



NEWSLETTER

# The Sword of the Spirit

If you have children, you no doubt can remember the dreaded trips to the doctor's office when your son or daughter had to get their shots before the school year began. The trauma of having a strange person stick a needle in various parts of your anatomy carries over through adulthood, to the point that most people have to look away when this heinous act is depicted in a movie or television show. Kids can think of a million other things they would gladly endure instead of getting a shot; well most kids anyway.

Our youngest son almost enjoys pain. I remember a time when I had to

## *"Name a few things you dread the most"*

take him for his shots and he simply said, "Let's go" and jumped in the car. Getting stitches was no problem for him even as a very young child, and there have been a few other things that exhibit his tolerance for pain that I won't take the time to print.

If I were to ask you to name a few things you dread the most (and I am assuming you have outgrown your fear of needles) some of you might list things like changing diapers (which by the way, why do most men have no problem gutting a deer but can't handle diaper duty) or doing your taxes. But if I were to adjust the question and asked what you

dreaded the most about your life as a Christian, two answers would probably come to almost everyone's minds: (1) witnessing, and (2) memorizing Scripture.

I've been teaching a class during our Wednesday evening Bible study that has alleviated the fears of most in regards to witnessing (maybe an article for another time) but my goal in this month's article is to hopefully get you to once and for all eliminate your fear and dread of memorizing God's Word. As a matter of fact, I hope to help you see that your spiritual life and your protection against Satan and his foes de-

pends on getting over it.

Let's begin by reading a very familiar passage of Scripture from the Book of Ephesians: **"And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (6:17).**

For all of my Christian life until very recently, I understood the sword of the Spirit to be the Bible. I even recall having "Sword Drills" in Sunday School where we practiced seeing who could look up certain verses of Scripture the fastest. I can remember being told to carry my Bible with me everywhere I

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## Cartoon Fun

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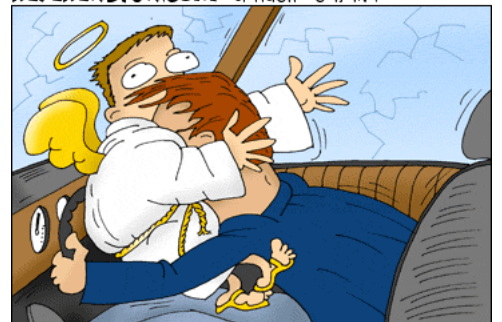


Thanks to Dan

12-03-2007

ANOTHER ESKIMO BAPTISM GONE BAD

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Thanks to Pam Winn (See Matthew 4:6)

03-18-2005

THINGS EASED UP ON GUARDIAN ANGELS AFTER AIR BAGS WERE INVENTED

## The Sword of the Spirit (continued)

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went because you don't want to be caught in a situation where you had to fight the enemy without your sword.

And while it is important to have your Bible handy this is not what is meant in this verse. When Paul speaks of the "word of God" he uses a particular Greek word "*rhema*" instead of the more common "*logos*" for "**word.**" And while both terms can overlap in their meanings depending upon the particular context, *logos* typically refers to the written word, or the entirety of the Bible, while *rhema* more often than not refers to "a thing spoken" or a "saying."

The difference between these two is immense in the context of **Ephesians 6:17**. The sword of the Spirit switches from being your Bible to being the amount of your Bible you can speak out. Which means if you desire to succeed in the art of spiritual warfare your only offensive weapon is the amount of God's Word that resides within you and can be retrieved at the proper time. I don't know about you, but that's a pretty sobering thought for me.

When you think it through it actually becomes very obvious. In **Matthew 4:1-11** we have the account of the temptation of Christ. After fasting for 40 days, Jesus is faced with the ultimate spiritual battle; Satan himself appears and does his best to trip up the Lord. In a weakened physical but heightened spiritual state, the account tells us that with each blow from the prince of darkness, Jesus counters with, "**It is written**" and then He quotes the *rhema* of God. Nowhere in the account do we see Jesus unraveling a scroll and running His finger across the papyrus until He finds the right verse to use. At no point do we hear Jesus say, "*Uh, give Me a minute; I know there is a verse for that somewhere.*"

Jesus, in His humanity, recalled the verses He needed, to not only handle the devil's attacks, but to send Satan packing by the spoken *rhema* of God. Jesus

not only had His sword, He knew how to wield it.

In this epic battle between Jesus and Satan, He even responds by properly saying, "**Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every *rhema* that proceeds out of the mouth of God**" (**Matthew 4:4**). Jesus didn't whack Satan over the head with His Bible, He spoke it.

At about this point, many of you are now feeling guilty or hopeless. Allow me to warn you, to encourage you, and to give some tips, with the remainder of the space I have.

First the warning: Do not allow the following words to come out of your mouth, "*I can't memorize*

***"The difference between these two is immense"***

*Scripture!*" The Bible is clear that the words we speak are much more powerful than we imagine. I am not espousing a "name it and claim it" theology, but I am saying that we can at times create our own self-fulfilling prophecies when we speak things, even if they are spoken casually or haphazardly. I do not have the space to get into the theology of this right now, and I won't go so far as to just say "trust me", but if you do a Bible study on the spoken word you will discover just how powerful they can be. The secular world has even discovered this truth. So do not say, "*I just can't memorize Scripture*" - if you do, you will be correct, and you will be easy prey for the devil and his demons; meaning you will succumb to temptation at just about every turn among other spiritual dangers.

Now let's move on to some encouragement. God never commands us to do anything that He will not also enable us to do. He won't leave us with this one offensive weapon against the enemy yet create you

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## Grace Church Monthly Calendar (check the weekly bulletin for changes)

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Praise & Prayer is scheduled on the second Friday of each month at 7:00 p.m. We meet at Dick & Jean's home.

Ladies Fellowship is every third Saturday, 9:00 a.m. at Ginny's home.

Monday night Bible study at Chuck & Judy's home at

6:30 p.m. each week.

Wednesday night Bible study at Pastor Al & Connie's home at 6:30 p.m.

Saturday evening worship service. 6:00 p.m. for coffee and fellowship, 6:30 p.m. for the worship service.

# Grace Church Happenings

## Building & Property Update

Praise the Lord! We have finally rounded the corner on our building project. We received approvals from both the planning commission and the county commissioners for the rezoning and the conditional use of the property. These approvals were necessary before we could move forward with obtaining permits and starting the construction—which we hope to do in the very near future. The well should be in place soon, as we have already received the permit from the state.

We have been pursuing bids for the other various phases of the project and are close to decisions on many of them. Some of the finish work on the interior of the building will be completed by those who have the skills to do so from amongst our own people.

A groundbreaking ceremony is scheduled for Sunday, August 2nd, at 10:00 a.m. We hope you can join us.

### **Please keep the following issues in prayer:**

- Wisdom, discernment, and unity for the church leadership in their decisions.
- Good bids from those we hire to be able to complete and furnish the building within our budget.
- For our church to keep its focus on ministry and not be overly distracted by the building project.
- That the Lord would add to His church now, during the project, and beyond.
- That God would provide any additional funds we may need to complete the project and to operate

the facility.

## Quarterly Church Celebration

Our July celebration has been rescheduled for August 30th at 10:00 a.m. We will combine our celebration with a church picnic at Chuck & Judy's home in Lost Park.

## The Way of the Master

I am thrilled to report that we have had crowds of 15-18 people almost every Wednesday evening since we began teaching and training folks how to share the gospel. The response has been great and the testimonies of their encounters with other people has been encouraging to say the least. People who have never witnessed before are amazed at how God is giving them the boldness to share the gospel message.

## Ladies Retreat

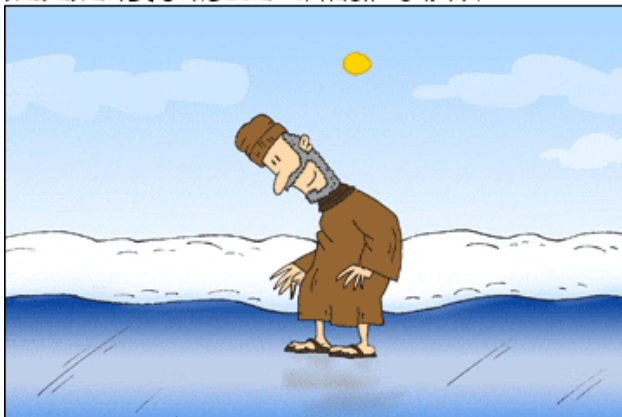
Our annual ladies retreat is rapidly getting organized. If you would like to add your name to the list of ladies who will be attending this year (9/20—9/22) contact the church (719-836-2921).

## Current Sermon Series

We are doing a study of the Ten Commandments for the next few months, to be followed by a study on the Holy Spirit. Transcripts are available on our website ([www.gracesp.org](http://www.gracesp.org)) and CD's are available upon request.

## More Cartoon Fun

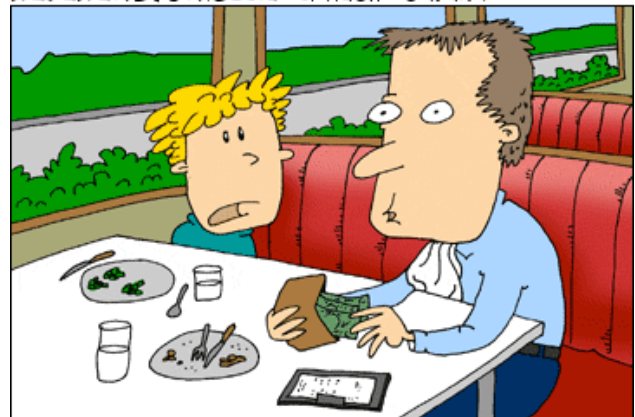
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Thanks to Ondrej Paska (See Matthew 14:24-33) 01-04-2008

**PETER FINDS HIS FAITH TO BE MUCH STRONGER IN THE WINTER**

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Thanks to Shirley Ostrander 01-15-2004

**HOW COME THE WAITRESS GETS 15% AND GOD ONLY GETS 10%?**

**GRACE CHURCH OF  
SOUTH PARK**

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*“To know Jesus and to make Him  
known”*

*“We will diligently strive to bring people to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, IN ORDER that we can help them grow spiritually, IN ORDER that we can make disciples of Jesus Christ, IN ORDER that we can fulfill the Great Commission of our Lord by reaching the world for Christ.”*

## The Sword of the Spirit (concluded)

with the inability to use it. Yes, some have an easier time than others, and as some of us gracefully age we have a harder time capturing things in our minds and an even harder time retrieving those things, but it is still possible to memorize God’s Word. And as you memorize God’s Word you will quickly find your understanding of God’s Word growing by leaps and bounds. Many Bible scholars claim there is no better way to gain understanding than to have a consistent memorization plan.

So allow me to wrap things up with a few tips that have worked for me and for others I have gleaned from.

First, start by only choosing verses and passages that have a great deal of meaning to you. If you are struggling with a particular area of sin in your life or there is a specific need in your life at the present time, find some verses that address that sin or that need. You will be more motivated to internalize verses that are a very present help in a time of need. Don’t be afraid to ask your pastor or a mature Christian friend to help you find specific verses that apply to your situation.

Maybe you are like a lot of Christians today who are struggling with their finances, God’s Word is full of verses that speak to handling your money, and many others that speak to God’s provision for the righteous.

Second, choose one translation and stick with it. Some find it easier to memorize out of the King James Version because it is more poetic in style. I don’t know if that’s true or not, but it is best to stick with a single translation, at least when you are starting out.

Third, hand write the verses you want to memorize, over and over again. And make sure at least one of those times of hand writing is on an index card you can carry around with you. There is some kind of connection between hand writing and retention. I can’t

explain it but it’s true.

Fourth, from your index card, memorize a single phrase at a time. Most verses can easily be divided into 3-6 word phrases. Cement the first phrase before you move on.

Fifth, repeat the reference often. Many will learn the verses but have no clue where to locate them.

Sixth, revisit what you are learning several times throughout the day. You will find that something you memorized perfectly an hour ago is already fuzzy. Expect this and do not get discouraged. It will be easier to re-memorize the second and third times.

And finally, review what you learned yesterday before attempting to start a new one today.

I know the task seems daunting but you will be rewarded beyond measure for your efforts; and remember, your spiritual life literally depends on it. Show me a Christian who is walking around depressed and defeated and I will show you a Christian who has very little, if any, of God’s Word committed to memory.

If you are having a problem with all of this, then may I suggest you begin with **Psalm 119:11** and **Philippians 4:8**. Get busy!  
Pastor Al

### Scripture Memory

This month’s challenge is to memorize **Ephesians 6:14-17** - **“Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (NASB).**

