

Divine Romance - Spiritual Warfare

Week 7 – Thursday

Eph. 6:23-24 – Footnotes 23², 23³, 24¹, 24²

In this message we want to focus on the matter of the whole armour of God. We will cover a certain number of details, but I want to make my burden clear at the beginning so that you do not lose the focus. My burden this morning is simply on the matter of the shield of faith. Ephesians 6:16 says, “Having taken up the shield of faith.” I specifically added verse 23 to the reading concerning the armour of God. Verse 23 is almost the final verse of the book of Ephesians. The book of Ephesians unveils the church more than any other book in the whole Bible. It covers at least 12 aspects of the church, and the final 2 are the bride and the corporate warrior, but the book ends with faith; actually faith and love. Verses 23 and 24 say, “Peace to the brothers and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.” These verses mention four things: peace, love, faith, and grace. A number of the epistles begin with a greeting concerning grace and peace. Paul often started his letters with grace and peace saying, “Grace and peace to you.” So here he concludes this letter with grace and peace, but in between these he inserted two things: love and faith.

Here Paul writes in a very particular way: not love and faith but love with faith. These two matters, love and faith, are so basic in our Christian life. In the first message I gave a little bit of my testimony. I know that all our experiences of salvation are so varied. No two of us got saved in exactly the same way. We all have a personal story and history with the Lord; all of these are precious. But that night, Friday July 13, when I was seven years old, do you know what I experienced? It was not first grace and peace; I experienced love with faith. First love came through the preaching of the simple gospel through my sister. That love that reached me, those words that reached me, somehow produced faith. So love came from God to me and faith went from me to God and connected me with Him. Since that night the triune God and I have been connected. How? Love with faith. You too, wherever you were, somehow love reached you through someone sharing the gospel; whether it was personal, one on one, whether it was in a gospel meeting, or whether for some of our second generation it was even in the children's meeting. I had the privilege to bring the gospel to each of my three children in my study. I knelt down with them one by one at different times to help them experience love and faith.

First Thessalonians talks about the armour in a little different way. This letter was to younger believers and it actually talks about the breastplate of love and faith (5:8). Love and faith are a kind of breastplate because they both have to do with our heart. Love with faith is so important every day of our Christian journey.