

the offer. "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Thus accepting the helmet of salvation, his whole person is covered with the armor which God provides.

6. And take *the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God*. The left hand holds the shield, and the right hand first receives the helmet, and places it on the head, and then that hand is free to take the sword. This is the weapon for aggressive warfare. It is the last piece of the armor to be taken. All the others must be in place before he can use the sword. Especially must the right hand be free. The helmet and the sword cannot both at once be in the hand. Let the helmet first be firmly placed on the head. What does this teach us? The question of salvation must be settled and out of hand before the Christian is ready to use the Word of God as an aggressive weapon. So long as the question of his own salvation occupies his thought and energy, he is not free to do aggressive work. But having the shield of faith on his left arm, and the helmet of assured salvation on his head, then he is free to use the sword of the Spirit.

But by the use of the sword is not meant preaching the gospel. The Christian warfare has to do solely with our conflict with the enemies of our souls, and it is waged wholly in the heavenly places. The Word of God is our means of opposing the "hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." There is nothing that so cuts and defeats the adversary of souls, as a text from the Word of God. It is to him the end of all controversy. Unlike the higher critics, he never for a moment contests its inspiration or divine authority. With this weapon Jesus withstood him in the wilderness. He had only to say, "It is written,"