

## ④ Missional Community Life

### INTRODUCTION | Ambassador of the Gospel

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For last three weeks, we have been studying the topic of missional community life. Today we would like to focus on the mission of the gospel. Just as the apostle Paul referred to himself as "the ambassador of the gospel", we are given the same responsibility to live a missional community life. Especially in Ephesians chapter 6, Paul metaphorically speaks about our life as a fierce spiritual warfare. Though it leaves a radical image of a Christian life, we were called to proclaim the power and the grace of the gospel while fighting the good fight of faith in Jesus Christ.

### SCRIPTURE | Ephesians 6:10-20 (ESV)

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<sup>10</sup> Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. <sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup> Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. <sup>14</sup> Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, <sup>15</sup> and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. <sup>16</sup> In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; <sup>17</sup> and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, <sup>18</sup> praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, <sup>19</sup> and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, <sup>20</sup> for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

### QUESTIONS |

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1. In this day and age, many people either deny the existence of the evil spirit and its work altogether or show unhealthy obsessive interest in it. In the light of these two extreme tendencies, what does the Bible say about this topic? If you acknowledge the existence of the devil, how would you approach the incomprehensible nature of human cruelty and evil in the world?
2. (v.10-11) How does the Bible encourage to stand against the work of the devil? (Ref. James 2:19)
3. What is the "schemes of the devil" that drive people away from God? Let's think about the following points from Genesis 3. (Ref. Genesis 3:1-6)
  - Doubting God
  - Reductionistic understanding of God's grace
  - Viewing God as an unmerciful (strict) mean deity
  - Underestimating the consequence of disobeying God

4. What are seven armors mentioned in the passage to fight off the schemes of the devil? Is there any particular armor you are in need of right now? Let's share.

5. An imprisoned Paul says, "I am an ambassador in chains." In what way was Paul fulfilling his duty as the ambassador of the gospel in such a condition? How would our spiritual warfare lead us to serve the mission of the gospel?

6. The spiritual warfare you are experiencing can lead to the mission of the gospel when you are encouraged by Jesus Christ who has worn the whole armor of God. How is your current spiritual battle? Let's share and pray for one another.

### Reading (Reference)

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#### James 2:19

<sup>19</sup> You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe- and shudder!

#### Genesis 3:1-6

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?'" <sup>2</sup> And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, <sup>3</sup> but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" <sup>4</sup> But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. <sup>5</sup> For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." <sup>6</sup> So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.

### UPCOMING EVENTS |

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Lunch Time Meeting: Jinbocho (30th), Kasumigaseki (10/1), Otemachi (10/2, 9), Marunouchi (10/8)

Bento Project (10/4)

Worship Service @ Ginza Shochiku Square (28th) \*Joint Worship with Grace Harbor

Cross Road Bible Study @ Hamarikyu Asahi Hall (10/5)

\*LOVE JAPAN (Oct. 11-13 @ Kyobashi Church) - Speakers include John Piper, D. A. Carson.

Register at <http://www.lovejp.org/ja/>

\*GraceCity Retreat (Nov.1-3) @ Okutama Seisyo-no Ie

Register at [events@gracecitychurch.jp](mailto:events@gracecitychurch.jp)