

39--- The Importance of Using God's Tools

Have you ever considered the wide array of tools that God provides His followers? He starts with Jesus and the Holy Spirit. He provides a Brother in Jesus and a Helper in the Holy Spirit. He provides His Word so we have a clear understanding of how we are to live our lives for Him. He provides the Church for fellowship. He provides Pastors to teach the Word and comfort the broken hearted. He provides Spiritual Leaders in our Marriage Ministry, Children's Ministry, Men's Ministry, Women's Ministry and Special Needs Ministry. These are tools we see every day as we engage with our brothers and sisters. But there are other tools that are not as obvious.

Do you put on the Armor of God every day? Do you know the power you have to cast out the devil in the name of Jesus? Do you know Jesus has given you the ministry of healing the broken hearted and tending to the needs of others?

Let's start with the Armor of God. Ephesians 6:10-17 tells us that God provides six important pieces of Armor that we need every day as we enter the battlefield.

- *** The helmet of salvation to protect our mind and imagination
- ***The breastplate of righteousness to keep our heart and emotions safe
- *** The belt of truth to safeguard us from error
- ***The sandals of peace to guide our steps
- ***The shield of faith to protect us from Satan's fiery arrows
- ***The sword of the Spirit, His Word, to prepare us to deflect attacks and pierce hearts with His truth

Are you putting on the Armor of God every day? Where are you vulnerable? Are your thoughts at risk? Is your heart safeguarded? Are you solidly grounded? Do you know the truth? Are you fighting off the fiery darts being hurled at you? Do you know the Word well enough to wage the good fight? Or are you not even under attack because you are not a threat to the devil? Being under attack is a badge of honor! Be engaged with bringing your loved one to Christ and be prepared when the devil attempts to thwart your efforts.

Now let's explore the power that Jesus has given you to cast out demons in His name. You alone have no power over the dark side. But Jesus has already fought and won the battle for you. He has cast out demons and he has given you the power to cast out demons in His name. **Let me be clear because this tends to confuse folks-** In the name of Jesus you can ask Jesus to come and cast out demons. Only He has the power but He will come when you call and cast demons out. He will provide a hedge of protection when you ask Him to provide protection. All He needs is for you to ask in His name! If you find yourself under spiritual attack just call on Him and He will drive the devil off. Then His angels will come and minister to you just as they came and ministered to Jesus during His wilderness experience. Are you asking Jesus to expel your demons?

Finally let's understand what **our mission** is on earth. We are to "heal the brokenhearted, preach the Gospel and set the captives free" (paraphrasing **Isaiah 61**). We are all on the mission field. You do not need a degree in theology to share the Gospel. You don't need a Nursing degree to heal the brokenhearted. You don't need a PhD in counseling to come alongside a brother and share his burden. All you need is provided to you by Jesus, the Word and God's love for the lost. Your job is to step onto the mission field of life and be salt and light! Are you available to be deployed by Him to the mission field?

God has provided a wide array of tools because He knows how to equip His army. The lyrics from the song "Whom Shall I Fear" says it best- "I know who goes before me. I know who stands behind. The God of angel armies is always by my side." He has provided all that we need but it is up to each of us to use what He provides.

Verse:

Deuteronomy 9:3 NIV "But be assured today that the Lord your God is the one who goes across ahead of you like a devouring fire. He will destroy them, he will subdue them before you. And you will drive them out and annihilate them quickly, as the Lord promised you".

Personal Reflection: Where do you need the Lord to go before you and open new territory for you? What mission field is He preparing for you? Are you tightening up your armor every day? Where are the “holes” in your armor and will you let the Lord train you up? What are your demons- alcohol, drugs, money, lust? Will you let Him cast them out?

Group Discussion: How can you come together and encourage your brothers to face their demons?

Where can God use your group on the mission field?

Are you standing shoulder to shoulder to confront the Devil?