

The Church of the Servant King

Review of the Spiritual Life of the Believer

The Spiritual Power Sphere of the Mature Believer SLR_8G_Component #8 – Sharing the Happiness of God

The believer who is developing the components of the Spiritual Power Sphere in his/her life discovers that he/she has an increasing capacity for 'joy' and 'peace' amidst all circumstances. This lesson is designed to develop this final component in the Spiritual Power Sphere of the mature (and maturing) believer.

A Look at Some Passages

In our first lesson (SLR_8A), I mentioned some passages that illustrate the results in the life of a believer who has developed (or is developing) the Spiritual Power Sphere in his/her life. I return to those passages now. The impact and significance of these passages should be greater and they should take on added meaning in view of the study we are concluding – The Spiritual Power Sphere.

In Ephesians 6:10, Paul says “Finally, my brethren, be strong [fr. $\alpha \blacklozenge \blacksquare \textcircled{\omega} \textcircled{\times}$]” in the Lord, and in the power of His might.” As the following verses in this passage (verses 11-13) indicate, our battle is a spiritual battle, not a battle of the flesh. Paul then draws an analogy between the armor of the Roman soldier and the believer’s spiritual armor.

| Ephesians 6 | Area of Body Protected | Armor Component | Spiritual Analogy |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Verse 14 | Waist | A belt from which hung leather strips | The waist was to be girded with truth (i.e. the principles, promises, and doctrines of the Word) |
| Verse 14 | Chest area | Breastplate of righteousness | This is experiential righteousness in context, not imputed righteousness at salvation |
| Verse 15 | Feet | Hard, studded shoes | Feet carry the believer to present the Gospel of peace, i.e. the message of salvation |
| Verse 16 | Overall protection against projectiles | Shield (2 ½' by 4') | Phase 2 faith (i.e. experiential faith, not salvation – Phase 1 faith) to protect against attacks of Satan |
| Verse 17 | Head | Helmet of salvation | An accurate understanding of soteriological truths is necessary to present the gospel |
| Verse 17 | Overall defense and offense | Sword of the Spirit | Pertinent truth from Scripture – defensive and offensive |

The waist [v 14] (a belt from which hung leather strips) was to be girded with truth (principles, promises, and doctrines). The chest area [v 14] was to be protected by the breastplate of righteousness (experiential righteousness, not imputed righteousness). The feet [v 15] were protected by hard, studded shoes which carry the believer to present the Gospel of peace, i.e. the message of salvation. The shield [v 16 – 2 ½' by 4'] of faith (Phase 2 faith of the believer) provides the believer with protection against the attacks of Satan (fiery darts). The helmet of salvation [v 17] represents soteriological truths and the sword of the Spirit [v 17] which is pertinent truth from God’s Word.

Only the spiritually mature believer, who, with a full appreciation of all that God has accomplished through Christ, is able to respond in love to God and share His happiness. Only the mature believer can fully understand Paul's sentiments expressed in such passages as 1 Corinthians 1:4-9; 2 Corinthians 1:3-7; Ephesians 1:2-23; 3:20-21; Philippians 1:3-11; Colossians 1:3-14 cf. 1 Corinthians 9:3-14; 2 Corinthians 10:4-5; 11:22-28; Philippians 1:27-29 and 1 Timothy 1:18-20. Only the spiritually mature believer is able to give thanks in all things

Occupation with Christ

Occupation with Christ (O/C) is another way in which to describe the mental attitude of the believer who is developing or who has developed the Spiritual Power Sphere in his/her life. O/C doesn't mean that the believer never thinks about anything but Christ. O/C means that the focus of the believer's life in terms of desires, goals, structure, objectives, and orientation is Christ-centric. The believer who is O/C is motivated through personal love for God (Component #5) and insures that his/her life does not bring dishonor to the Person his/her life represents. Some examples of the manner in which O/C is manifest in the believer's life follow:

- Priorities are organized so that there is time for continued momentum in Christian disciplines (Component #4), e.g. prayer and Bible study
- The focus of the believer's life is the glorification of Christ rather than the exaltation of self. Only the maturing or the mature believer who is yielded (Component #1) to Truth and who possesses objectivity (Component #2) and humility (Component #3) will have norms and standards (a conscience) that are sensitive to the divine norms and standards. For instance, a maturing or mature believer with pertinent Truth in the soul does not address personal insecurities by establishing goals and objectives designed to empower self and thereby receive the adulation of others. The mature or maturing believer has adopted the divine norms that call the believer to die to self and serve instead of being served (2 Co 11:22-29; 12:14-15). The inordinate ambition that motivates one to build one's empire on earth through a focus on wealth accumulation and perpetuating one's name in history is set aside and replaced with a structure in one's life that focuses upon the glorification of Christ. Wealth can be accumulated by the maturing or mature believer; however, when there is O/C present in one's life, wealth is seen in a different way (2 Co 8:8-15 cf. Phil 2:1-11).
- O/C means the maturing or mature believer evaluates opportunities to donate time and money based upon objective divine viewpoint (Component #2). The believer who is O/C doesn't want to waste time or money on charitable endeavors that do not have a spiritually redeeming result in people's lives. Glorification of Christ is the standard in charitable endeavors, not the approbation of man, philanthropic human good, or the advancement of one's career.
- O/C means that time is allocated in one's life for personal ministry and leadership at home that could otherwise be devoted to one's professional career and advancement. The humility (Component #3) of the Spiritual Power Sphere protects the believer from jealousy and inordinate ambition when others receive the recognition that could have been the believer's had the believer worked 80 hours a week instead of a lesser number of hours. The believer is able to relax and rest in faith (faith-rest) knowing that God is omniscient and very aware of these "injustices" in life and He will provide (1 Pe 5:7).
- O/C means that sometimes a man with the gift of pastor-teacher will forgo advancement in the world in order to attend seminary and receive training that will better equip him to serve others. This is an example of taking up one's cross, denying self and following Christ. The man forfeits the opportunity for career advancement, greater accumulation of financial security, and time with family – all of which are things he has the 'right' to enjoy (1 Co 9:4-18 cf. 2 Co 8:8ff).
- O/C means that sometimes a man and a woman will engage in ministry (e.g. missions) and sacrifice personal provision and comfort. O/C and yieldedness to God's direction in their lives increases the bond between married people pursuing a common spiritual goal.

A man who is equally yoked with such a spiritually oriented wife is blessed indeed (Proverbs 31:10-31 esp. v. 30).

- The mature (and maturing) believer who is O/C is content in all things and is not a whiner. Whining is evidence of a lack of trust in God's provision of the moment and dishonors the Christ we represent. See Philippians 2:14; 4:10-13.
- The mature believer who is O/C gives thanks in all things because he/she is constantly aware of his/her dependence upon the Lord's sustaining grace (2 Co 12:9 cf. 1 Thess 5:16-17).
- Glorification of self (cosmic thinking – a momentum test – Component #7) is not one's motive; glorification of Christ is the overriding issue. Objective thinking (Component #2) replaces subjective thinking. Humility (Component #3) characterizes the believer who is O/C and dies to self in the interest of glorifying Christ. The emphasis is not upon one's rights and entitlements, but upon opportunities to serve others (spouse, fellow Christians, unbelievers)
- The believer who is O/C will desire to serve his/her spouse to insure that the marriage glorifies God. O/C means that a man and wife will gladly serve each others needs knowing that to do so is increasing the chances that their marriage will be honoring to the Lord they each love (Component #5). Sometimes a mature male believer endures in a marriage where the spouse is carnal and non-spiritual and where physical abuse is not present in order to love the spouse as Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it (Eph 5:25). Sometimes the female mature believer spouse endures in a marriage and remains in submission to her husband (Eph 5:22) where the husband is carnal and non-spiritual and has otherwise forfeited his right to leadership.

The Fruit of the Spirit

The components of the Spiritual Power Sphere insulates the believer from the world, the flesh, and the devil (false religion). Insulation doesn't mean isolation. Other people can see the maturing or mature believer in the world, yet they cannot see the inner qualities of yieldedness (Component #1), objectivity (Component #2), humility (Component #3), momentum (Component #4), personal love for God (Component #5), impersonal love for man (Component #6), and passing momentum tests (Component #7). However, other people do see the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23 cf. Col 3:12-16) in the believer's life. The fruit of the Spirit is synonymous with sharing the happiness of God (Component #8).

I can sum up the difference between the fruit of the Spirit in the believer's life and the Spiritual Power Sphere of the mature believer as follows:

- Fruit –
 - what the world should see in the believer's life
 - the result of the believer having developed all eight components of the Spiritual Power Sphere
 - the believer's impact in/on the world
 - the 'rivers of living water' that flow from the believer's life (John 7:37-38)
 - the manifestation of the character of Christ to the world
- Spiritual Power Sphere –
 - the dynamics of the spiritual life of the believer that the world doesn't see nor understand (Eph 6:10-13; 1 Co 2:10-16)
 - the spiritual foundation in the believer's life that results in the fruit of the Spirit
 - insulates the believer, but does not isolate the believer from the world
 - the character of Christ inside the believer

Some Concluding Comments

For years, I have observed believers who have sat under very good Bible teaching that included accurate analysis of contemporary events. The cosmic thought that was the underpinning of the policies of government was accurately noted. The effect of the sin nature's

trends toward asceticism and lasciviousness was properly understood. However, possessing the doctrine to accurately interpret and analyze contemporary history is only one side of the coin, so to speak, in the life of a believer. Many believers who have much doctrine are like one-sided coins. They can accurately interpret history and circumstances from a divine perspective based upon Bible Truth. However, since the components of the Spiritual Power Sphere have not been developed in their lives (i.e. yieldedness), there is no fruit of the Spirit and sharing the happiness of God via an Occupation with the Person of Christ. Hannah Whitall Smith expresses this quite well in her book *A Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*:

Your victories have been few and brief, your defeats many and disastrous. You have not lived as you feel children of God ought to live. You have had, perhaps, a clear understanding of doctrinal truths, but you have not come into possession of their life and power. You have rejoiced in your knowledge of the things revealed in the Scriptures, but have not had a living realization of the things themselves, consciously felt in the soul. Christ is believed in, talked about, and served. However, He is not known as the very life of the soul, abiding there forever, and revealing Himself there continually in His beauty.¹

It is my hope and prayer that the study of the eight components of the Spiritual Power Sphere has opened the eyes of your understanding (as it has mine) to know “what is the exceeding greatness of His **power** toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty **power** which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places” (Eph 1:19-20).

¹ Hannah Whitall Smith, *A Christian's Secret of a Happy Life* (United States: Whitaker House, 1983), 10.