

Lesson 10

THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS: The Things of the World vs. Our Love (Battlefield #2)

Before starting the video:

In developing the ability to win this invisible war, we now explore the second battlefield we encounter. It is the battle for our love. Specifically, the devil uses the seductive things of the world system to bait and attract our love so as to compete with God for our hearts. To whom will you give this prized possession? Another aspect of the Breastplate of Righteousness is how it protects our spiritual heart – the seat of our affections. We will also learn tactics the enemy uses in this arena, and see how they were successfully used in the lives of King Solomon and Judas Iscariot. Keep in mind that there are three kinds of love: *Agapē* love in our spirit, and the two loves in our soul – *Phileō* in our emotions and *Eros* in our sinful nature (see Lesson 6). Pray for the Holy Spirit’s illumination in this critical area. Again, please disregard the numbering of the tactics on the video. We will complete the study on the Breastplate in Lesson 12. The 2nd Qtr. Exam can be taken after this lesson.

- Now watch the video for an overview of Lesson 10 before proceeding further (26 min.).
 When you’re through, pick up again at this point. Fill in the blanks from the Summary.

WHAT MAKES THE “WORLD” A FORBIDDEN PLACE?

† **1 John 2:15** (KJV) – *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

1. What are some reasons for God commanding us to “Love not the world?” What exactly is the “world?”

TACTIC: Divert Their Love from God – To divert your love and obedience that should rightfully go to God – to someone or something else via the things of this world, thereby displacing God as the center of your life.

☉ **Main Target:** Your Love and Affection

- A. Each day we live and work in the “world.” It is our natural habitat. But we must remember that the world system is ruled by Satan and has the imprint of his character upon it. Also, **Ephesians 2:1-2** teaches that following the ways of this world is the same thing as following Satan, “the ruler of the kingdom of the air.” Let’s now review our definition of “world.”



 **DEFINITION – WORLD**

The entire social, economic, and political order, ever since the fall of Adam and Eve, consisting of the daily interaction of humanity, where generally self-seeking interests are the law of life and the God of the Bible is excluded. Its system appeals to man’s sinful nature, competing with God for the possession of our hearts, and whose pursuits in life are indifferent and in opposition, to both the will and glory of God. **For an enlargement of what comprises the world system see Lesson 2.**

- B. The world system is outwardly cultured, elegant, religious, and scientific, but within it is seething with political and commercial rivalries and ambitions. It is driven by demonically-inspired cravings for power and control. The world has a hatred for the true God and those who serve Him (**John 15:17-25**).
- C. The entire unbelieving world has been blinded by Satan, the false god of this world (**2 Corinthians 4:4**). As part of Satan’s warfare against God, he works to divert the hearts of mankind from the things of God to the things of this world.
- D. These things rival God and compete with Him for the possession of our hearts so as to displace Him as the center of our lives. When this occurs, we unwittingly give to Satan what belongs to God in love, obedience, and worship through love of the world instead of love for God.
- E. The believer’s allegiance to God is tugged at from every direction. Now that we are “*born again*,” no idol should take God’s place (**Exodus 20:3; 1 John 5:21**). An idol is anything that becomes our main priority and receives more importance, love, and devotion than God does. It can be a person, possession, or vocation (**Ezekiel 14:3**).
- F. The things of the world are active and vigorous in their appeal to the fallen aspects of our sinful nature. They have the potential to lead us away from God and His will for our lives.
- G. The things of the world are also competing seeds in the soil of our hearts that choke out the seeds of God’s Word – making them unfruitful (**Mark 4:18-19**).
- H. Love for the world is incompatible and cannot co-exist with love for God. Once the love of the world takes the place of love for God, sinful tendencies and pursuits multiply until the believer is once again a part of the very world out of which he had been called. (**2 Cor. 6:14-18**).

† **James 4:4-6** (NLT) – *You adulterers! Don’t you realize that friendship with this world makes you an enemy of God? I say it again, that if your aim is to enjoy this world, you can’t be a friend of God. 5. What do you think the Scriptures mean when they say that the Holy Spirit, whom God has placed within us, jealously longs for us to be faithful? 6. He gives us more and more strength to stand against such evil desires...*

- I. However, “love of the world” should not be understood as prohibiting the mere possession, appreciation, or the enjoyment of material things once God has His rightful first place in our heart (**Matt. 6:33; Ps. 37:4**). These are gifts of “...*God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment*” (**1 Tim. 6:17**). There must be a balance. The prohibition is in the attachment for those things, which displace Him as the center of our lives and become the center themselves. It is one thing to possess something, but it is another thing to be possessed by them, for “*a man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions*” (**Luke 12:15**).

► **CONSIDER THIS:** The born-again child of God, who once belonged to Satan’s kingdom and enslaved by the things of the world, is now a citizen of God’s kingdom, the Church – the world-wide Body of Christ (**Colossians 1:13**). For the believer, the world is an alien place – a bizarre, foreign land – incompatible with the things of God. Though we continue to live in this world system, we do so as “*foreigners and strangers*” – just as Jesus did when He visited it (**Hebrews 11:13-16; 1 Peter 2:11**).

† **John 17:14-15** (GNT) – Jesus said, “*I gave them your message and the world hated them, because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. 15. I do not ask you to take them out of the world, but I do ask you to keep them safe from the Evil One.*”

While we sojourn here, we are called to keep ourselves from being polluted by the world’s behavior and philosophies (**James 1:27**). We are to be salt to the world to impede the spread of evil and corruption as well as shine as light in the midst of darkness so the true God can be seen (**Matthew 5:13-16**). Our mission is to rescue people from Satan’s kingdom, bringing them into God’s kingdom through the new birth. It is also to influence and take back the areas that belong to Satan and use them for God’s purposes and glory (i.e. education, government, media, etc).

2. By which avenues does Satan seek to ensnare our love and affection?

A. The Bible states that the world makes its appeal to us in three ways:

† **1 John 2:16** – *For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world.*

† **1 John 2:16** (KJV) – *For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.*

(1) “The lust of the F_____”

(a) Lust is an inordinate craving and desire for something forbidden by God. It is the hunger for the gratification of carnal appetites and sensual indulgences.

(2) “The lust of the E_____”

(a) It is the inordinate attraction to things forbidden by God coupled with a covetous desire for their possession - things which exert a powerful appeal to our sinful nature via sight.

(3) “The P_____ of L_____”

(a) The “*pride of life*” is the inordinate appeal to the latent desire to be like God, and is pursued through the acquisition of possessions, position, power and status. Indications of its presence are: an exaggerated and unwarranted sense of self-importance; boasting and gloating over real or pretended virtues and achievements while disdaining others much better than ourselves; a selfish ambition for greatness and position and coveting status and status symbols; an addiction to the recognition and admiration of men; and a self-reliant, compulsive pursuit to “keep up with the Joneses.”

† **Luke 16:15** – Jesus said: “*What is highly valued among men is detestable in God’s sight.*”

- B. When God says “*love not the world,*” it is not that He is withholding something good from us but because they are harmful to us. When these things are present in our lives, they demand from us the love and obedience that is due to God alone. When left unchecked, they produce irreparable harm to our spiritual lives.

🐾 **TACTIC: Peer Pressure** – The enemy will attempt to exert peer pressure on you through close acquaintances – intimidating you to conform to the standards of this world system.

🌀 **Main Target:** Our Will

† **2 Corinthians 6:14-18** – *Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? 15...What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? 16. What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.” 17. “Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.” 18. “I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.”*

† **Judges 3:5-8** – Note the progression – toleration of evil leads to admiration which leads to conformity: verse 5. *they “lived among;”* 6. *“they took;”* they *“served their gods;”* 7. *“they forgot the Lord.”*

† **Romans 12:2** (Phillips) – *Don’t let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold...*

Note: The devil’s mode of operation to corrupt a society: Sinful practices seek public tolerance, then demand social acceptance, followed by the claim to special rights.

3. Our love is very special to God.

A. God is jealous for it and is not willing to share it with anyone (**Ex. 20:3-5; 34:14; James 4:5**).

B. To love God with all our being is the first and greatest commandment (**Matthew 22:36-40**). To be a true follower of Christ, there must be a willingness to give up any possession or relationship that competes for our allegiance to Him – even our own family.

† **Matthew 10:34-37** (NLT) – Jesus said: 37. *“If you love your father or mother more than you love me, you are not worthy of being mine; or if you love your son or daughter more than me, you are not worthy of being mine.”*

C. If our love for God diminishes, Jesus said we have “*fallen.*” Love either grows or dies. Jesus said, *“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”* (**Matthew 6:21** KJV)

† **Revelation 2:4-5** (GNT) – Jesus said, *“But here is what I have against you: you do not love me now as you did at first. 5. Remember how far you have fallen! Turn from your sins and do what you did at first.”*

D. Obedience is the proof that we love God (**John 14:23-24**).

WHAT IS LOVE FOR THE WORLD?

1. A love for things of the E_____ to the **neglect** of things that are A_____.

† **Colossians 3:2** (KJV) – *Set your affection on things above, not on things of the earth.*

† **2 Corinthians 4:18** – *So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.*

2. A love for things that are T_____ to the **neglect** of things that are E_____.

† **1 John 2:17** – *The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever. (Contrast with **Genesis 25:29-34** and **Hebrews 12:16-17**)*

3. A love for things which are E_____ to the **neglect** of things that are I_____.

† **1 Peter 3:3-4** – *Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. 4. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.*

† **1 Samuel 16:7** – *...The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.*

4. A love for things that are M_____ to the **neglect** of things that are S_____.

† Read **Luke 12:15-21**.

† **Matthew 16:26** – Jesus said, “*What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?*”

† **1 Corinthians 7:31** (NLT) – *Those in frequent contact with the things of the world should make good use of them without becoming attached to them, for this world and all it contains will pass away.*

KING SOLOMON'S FALL

1. King Solomon, the son of King David and Bathsheba, ruled over Judah after his father David. What were the prior conditions and the tactics used against Solomon to cause his downfall?

A. God made him the wisest man who ever lived. **Q:** How could the wisest man on the face of the earth desert the true God and end up blinded and serving other gods? Let us see.

† **1 Kings 3:5-13; 4:29-34** – Because Solomon asked in humility for God to give him understanding to rule His people, God appeared to him and gave him not only the gift of wisdom that he asked for, but blessed Him with what he didn't ask for – riches and honor.

B. Note the conditions surrounding Solomon’s failure:

- (1) Not while he was insecure, but after “*his kingdom was firmly established*” (1 Kings 2:12)
- (2) Not during a time of conflict and danger, but in a time of peace and safety (1 Kings 5:4)
- (3) Not during a time of need, but at a time of prosperity (1 Kings 10:14-29)
- (4) Not when he was young and immature, but when he was older and experienced (1 Kings 11:4)
- (5) Not before he had a relationship with God, but when he loved God (1 Kings 3:3)
- (6) Not before God appeared to him, but after He appeared to him twice! (1 Kings 11:9)

► **CONSIDER THIS:** Having prosperity and beauty can be unhealthy to our spiritual lives as they tend to lull us into an unwatchful, self-reliant state. Interestingly enough, according to Sir Alex Fraser Tyler, a Scottish jurist and historian, most great nations progress through eight stages which lasts an average of 200 years. The third stage in this cycle is when liberty leads to abundance which leads to complacency, apathy, and eventually bondage (Judges 3:8-15). When we’re full, there is a danger of forgetting God as the source of our blessings, and thinking that they come as a result of our own efforts. Actually, God has designed prosperity to work in a cycle: He blesses us so we, then, can bless others. The recipient then gives thanks and praise to God (2 Corinthians 9:6-14). Selfishly hoarding our prosperity only brings us misery.

🐾 **TACTIC: Use Prosperity** – The enemy will visit you in times of spiritual and material prosperity with the hope of catching you with your guard down so as to make conditions right for you to choose to become self-reliant, so eventually you no longer remain dependent on God, thereby forgetting Him and His commandments. ☉ *Main Target:* Your Dependence on God; Pride; Selfishness

† **Deuteronomy 8:6-20** (NLT) – *11....Beware that in your plenty you do not forget the LORD your God and disobey his commands, regulations, and laws. 12. For when you have become full and prosperous and have built fine homes to live in, 13. and when your flocks and herds have become very large and your silver and gold have multiplied along with everything else, 14. that is the time to be careful. Do not become proud at that time and forget the LORD your God, who rescued you from slavery in the land of Egypt...17. He did it so you would never think that it was your own strength and energy that made you wealthy...*

† **Jeremiah 5:7** (NLT) – *I fed my people until they were fully satisfied. But they thanked me by committing adultery and lining up at the city's brothels.*

C. Solomon’s failure originated in his disregard for God’s word (Deuteronomy 17:18-20). A valuable lesson to learn: knowing what to do is one thing, but to do it is quite another.

- (1) Unscriptural Alliances – It began with the temptation to make a political marriage with the Egyptian Pharaoh’s daughter – a marriage to an unbeliever (1 Kings 3:1). He disobeyed God’s command in Deuteronomy 7:1-4: “*for they will turn you away from following Me.*”
- (2) Unscriptural Resources – Then he gained possession of thousands of horses which brought him prestige and self-reliance – disobeying Deuteronomy 17:14-16. The result was he placed more trust and faith in himself when in battle than in the Lord.
- (3) Unscriptural Extravagance – He made limitless expenditures for his own self-gratification and lived in opulent extravagance – disobeying Deuteronomy 17:17b.

(4) Unscriptural Excess – He gradually began to love many other foreign women. It was an easy move to take other heathen wives because he had already taken the first step by marrying Pharaoh’s daughter. Eventually Solomon had 700 wives and 300 concubines (disobeying the warning in **Deuteronomy 17:17a**). This evil companionship turned away his heart after their gods.

† **1 Kings 11:1-4** – *King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh’s daughter—Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites. 2. They were from nations about which the LORD had told the Israelites, “You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods.” Nevertheless, Solomon held fast to them in love. 3. He had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray. 4. As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods... (Also read verses 5-13).*

► **CONSIDER THIS:** The moment a sinful temptation first comes to us, it must be repelled. We do this by first submitting to God, and then with His help, we resist it (**James 4:7**). This first flat refusal brings strength and confidence for the next temptation. But if we give into it, it then becomes easier to take the second and third steps into sin, etc. The first refusal is critical!

🐾 **TACTIC: You’re “Above the Law”** – The enemy will come to you during a time of God’s special favor in your life to persuade you to think that you are “above” one of God’s laws, and that somehow God will exempt and overlook your disobedience. ☹ *Main Targets:* Your Mind and Pride

† **Numbers 32:23** – *...you may be sure that your sin will find you out.*

OUTCOMES OF THE TACTICS

What was the outcome of the **Tactic: Let Self Reign?**

1. **Temptation** – Solomon was demonically attacked during a time of peace and spiritual and material prosperity. With his guard down, conditions were right to become self-reliant. He was tempted to disobey God’s word and make a political alliance with Pharaoh, king of Egypt – sealing it with the marriage to Pharaoh’s daughter, an unbeliever who worshipped false gods. His sinful nature was demanding control by bombarding his will. Solomon did not kill the desire but nurtured it. He was neither watchful nor cautious. Furthermore, he did not ask, “What does God’s Word say about this?”



2. **The will concedes** – His will gave consent and he chose to disobey God’s Word and married her anyway. He further disobeyed God’s Word in other areas: amassing to himself horses, silver and gold, etc. – allowing the enemy to invade other areas of his life and his earthly kingdom.
3. **Darkness and blindness set in** – These acts of disobedience opened the door to deception as he began to do things he would never do in his right mind. Others saw how wrong he was but he couldn’t see it. Solomon took more and more foreign wives who brought their gods with them. Gradually, before he knew it, the love he had for the Lord was diverted to his foreign wives and they further diverted his love to their gods whom he worshipped. In his blindness he built altars to the gods of his pagan wives that were used to sacrifice animals – and even the killing of human babies by fire to Chemosh, the god of Moab – among other detestable things.
4. **It breaks his relationship with God** “*And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord...*” (1 Kings 11:9).
5. **He brought the chastisement of God on himself** – Not only did he bring self-inflicted consequences from God upon himself but also on his children and his nation (1 Kings 11:9-14, 23-26). God tried to get his attention through severe measures, but Solomon, intoxicated with sexual pleasure and material possessions hardened his heart. There is no record of his ever having repented.
6. **The judgment of God** – Did Solomon ever come to repentance and get right with God and make it to heaven? We will find out in the next life, but today it should cause us all to be very alert and watchful.

► **CONSIDER THIS:** The ultimate objectives of the devil were met by using a combination of these tactics, which produced tragic outcomes:

TACTIC: Prosperity – Catching Solomon with his guard down, the devil successfully tempted him to forget God and become self-reliant. Prosperity must be accompanied by humility. No matter how “big” we become, our task is to remain “*small in your own eyes*” (1 Samuel 15:17; 1 Kings 3:7).

TACTIC: You’re “Above the Law” – The devil succeeded in convincing Solomon that God would exempt and overlook his disobedience. Even the king is not exempt from obeying the Word of God!

TACTIC: Divert Their Love from God – The devil was successful in diverting Solomon’s love for God to his foreign wives and then to their gods – thereby displacing God as the center of his life – and in turn robbing God of Solomon’s love and obedience.

TACTIC: Let Self Reign – Solomon took the devil’s bait when tempted and chose to disobey God’s Word and let his sinful nature take control in these areas. It plunged him into darkness and blindness – breaking his relationship with God which brought him under the chastisement and perhaps, the judgment of God.

JUDAS ISCARIOT'S FALL

1. Background

- A. Judas became a disciple of Jesus.
- B. Jesus' Father led Him to pick Judas as one of His twelve apostles (**Luke 6:12-16**).
- C. The authority of the Holy Spirit to cast out devils and heal the sick was given to him ("*the twelve*") – which he did like the other apostles (**Matthew 10:1-4**).
- D. Judas became treasurer of their group (**John 13:29**).

2. How did the **Tactic: Let Self Reign** that was used against Judas cause his fall?

- A. **Temptation** – He was enticed to steal money out of their treasury funds. The greed in his sinful nature was demanding control. Would he open the door of his will and give it access?
- B. **His will concedes** – His will succumbed to the temptation and allowed covetousness and greed to have its way. His love for God was being diverted to the love for money. He made a deliberate choice to steal the money for the first time.
- C. **Darkness and blindness set in** – Judas continued to steal in the very presence of Jesus!!

† **John 12:3-6** – *Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. 4. But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, 5. "Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages." 6. He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.*

(1) Satan got a foothold in Judas' life and proceeded to advance into other areas. He then planted the idea of betrayal into his mind. Notice that the idea had not originated with Judas and it was done prior to Satan possessing him. Note also that the bait was thirty pieces of silver which appealed to his weakness of greed and love for money. His will conceded and it brought further darkness and blindness. The overpowering appetites of our fallen nature, if allowed control, could cause us, like Judas, to sell out the very Son of God! He chose to make a deal with the chief priests to betray Christ.

† **John 13:2** (Phillips) – *By supper-time, the devil had already put the thought of betraying Jesus into the mind of Judas Iscariot...*

D. **It broke his relationship with God.** – Things got so bad that Satan actually **possessed** Judas right there at the last supper.

† **John 13:27, 30** – *As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. "What you are about to do, do quickly," Jesus told him...30. As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night.*

THE BREASTPLATE: THE THINGS OF THE WORLD VS. OUR LOVE

- (1) Judas was in such blindness that he led the chief priests and soldiers to where Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane and actually gave Jesus a kiss of betrayal – or was it Satan doing it through him?

E. **Then the chastisement and judgment of God** – Judas awoke and came to his senses too late.

† **Matthew 27:3-4** – *When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders. 4. “I have sinned,” he said, “for I have betrayed innocent blood.” “What is that to us?” they replied. “That’s your responsibility.”*

- (1) There is a point where our remorse alone can’t rectify our deed. Judas had a form of repentance, but without faith. He may have believed his deed was unpardonable. So Judas returned the money to the chief priests, and lost that which he so coveted. The devil will always have us chase a deceptive mirage, only to lose it in the end.

† **Matthew 27:5-10** – *5. So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself..*

- (2) After having used him for a season, Satan drove Judas to commit suicide – sealing his eternal fate in hell.

- (3) Satan was successful in cultivating in Judas a misplaced affection – diverting Judas’ love and obedience from God to money. In the end Judas brought on himself the judgment of God. Satan’s warfare against God is ongoing and often we are caught in the middle.

† **1 Timothy 6:9-11** (NLT) – *But people who long to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin and destruction. 10. For the love of money is at the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.*

► **CONSIDER THIS:** Judas Iscariot asked the chief priests, “*What will you give me if I hand Jesus over to you?*” (**Matthew 26:14** GNT). It’s been said that “everyone has a sell-out price.” Judas sold out his Lord and his inheritance in the Kingdom of God for 30 pieces of silver (approximately \$20). Examples of others who “sold out” are Esau, who sold his birthright for food (**Hebrews 12:16-17**), and Demas, who deserted Paul, leaving God’s call into the ministry for the love of the world (**2 Timothy 4:10**).

Evangelist Steve Hill challenged those in his Cincinnati, Ohio Crusade: “What is your secret, spiritual sell-out price?” He said many times it remains a secret until the day of testing and crisis. Steve asks, “Is your faith for sale? What would someone have to give you to quit serving God and from following His call on your life? Is it sex, drugs, money, position, or someone hurting you?”¹ Whatever the devil is offering you, like Judas, you will lose it all in the end and weep bitter tears. Nothing comes close to what Christ has offered you: the price of His outpoured life so you can be forgiven, and the opportunity to become a child of God and inherit the inexplicable glories of the Kingdom of God. Keep your focus on Christ and don’t sell out!

† **Galatians 6:14** – *... the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.*

- This ends the video content for Lesson 10.
- Video tape users: DO NOT REWIND. Keep cued for next lesson.
- Continue on with the Study Questions and Application and the Summary.

STUDY QUESTIONS AND APPLICATION

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you anyone or anything that you may love more than God.
 (Note: When we choose to love and worship God as our Creator and Father, He receives one of the main blessings for which He created us. Free will must exist for this to occur.)

2. Do you find yourself loving the things of the world more than you love the things of God? Within each category below, identify the critical things you are neglecting that should be getting your prime attention.
 - A. Eternal things vs. Transitory things: _____
 - B. Internal things (our spirit) vs. External things: _____
 - C. Spiritual things vs. Material things: _____

3. Is there any type of temptation you can identify that Satan is currently using to lure you? Are you resisting, or has your will already conceded to it?

4. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal if any of the following tactics are being used against you. If so, within each of these tactics, which of the six stages of **Let Self Reign** may you be in?

<input type="checkbox"/> A. Divert their love from God	<input type="checkbox"/> C. Prosperity
<input type="checkbox"/> B. Peer Pressure	<input type="checkbox"/> D. You're "Above the Law"

5. We can be an invaluable help to each other by pointing out sins we see in each other's lives. Courageously give permission to a few select friends to tell you of any sins they might see in your life which you don't. When you are confronted, do not be defensive or offended. See it as an expression of God's love through that friend and deal with it obediently through prayer and obedience to God. If you are one of those friends selected, do so with much love, prayer, wisdom, timing, and sensitivity.

6. Read **Acts 4:34 - 5:11**. Meditate on the way Satan tempted Ananias and Sapphira. Describe what occurred to them in each of the six steps of **Tactic: Let Self Reign** and how they brought themselves under God's judgment. Then contrast them with the believers in **Hebrews 10:34**. What is it that you think it would take for a believer to get from the mindset of Ananias to the mindset of those in Hebrews 10:34?

SUMMARY

We learned about how the Breastplate of Righteousness can protect our spiritual heart – the seat of our affections. We identified battlefield #2 – the battle over who will get our love, God or Satan. As part of Satan’s continuing warfare against God, he uses the seductive things of the world system to bait and attract our love in order to compete with God for its possession. He uses the **TACTIC: Divert Their Love from God** by trying to divert our love and obedience that should rightfully go to God to something else via the things of the world in order to displace God as the center of our lives. To whom will we give this prized possession?

Even though the world is our natural habitat, God commands us to “*Love not the world*” and gives us reasons for it. It is not because He wishes to withhold something good from us, but because they rival God and compete with Him for the possession of our hearts. The evil characteristics in our sinful nature are awakened by the things of the world, and are used as the devil’s bait in tempting us to disobey God’s Word. However, we need to maintain a balanced view. “*Love not the world*” should not be understood as prohibiting the mere possession, appreciation, or the enjoyment of material things when God has first place in our lives. These are gifts of “*God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.*” It is one thing to possess something but quite another to be possessed by them.

There are three ways Satan uses the world to make its appeal to our fallen nature in attempting to ensnare our love: the lust of the **2A(1) flesh**, the lust of the **2A(2) eyes**, and the **2A(3) pride of life**. He uses the **TACTIC: Peer Pressure** to try to coerce us through close acquaintances to conform to the standards of this world. The devil will also use the **TACTIC: Use Prosperity** – visiting us in times of spiritual and material prosperity hoping to catch us with our guard down so as to make conditions ideal for us to choose to become self-reliant – forgetting God and His commands. Satan will even use the **TACTIC: You’re “Above The Law”** – coming to us during a time of God’s special favor in our life to try to convince us that somehow God will exempt and overlook our disobedience. He successfully used all these tactics on Solomon (including **TACTIC: Let Self Reign**), which precipitated his downfall.

Our love is very, very special to God and He is jealous for it. He is unwilling to share it with anything or anyone. Jesus said that to love God is the greatest commandment. Our love is measured by our obedience to God, and love either grows or dies. What exactly is love for the world? It is having a love for the things that are: of the **1. earth**, **2. transitory**, **3. external**, and **4. material**; to the **neglect** of things which are: **1. above**, **2. eternal**, **3. internal**, and **4. spiritual** respectively. These are like a gauge that indicates where our affections lie. God must always have first place in our hearts. Beware of those things Satan uses to rob God through misplaced affection as he did with Judas Iscariot, who displaced God from the center of his life and brought himself under God’s judgment. It is said that “everyone has a sell-out price.” Nothing comes close to what Christ has offered us so let’s keep our focus on Him and don’t sell out!

The world has become an alien place for the “*born again*” believer – a bizarre, foreign land incompatible with the things of God. Though we must continue to live in this world system, we do so as “*foreigners and strangers*” – just as Jesus did when He visited it. This world is not our home. While we sojourn here, we are exhorted to keep ourselves “*...from being polluted by the world.*” (**James 1:27**)