

Ephesians: Blessed Beyond Belief

To Build up the Body

Stand Firm

Ephesians 6:10-20

- 10 Finally, be strong in the Lord
and in the strength of his might.
- 11 Put on the whole armor of God,
that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.
- 12 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.
- 13 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.
- 14 Stand therefore,
 having fastened on the belt of truth,
 and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,
15 and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.
- 16 In all circumstances
 taking up the shield of faith
 with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one;
17 and take the helmet of salvation,
 and the sword of the Spirit,
 which is the word of God,
18 praying at all times in the Spirit,
 with all pray and supplication.
 To that end
 keep alert with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints,
19 and also for me,
 that words may be given to me in opening my mouth
 boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel,
20 for which I am an ambassador in chains,
 that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

Ephesians 6:21-24

- 21 So that you also may know how I am
 and what I am doing,
 Tychicus,
 the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord
 will tell you everything.
- 22 I have sent him to you for this very purpose,
 that you may know about how we are,
 and that he may encourage your hearts.
- 23 Peace be to the brethren,
 and love with faith,
 from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 24 Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love incorruptible. (ESV)

Review

- 1:1–3:21 Positional Unity of the Church
- 1:1-23 God's (life insurance) plan and benefits
- 2:1–3:21 Steps towards fulfilling God's plan
 - 2:1-10 God's plan (1:3-14) applied to individuals
 - 2:11-22 New Corporate identity
 - 2:13-22 Now have been brought near to God, being made into a new man—entity, the Church
 - 3:1-13 The mystery of the Church is revealed after Christ
 - 3:14-21 Prayer and Praise
 - 3:14-19 Prayer for the Ephesians to know and experience Christ's love and experience maturity filled by God (The impossibly big prayer for intimacy and to be total consumed with God)
 - 3:20-21 Doxology: Praise to God for His superabounding
- 4:1–6:9 The Proper Conduct of the Church
 - 4:1-16 Call to a mature unity
 - 4:1-6 Walk in Unity (Call for Unity)
 - 4:7-16 The enablement for Unity and Maturity
 - 4:17-24 Walk in Holiness—Remove and Replace
 - 4:25-32 The New Christian speech
 - Walk in holiness by speaking the truth and demonstrate love not anger
 - Speak truthfully and with edifying words
 - Don't let anger lead you to sin, instead--Be kind and Forgive
 - 5:1-14 Walk in love and light
 - 5:15—6:9 Walk in Wisdom
 - 5:15-21 Walk Wisely and Worship Together
 - 5:22-33 The filling of the Spirit enables walking wisely in marriage relationship
 - 5:22-24 The Wife's role: Commanded to submit
 - 5:25-33 The Husband's role: Commanded to Love
 - 6:1-9 The filling of the Spirit enables walking wisely in home and work relationships
 - 6:1-4 Children are commanded to obey their parent and honor them
 - 6:5 Fathers are commanded to replace provocation with proactive upbringing
 - 6:6-8 Slaves are commanded to be obedient, serving as to the Lord first
 - 6:9 Masters are commanded to replace threats with understanding who their ultimate Master is

Exposition

VII. Stand firm 6:10-20

Fight the Battle Together

A. The Battle 6:10-13

Be Strong in the Lord

Realize you are in a Battle

1. **Call to be strong in the face of battle 6:10**
What: be strong in the Lord
2. **Call to put on the armor in light of the enemy 6:11-13**
How: put on God's armor 6:11a
Why: to stand against the devil's schemes 6:11b-13

Understand the Adversary

The devil is a person not a force

Notice that he has intellect—"schemes"

The devil is powerful, but his power is limited by God (Job 1)

The devil's purpose is self-exaltation, to replace God, to be autonomous (Isaiah 14)

The devil has a strategy

Accuser of believers Revelation 12:10

Attacker To hinder their work 1 Thessalonians 2:18; Matthew 13:38-39; Ephesians 6:10-11
"Asider" uses whatever will side track us, from our purpose, to worship, to grow, to be one

B. The Armor 6:14-17

Stand Firm

Put on the Armor

The life of a Christian, like that of a soldier, is not one of ease and leisure, but of active service. God does not lead us into a battle ill-equipped, or unable to win the battle. Put it on, keep it on—always ready for battle.



1. The Command: Stand 6:14a

2. The Supply: Armor 6:14b-16

Stand Firm

a. The Belt of Truth Eph. 6:13-14 (See also: John 17:13-17)

Literal: wide, heavy, leather belt—foundational part of the armor, held tonic in (gird loins, 1 Peter 1:13)—prepared for action, freed for quick movement (Hebrews 12:1-2), a place to hang weapons—strong foundation, a place to display awards (metals)—the soldiers' hope was to go into battle with nothing on his belt and then after the battle to be awarded recognitions for accomplishment

Idea: The truth (and character/integrity) are our foundation. If the truth is our foundation, then guilt (Satan's sly tactic) will not play a part in our thoughts or actions, because our conscience is clear. If we do not have the belt of truth buckled on we are vulnerable. We will want to flee instead of stand when facing the enemy. We have the objective truth of God's Word, which we must live-out in our lives.



b. The breastplate of Righteousness Eph. 6:14

Literal: Metal cast of the torso of a man or sheets of metal worn to protect the vital organs

Idea: We have protection through the breastplate of righteousness (both through the righteousness given to us through Christ and by maintaining a righteous life)

Principle for Spiritual Battle: "By God's grace, I dedicate myself to living as much like Christ as I know how, counting on Christ's righteousness to make me acceptable to God, and reject Satan's accusations against me when I fail."



In hand-to-hand combat, the Roman soldier would try with a short sword to find small breaks or weak points in the armor (breastplate) and thrust his sword in to kill.

"If sins in the life of the child of God remain unjudged and unconfessed, those sins are like a defect in the protective covering and leave an opening through which the dagger points can pierce to his destruction."¹

c. The Shoes of the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace Eph. 6:15

Literal: Leather shoes strapped to the legs with leather straps and often with short spikes for footing

Idea: The word "readiness" or "preparation" can either mean "being ready" or "foundation/base"

Principle for Spiritual Battle: I believe the secure footing of the gospel is true for me as I appropriate them and proclaim them.



The gospel gives us peace with God and therefore peace in the battle.

We can never walk worthy without the gospel.

"The child of God must by the grace of God appropriate that which God has provided in the gospel so that he will have a secure footing when the adversary attacks."²

¹ Dwight Pentecost, *Pattern for Maturity: Conduct and Conflict in the Christian Life*, (Moody Press, 1966) p. 234.

² Dwight Pentecost, *Pattern for Maturity: Conduct and Conflict in the Christian Life*, (Moody Press, 1966) p. 242.

d. **The Shield of Faith** *Eph. 6:16*

Literal: Shields were about 4½ by 2½ feet, pieces of wood covered with metal or leather. They were used to deflect arrows, spears, and swords. They worked well when a group of soldiers lined up together with their shields together forming a wall.

Idea: Exercise of faith. Believing what God has said and living accordingly. The issue of integrity, honesty and sincerity. One with that kind of reputation keeps those who would try to corrupt away because they know they will not corrupt you. The one with flawed character attracts those with flawed character. But if we are secure in the truth of God's Word, that what He has said about us is true—there is now therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus—we can stand firm holding the shield of faith.

Principle for Spiritual Battle: "Whenever I feel like doubting, or sinning, or quitting, I will reject those thoughts and feelings, because I deeply believe that God's truth and will are best."³
We are adequately protected from all that Satan can throw at us.



Take

e. **The Helmet of Salvation** *Eph. 6:17*

Literal: Metal headpiece designed to protect the head from blows

Idea: Protection and provided a striking symbol of military victory

Principle for Spiritual Battle: "I fix my hopes and affections, not in this world, but in Christ and the next world."⁴



f. **The Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God** *Eph. 6:17-18*

Literal: Short straight sword used by Roman soldiers for close hand-to-hand combat

Idea: Using a specific truth from the Word of God for a specific situation
It is the "sword of the Spirit" not only because He is the agent behind the inspiration of the text, but because He is the one who applies it to our hearts.

Principle for Spiritual Battle: "I will master the Word as well as I can, that I will be able to use it to strengthen and guide me in life's specific circumstances."⁵



C. The Need (purpose): Be alert and pray 6:18-20

Prayer in the Spirit is prayer that conforms to the will and purpose of the Spirit.

Spiritual Warfare

What do we struggle against?

World, Flesh, and the Devil

Unrenewed mind (Mk 15:19; Eph 6 fiery darts; Is 55:7-9)

What do we need to do?

Watch what goes into your mind (Heb 4:12)

Let the Word guide our thoughts (Phil 4:8)

5 Steps to overcoming the struggle

1. Recognize it all begins in the mind
2. Understand thoughts lead to choices
3. Understand choices turn into acts
4. Understand acts repeated become habits
5. Understand habits turn into strongholds

James 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. **Resist** the devil, and he will **flee** from you. (ESV)

³ Max Anders, *30 Days to Understanding the Christian Life*, (Brentwood, TN: Wolgemuth & Hyatt Pub., 1990) p. 249.

⁴ Max Anders, *30 Days to Understanding the Christian Life*, (Brentwood, TN: Wolgemuth & Hyatt Pub., 1990) p. 251.

⁵ Max Anders, *30 Days to Understanding the Christian Life*, (Brentwood, TN: Wolgemuth & Hyatt Pub., 1990) p. 251.