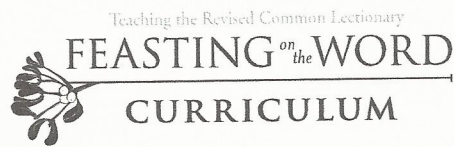


August 23, 2015
Put on the Armor of God



Adult
Resource Sheet 1

Focus on Ephesians 6:10–20

WHAT is important to know?

— From “Exegetical Perspective,” Aaron L. Uitti

Putting on the whole armor of God is linked to evangelism. Prayer is vital in this work. The church has been created to proclaim the mystery of the gospel to the world and to the powers (3:10). The mystery begins with Israel as a “peculiar” people (2:12). It discloses God’s plan “to gather up all things in [Christ], things in heaven and things on earth” (1:10); it is demonstrated in making one people of Jew and Gentile. Anyone making such “offensive” proclamations will be confronted by the powers. It takes courage—and prayer—for anyone publicly to preach the offense of the gospel.

WHERE is God in these words?

— From “Theological Perspective,” Haruko Nawata Ward

There are examples of Christians who have taken up the “warfare of peace.” Christians in the French village of Le Chambon sur Lignon hid and protected 5,000 Jewish children in World War II. Martin Luther King Jr. preached the “more excellent way” (1 Cor. 12:31) of love and nonviolent protest. The message to the Ephesians is clear that in the middle of our fierce fighting, Christians bring the gospel of peace (6:15), and “the whole armor of God” is only for their protection (v. 13).

SO WHAT does this mean for our lives?

— From “Pastoral Perspective,” Archie Smith Jr.

Standing firm means that one is willing to debate, listen, and consider alternatives in order to reach a beneficial goal, while at the same time not sacrificing basic principles. Martin Luther King Jr. stood firm on nonviolence. Margaret Sanger, the twentieth-century suffragette, stood firm on women’s rights. Nelson Mandela stood firm and resolute against apartheid. Representative Barbara Lee stood firm against the war in Iraq. Robert Sobukwe stood firm as he faced the evils of imprisonment under apartheid. All stood firm against injustice. The lesson we draw from them is that to have a strong ego, a concern for justice and compassion, is to be grounded in the convictions of the community and open to critical evaluation. This is how we stand firm, as Paul counsels.

NOW WHAT is God’s word calling us to do?

— From “Homiletical Perspective,”

Peter Rhea Jones

Just one day after France surrendered to Nazi Germany, a pastor preached to a small village congregation with a prophetic vision that “The responsibility of Christians is to resist the violence that will be brought to bear on their consciences through the weapons of the spirit.” These Huguenots would provide sanctuary for 5,000 Jews. They discovered the Pauline “weapons of the Spirit.” Christians can be awakened to weapons of the Spirit such as prayer (v. 18), Christian truth (v. 14), and the Spirit (v. 17b). The most potent idea to take away from this text may be the gathered community’s heightened awareness of the “weapons of the spirit” available to the Christian church.