

Divine Romance – Spiritual Warfare

Message 1

Week 2 – Monday

Psa. 5:2-3; 88:13

What are we doing? We are trying to develop our romance with the Lord. We can spend time with the Lord any time but it is especially an honor to the Lord to set apart some time first thing in the morning before we get involved in the affairs of human life, before we even touch anything of service. We should just be with the Lord. But when we set apart this time with the Lord, whether it is 10 minutes, 15 minutes or 30 minutes, we don't want to be distracted, but thoughts come. We should realize that these are not our thoughts; they are Satan's thoughts. These thoughts are his devices his, his thoughts. We never have to repent of these thoughts. When a thought comes it is not our thought; it is Satan's thought. Just because it's not evil doesn't mean that it is not Satan's thought. Sometimes you may have a very pleasant thought. Actually, it's hard to believe, but I have three grandchildren. A couple of weeks ago I was going to see them on the way to a conference. So that morning (I think any parent or grandparent would be able to sympathize) when I was praying a thought of my newborn grandson came in: "I miss him, I can't wait to see him." Do you know that at that moment even the thought of my adorable grandson was Satan's thought not mine. I don't want to think about him now; I can think about him later.

Saints, we don't have to waste time to repent saying, "Oh Lord, forgive me; oh Lord I come back." Just return and keep developing your romance. Remember, the enemy will always come to try to interrupt the sweet dispensing. I hope that in this little fellowship you would realize that there is a spiritual warfare around us behind the scenes all the time. We are not insignificant persons; we actually mean something to the Lord and to Satan. It means something, especially now at the end of the age. The church will be the factor to turn this age; so saints, our time with the Lord is very meaningful. We should not let it be disturbed so easily; we need to have a realization that there is a spiritual scenery.

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Week 2 – Tuesday

Dan. 10:2-3, 12

2 Kings 6:15-17

The Book of Daniel gives a very good illustration of this. In chapter 10 Daniel is praying. He prayed for 21 days, three whole weeks. Then the angel comes and tells him, “Your prayer was heard 3 weeks ago but I am only coming now because along the way there was a battle. A warfare was going on that prevented me from coming. How significant the prayer of one man on the Earth was that it would stir up the evil forces to try to delay the answer to this prayer! Man in cooperation with God is not insignificant. Our prayers mean something, not just when we are praying for things such as the Lord’s work and the Lord’s move on the Earth. Even our prayer just to receive and enjoy the dispensing means something. That little story in Daniel 10 shows us that the enemy will fight against our fellowship with God. It is not insignificant.

Second Kings chapter 6, starting from verse 15 says, “And the servant of the man of God rose early and went out, and there it was: an army with horses and chariots surrounding the city. And his attendant said to him, Alas, my master! What shall we do?” He woke up early and saw the enemy. Actually, this matches our experience; we also wake up early and see the enemy. Elisha said, “Do not fear, for they who are with us are more than they who are with them. And Elisha prayed and said, O Jehovah, open his eyes that he may see. And Jehovah opened the eyes of the attendant, and he saw: The mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.” Elishah realized that there was a spiritual scene that the attendant could not see; since the attendant could not see, his faith was weak. “What shall we do?” How did Elisha fight this battle? He prayed, “Lord, open his eyes.” I hope that through this word tonight and this weekend the Lord could open our eyes to see that those who are with us are more than those who are with them. The Lord is with us in this battle! May we have a view of the spiritual warfare going on. This would stir us to exercise our faith.

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Week 2 – Wednesday

Eph. 6:10 — Footnotes 10¹, 10², 10³, 10⁴

I hope that in this weekend we will come to the matter of the shield of faith and we will see there that faith has a lot to do with our will. We need to exercise our will in a proper way. This does not mean that we have to fight to be strong. We read Ephesians 6:10 which says, “Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of his strength.” Please note that it does not say, “Be powerful.” If it would say, “Be powerful”, I would say, “Lord, this sounds good but I don’t think I can do it.” But it does not say, “Be powerful”; it says, “Be empowered.” In other words, allow the Lord to dispense His strength, even to dispense Himself as our power and our strength. That needs our cooperation, the proper exercise of our will.

When man fell, our entire being was affected by the fall. The enemy injected himself into our body making it the flesh, and our soul became the self. That is why we need to deny our self. We do need to deny our self! And our spirit was deadened. However, even though our spirit was deadened, a function of our spirit was preserved, and that is our conscience. If man’s conscience was never preserved, how could man be saved? When the Spirit of reality comes, He will convict the world concerning sin. The Spirit’s conviction is effective because even in the fall God preserved man’s conscience. But not only so, even though our entire soul was corrupted and defiled by the fall, God still preserved our free will. There are many things in our mind, even things that we don’t want to be there, such as thoughts of revenge, evil thoughts, and jealousy. Our emotion is drawn to things that we don’t want to be drawn to, but we can’t help it. But God has preserved our will! If God did not preserve our will, how could man choose God? How could man be saved? Paul said that he was the foremost of sinners; but even so, he could respond to the Lord. Our will plays a key role in the spiritual warfare; we need to exercise our will. When it says, “be empowered” the word *be* is passive, but *empowered* is active. We need to be active to receive the dispensing.

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Week 2 – Thursday

2 Cor. 3:16-18 – Footnotes 16¹, 18¹, 18³, 18⁴, 18⁵

Let's come back to 2 Corinthians chapter 10. We encourage all the saints to have a set time with the Lord and we believe that most of the saints practice this every day. When a new one receives the Lord, we always encourage them to have a set time with the Lord. Of course, there are different aspects of prayer. We should have the kind of fellowship with the Lord that is continuous; wherever we are, we should tell the Lord everything. We should just talk to Him. We should have hundreds of conversations with the Lord every day, even to say, "Lord thank You that the sky is blue. Lord, thank You for this new day. Thank You that I did not miss the bus. Thank You that I got a parking spot." Just talk to the Lord about everything. But on the other hand, we should set apart time to be with the Lord, to have fellowship with God.

It is particularly good to set apart some time in the morning, not for prayer for things, but prayer for fellowship. We may have burdens in our hearts such as some unbelievers that we desire to be saved, family members who are sick, or members of the church whom we want to shepherd. Of course, we should pray for them, but not during the time of fellowship with the Lord. We should set apart another time, or if we have a longer time with the Lord, we can come to these things at the end. But it is important that we set apart times with Lord for fellowship, just for fellowship. That fellowship includes using the Word, to pray with the Word, with a verse. All the brothers and sisters should try to do this, even try to do this every day,

My burden is concerning the quality of our time with the Lord. If you are setting apart 10 minutes, how many minutes of those 10 minutes are really effective, and how many minutes are under the attack of the thoughts? My burden is from my study; I have been actively studying this matter of having fellowship with the Lord for about 31 years. I have been studying not only in my own experience, but also with saints of different ages, in different places, and in different continents. I found out that the number one frustration to our fellowship with the Lord is the undisciplined mind. Stray thoughts. Nearly everyone struggles with this when they try to spend time with the Lord.

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Week 2 – Friday

2 Tim. 1:7 – Footnotes 7¹, 7²

When I was younger I used to think that I was the only one who had such a problem. I found out later that nearly everyone has the problem of stray thoughts even now. It could be a dream that you had last night. Did this ever happen to you? You are praying, “Lord, I love You” and you don’t even realize when another thought comes, but you find yourself thinking of the dream that you had last night. If the dream was not a good one, you find your inner being sinking. It may take you 3 or 4 minutes that you are thinking about that to realize that you are thinking about your dream. You may not know when it started but suddenly you have a realization, “I need to come back.” Sometimes it is like trying to pull yourself out of quicksand. How can we take captive every thought unto the obedience of Christ as it says in 2 Corinthians 10:5? This takes a combination of our spirit and our will. First, we need the enlightenment of the Word in these verses that we read tonight that really expose Satan’s strategy.

Second Timothy 1:7 is another key verse. It says, “For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness.” Please notice that it is our spirit, but this verse says it is a spirit of three things. What are those three things? Power, love and sobermindedness. Isn’t it something that our spirit has the three parts of our soul covered? Of course, the sobermindedness matches the mind, love matches the emotion, and power matches the will. This is not about exercising our will power; this is our exercising our spirit which is a spirit of power that empowers our will to stand with the Lord in the spiritual warfare. This is our will and our spirit rising up to say, “No!” You cannot keep a thought from coming but you can stop the thought from interrupting the dispensing. Sometimes, when the spirit is more sensitive as I am there with the Lord and a thought comes, I would even say “No” out loud, “Stop.” You tell your mind stop and then you continue. Saints, we need to rule our inner being by our spirit of power.

Divine Romance - Spiritual Warfare

Week 2 – Saturday

Matt. 16:18 – Footnotes 18⁴, 18⁵, 18⁶

This warfare is not just in the future when the Lord comes back; this warfare is not just in the church in general. It is there, but not only there. This warfare is in our being. Our focus, our attention should not be on the warfare; our focus should be on the romance. But when the enemy comes, we need to be empowered so that we can we can stop the enemy's attack that is coming to interrupt the dispensing of the Lord into our being. So saints, be empowered in the Lord in your personal fellowship with the Lord. In the next message we want to have more fellowship on developing the romance and how to exercise in taking captive every thought. My real burden is the quality of our time with the Lord. I know that many saints are faithful to spend time, but the enemy is relentless.

In Matthew 16 we have what is possibly the greatest prophecy in the Bible: "I will build My church". There is no period after that declaration but a comma, because right away the Lord unveiled something else: "I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." On the one hand, you can take this, and we should, as a promise. The gates of Hades shall not prevail. Has it not seemed sometimes that the gates of Hades were prevailing? I think that all of us would sometimes when we look back say, "Oh oh, the gates of Hades were prevailing." But we can take the promise: "I don't live by what I see; I don't believe the appearance. I live by faith; I live by the Word. The Word says that the gates of Hades shall not prevail." On the other hand, this is a kind of warning that whenever the Lord is building the church, the gates of Hades are right there. The gates of Hades will always try to prevail. Where does the Lord build His church? How does the Lord build His church? There are some aspects of His building in the meetings of the church and in the church life, but when you are meeting with the Lord in the morning, the Lord is making His home in your heart. The Lord wants to build Himself into you more. Do not think that the gates of Hades will not be there. How do they try to prevail? Mostly in your thoughts. We want to expose the enemy and open our eyes to see the spiritual warfare around us. Still, I want to emphasize again, "Don't focus on the warfare; focus on the romance." "Amen, Lord Jesus we love You."