foundation of our Christian experience! If we are not saved from our sins, we are no different from ordinary sinners. "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil" (I John 3:7, 8). So we can tell quickly whether or not we are a child of God.

### Drawing Back

There are other people who admit that one must be born again and know that his sins are forgiven, but they refuse to believe that one can be sanctified and live a holy life. "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness" (I Thes-salonians 4:3, 7). Some argue that that means a physical purity and separation. But it goes deeper than that. Paul continued his writings to the Thessalonians by saying: "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole **spirit** and **soul** and **body** be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Thessalonians 5:23).

There are others who preach holiness, and emphasise the need for clean living, but draw back from the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Jesus said: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). God wants His witnesses to have power to tell the story of Jesus, so the hearts of men will be touched by the Spirit of God.

There are ministers who feel the lack of power, and want to do more for the Lord, but they will not seek the source of that power. Everyone who is saved and sanctified, from the youngest to the oldest, can receive that power if he will make the full consecration of his life to the Lord. Through the Prophet Joel, God promised, "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh" (Joel 2:28). That is the baptism of the Holy Ghost which fills the life that has been purified through the Blood of Jesus at sanctification.

### The Mind of Christ

When the Apostle Paul was writing to the Philippians he said: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: . . . [who] humbled himself, and became obedient unto death" (Philippians 2:5, 8). Our fight may have to be a fight unto death. Are we willing to do that much for the Lord? In the Koreans' fight against Communism, there were many Christians who proved their faith in Christ by giving their lives rather than deny the Saviour. God found in them a people He could trust, who did not count their lives dear unto death.

But sometimes it is harder to live for Jesus than it would be to die for Him. In one burst of zeal or straight challenge, some people could answer fearlessly and give all; but if they had to live on, year after year, denying themselves the comforts of this world in order to carry the Gospel, they might shrink from the sacrifice. May the Lord help us daily to take up our cross and follow Jesus, forgetting our own desires and pleasures for His sake!

Paul said: "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung [refuse], that I may win Christ" (Philippians 3:7, 8).

Paul gave the reason for his sacrifice: "That I may know him,



unto fables.

<sup>5</sup> But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

<sup>6</sup> For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

<sup>7</sup> I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith:

<sup>8</sup> Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

## 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

<sup>16</sup> For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day.

<sup>17</sup> For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory;

<sup>18</sup> While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.

## 2 Corinthians 5:1-4

<sup>1</sup> For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

<sup>2</sup> For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

<sup>3</sup> If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

<sup>4</sup> For we that are in *this* tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Philippians 3:10, 11). Life is going to go on forever, either in Heaven or in hell. Paul was willing to suffer all things here on earth so that he might attain unto the first resurrection, to live and reign with Jesus forever.

Those Korean Christians who are sacrificing their lives for their Christ have the same hope. In the resurrection of the dead they will come forth to live eternally with the Lord. What does it matter if the body should have to suffer a little here? Our life here is but as a vapour, compared with the endless ages of eternity. And only what we have done for the Lord will count when we stand before the Judge of all the earth.

Jesus gave His life for us that we might be saved. Would it not be wonderful if we could stand before Him and say that we had given our life for Him in consecrated service? and even as a martyr, if need be?

## QUESTIONS

1. What does the Christian soldier have to fight?
2. What is the armour of a Christian?
3. What is our sure defence against Satan?
4. How many of Christ's teachings has He asked us to teach?
5. Name some of the ways Satan deceives people.
6. How can we tell the difference between a Christian and a sinner?
7. For what reason was Paul willing to suffer the loss of all things?
8. What does God expect of us?