

Conquering Conflict

Contents:

- Sermon Synopsis
- Sermon Highlights
- Scripture Verses
- Quotes from this episode
- 1 Bible Study – for personal or group study
- 3 Daily Devotions for further reflection

Sermon Synopsis

This episode of World Impact, filmed among the ancient ruins of Ephesus, explores how faith endures and triumphs through conflict. Against the backdrop of the fallen Temple of Artemis—once one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World—Dr. Billy Wilson reflects on the Apostle Paul’s ministry in this great city, where spiritual awakening collided with cultural and economic resistance. The message underscores that while earthly powers crumble, the Word of God continues to advance, transforming hearts and societies across generations.

Paul faced tension when the spread of the Gospel threatened the livelihood of artisans like Demetrius, who profited from idols of Artemis. Despite opposition, Paul’s ministry sparked lasting change that outlived the grandeur of the temple itself. From this historic struggle, Dr. Wilson distills lessons for today’s believers: conflict is not a sign of failure but evidence that the Gospel still disrupts darkness.

Building on Paul’s writings to the Ephesian church, the message highlights three essential principles for overcoming opposition. First, believers must remember their identity in Christ—seated with Him in heavenly places and adopted as children of God, secure in their calling and destiny. Second, they must recognize the true nature of the battle—not against people, but against spiritual forces that oppose God’s work. Third, they are called to stand firm, clothed in the full armor of God, empowered by faith, righteousness, and the Word of the Spirit.

The episode concludes with a call to prayer and perseverance. As Paul urged the Ephesians to “stand,” so too must modern believers hold their ground in faith, engaging conflict with courage and intercession. The ruins of Ephesus—its library, marketplaces, and once-glorious temple—serve as vivid reminders that human achievement fades, but the Kingdom of God endures.

Sermon Highlights

- Our identity in Christ empowers us to face and overcome conflict. As children of the King, we are reminded who we are in Him - chosen, redeemed, and sealed with the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 1:17-19 speaks to receiving the spirit of wisdom and revelation to know God better and understand the hope and power we possess in Him.
- The true nature of our conflict is spiritual, not physical. Ephesians 6:10-14 calls us to stand firm in the full armor of God, recognizing that our struggle is against spiritual forces, not against flesh and blood. Understanding this enables us to focus our battle against the true enemy and not be misled by surface opposition.
- Victory is achieved through steadfastness and prayer. Ephesians 6:18 instructs us to pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. Standing firm in the faith and engaging in persistent prayer is our strategy for overcoming the conflicts that arise as we change the world for Christ.
- Ephesus, a city of great spiritual opposition, became a beacon of the Gospel's triumph. Acts 19 depicts how Paul faced severe resistance in Ephesus yet persevered, teaching us that missional advancement will always be met with resistance but can be overcome through God's power.
- The message of the Gospel endures and prevails over cultural and societal opposition. Despite challenges, including the great disturbance surrounding 'the way' described in Acts 19:23, Christianity has outlasted the ruins and the opposition, proving God's word marches forward through all ages.

Quotes

- The greatness of man cannot be seen in the hours of comfort and convenience, but rather in moments of conflict and adversity. - Dr. Billy Wilson
- Remember all missional advancement always engages missional resistance. - Dr. Billy Wilson
- Christianity is called the way, a new way of life, a new road if you please to walk on in this world as we follow Jesus Christ. - Dr. Billy Wilson
- Every source of blessing is a point of attack. - Dr. Billy Wilson
- In order to overcome conflict, in order to conquer it in our lives, we must always remember who we are. We are children of the king. - Dr. Billy Wilson

Bible Study

Objectives

- Understand and incorporate the lessons Paul learned about handling opposition and conflict into our lives.
- Recognize the spiritual dimension of conflict and the biblical tools available to conquer it.
- Embrace our identity in Christ to stand firm in the face of conflict.
- Develop a prayer strategy to deal with conflict as it arises.

Reading and Reflections

- Ephesians 1:17-19 - Contemplate the spirit of wisdom and revelation in knowing God better.
- Ephesians 6:10-14 - Reflect on the full armor of God and what it means to stand firm in the Lord's power.
- Acts 19 - Study the conflicts Paul faced in Ephesus and how he handled them.

Key Observations

- Christianity is often referred to as 'The Way', and like any path, it faces resistance.
- The conflict is not only physical but spiritual—our true battle is against principalities and powers.
- Opposition and conflict are inevitable, but through Christ, we can conquer them.
- Standing firm and praying are our primary responses to conflict.

Personal Reflections

- Reflect upon a recent conflict and identify the spiritual dimensions behind it.
- Consider how the full armor of God has protected you in difficult times.
- Examine your heart for any signs of weariness in your walk with Christ.

Lessons for Daily Life

- Always remember our identity and inheritance in Christ to face conflict with confidence.
- Recognize the non-physical forces at work in our struggles and direct our battles through prayer.
- Persevere in hardships without losing our first love, Jesus Christ.

Practical Applications

- Wear the full armor of God daily, being conscious of its protective power.

- Incorporate specific prayers against spiritual opposition in our daily prayer routine.
- Engage with Scripture regularly to strengthen our resolve and understand our identity in Christ.

Challenges for the Week

- Identify one area of life where you're experiencing conflict and commit it to prayer every day.
- Read Ephesians 6:10-18 each morning and visualize putting on each piece of the armor of God.
- Reach out to someone in your community who is facing conflict and offer spiritual support.

Further Study

- Study the life of David and how he faced Goliath, as an example of conquering conflict with God's power.
- Research the history of Ephesus and the culture of the time to better understand the context of Paul's struggles and his epistles.
- Explore the topic of spiritual warfare in the Bible, using resources like 'The Bondage Breaker' by Neil T. Anderson.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before You with hearts open to Your word and Your teachings. As we reflect on the conflict faced by Paul and the Ephesian church, help us to absorb the lessons for our own lives. By the power of the Holy Spirit, guide us to stand firm in our identity in You, to discern the spiritual battles around us, and to engage in warfare through prayer with boldness and faith. May Your word equip us to conquer conflicts and to emerge stronger in our walk with You, never forsaking our first love, Jesus Christ. In His mighty name, we pray. Amen.

Daily Devotionals

Day 1

Scripture Verse

Ephesians 1:17-19 - 'I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.'

Reflection

In the bustling city of Ephesus, where culture and commerce thrived, the Apostle Paul faced opposition with steadfast courage. As we reflect on our own lives, we too encounter conflicts that challenge our faith and purpose. But take heart, for we are called to embrace a divine heritage that transcends earthly struggles. Consider the life of a young entrepreneur, balancing the tension between worldly success and spiritual integrity. In moments of conflict, whether negotiating a difficult deal or facing ethical dilemmas, the wisdom and revelation of God provide guidance. Just as Paul urged the Ephesians to remember their identity in Christ, we too must anchor our souls in the truth of who we are – chosen, redeemed, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. In the face of adversity, let us open the eyes of our hearts to see beyond the immediate struggles. As we do so, we discover the hope of our calling and the riches of being God's holy people. The same incomparably great power that raised Christ from the dead is at work within us, equipping us to overcome any challenge. Let this truth embolden you to face each day with confidence, knowing that your identity in Christ is the bedrock upon which you stand.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, grant me the spirit of wisdom and revelation that I may know You more deeply. Enlighten my heart to the hope of my calling and the riches of my inheritance in You. Empower me to stand firm in faith, no matter the conflict I face. Amen.

Day 2

Scripture Verse

Ephesians 6:10-14 - 'Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.'

Reflection

As followers of Christ, we are engaged in a spiritual battle that requires divine armor. Just as a soldier prepares for combat, we too must equip ourselves with God's armor to withstand the enemy's schemes. The conflicts we face are not merely human disagreements but manifestations of a greater spiritual war. Imagine a counselor helping individuals navigate through personal struggles. Behind each story of pain and conflict lies a deeper spiritual reality. The armor of God provides protection and strength, enabling us to discern and combat the true source of opposition. As we put on the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, and the helmet of salvation, we are shielded by faith and armed with the Word of God. Our daily skirmishes, whether in the workplace, family, or within ourselves, are opportunities to exercise faith and demonstrate God's power. As we stand firm, clothed in God's armor, we become beacons of light in a world overshadowed by spiritual darkness. Let us resolve to stand our ground, not in our strength but in the Lord's mighty power, assured that victory is ours in Christ Jesus.

Prayer

Lord of Hosts, clothe me with Your full armor that I may stand firm against the wiles of the devil. Let me not waver in the face of spiritual warfare, but stand grounded in Your truth and righteousness. In Your mighty power, I will prevail. Amen.

Day 3

Scripture Verse

Ephesians 6:18 - 'And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.'

Reflection

In the relentless march of life's conflicts, prayer is our indomitable fortress. It is through prayer that we engage in the deepest communion with our Creator, laying bare our hearts and seeking His will. As Paul exhorted the Ephesians, so are we called to pray in the Spirit at all times, with every kind of prayer and request. Visualize a student, their mind teeming with knowledge yet their spirit yearning for divine connection. It is in the quiet moments of prayer that the cacophony of life's demands fades, and the voice of God becomes clear. Whether in the stillness of morning or the chaos of a day's end, prayer is the lifeline that anchors us to God's presence. In today's world, where information abounds and distractions are rife, let us be vigilant in prayer, interceding for others and ourselves. Through prayer, we find strength to overcome adversity and wisdom to navigate life's complexities. Let us embrace this vital discipline, knowing that our prayers ascend to the heavens and activate the power of God in our lives and in the world around us.

Prayer

Almighty God, I commit to a life of ceaseless prayer, seeking Your face in every situation. Keep me alert and attuned to the needs of Your people, that I may intercede with compassion and conviction. Through prayer, let Your kingdom come and Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

Scripture Verses

1 Corinthians 16:8-9

But I will stay on at Ephesus until Pentecost, because a great door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many who oppose me.

Acts 19:9

But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way. So Paul left them. He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus.

Acts 19:23

About that time there arose a great disturbance about the Way.

Acts 9:1-2

Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem.

Isaiah 35:8

And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean will not journey on it; it will be for those who walk in that Way; the wicked fools will not go about on it.

John 14:6

Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'

Ephesians 1:17-19

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.

Ephesians 6:10-14

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then...

Revelation 2:2-4

I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked men, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary. Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love.

[Ephesians 6:18](#)

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

[Ephesians 1:18](#)

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people,

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