

Subject: *Spiritual Warfare – Part 3*

Scripture: *Ephesians 6:10-20*

1. OUR STRENGTH FOR THE FIGHT

2. OUR STAND IN THE FIGHT

3. OUR STRUGGLE IN THE FIGHT

A. We fight against a spiritual enemy

This is “an invisible war.” Our enemy is not visible, but he is real.

B. We fight against a serious enemy

1 Peter 5:8 *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.*

C. We fight against a skillful enemy

Satan is very thoughtful and clever. The “wiles” (methods) of the devil means that he carefully thinks out his strategy and uses his most effective weapons against us. He is not all-knowing like God, but he is ever-learning. Never underestimate your enemy.

D. We fight against a sophisticated enemy

4. OUR SECURITY IN THE FIGHT

Vs. 11, 13 – “the whole armor of God” (all of the armor is important; none is optional)

A. God’s armor is special

He provides exactly what we need...this is God’s armor. He designed and tested it. There is no substitute.

B. God’s armor is sufficient

God supplies everything we need for spiritual battle. He prepares us for victory, but in order to be victorious we must learn about the armor and how it protects us.

C. God’s armor is spiritual

We are in a spiritual battle and we face a spiritual enemy, so we need spiritual armor. It’s likely that the Apostle Paul was looking at a Roman soldier or soldiers when he wrote this passage in Ephesians 6. Paul refers to himself as a prisoner in this letter (Eph. 4:1; 6:20). As he saw the body armor of the Roman soldier, he thought of the spiritual armor that Christian soldiers must wear.

5. OUR SUCCESS IN THE FIGHT

The Bible says to “put on” this armor. This carries the idea of wearing something at all times. We must put on the whole armor of God and keep it on. We must wear it as long

as we're in the world because the battle continues. The first three pieces of armor (belt, breastplate, and boots) were worn by Roman soldiers at all times. The last three pieces (shield, helmet, and sword) were ready at hand to be used in actual combat situations. If we are going to be ready for spiritual warfare we need to understand what the pieces of armor represent and how they protect us for spiritual warfare.

A. The belt of truth

The belt was used to gather up the loose fitting tunic, so a soldier would not trip or be hindered. God's truth protects us from satanic lies and false teaching.

Ephesians 4:14-15 ¹⁴ *That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;* ¹⁵ *But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.*

Truth gives us stability and brings us to maturity—two things we desperately need in spiritual warfare. As we know the truth and grow deeper in the truth, we learn that by Christ's death and resurrection, Satan has already been defeated, but he has not been destroyed. Satan is alive, active, and as dangerous as ever.

Satan is the great deceiver. His motive is death and his method is deception.

John 8:44 *Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*

God's truth is our only protection from the enemy. We must learn the truth, love the truth, and live the truth.

John 17:17 *Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*

2 Timothy 2:15 *Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

Psalms 119:104 *Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.*

Psalms 119:128 *Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way.*

B. The breastplate of righteousness

This is a very important piece of armor. The soldier's breastplate protected his vital organs (heart, lungs, etc.). No soldier would ever go into battle without it. Today soldiers wear a flak-jacket. The heart represents the source of our thoughts and choices. The breastplate of righteousness protects our thoughts and choices. Our enemy seeks to fill our hearts with evil thoughts, sinful desires, and unwise choices.

Proverbs 4:23 *Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*

Matthew 6:33 *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

2 Corinthians 7:1 *Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*

1 Peter 2:11 *Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.*

C. The shoes of the gospel of peace

This represents our spiritual standing of peace with God. Civilians wear shoes for looks and comfort, but soldiers wear shoes for survival. Good shoes are a necessity, not a luxury. A soldier's life depends on having good shoes (boots) for protection and traction. A soldier needs to be ready to march, climb, fight, and stand his ground. A Christian soldier must stand in the gospel of Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:1 *Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand.*

Romans 5:1-2 *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

The gospel of peace is the good news that we are reconciled. We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. By nature all people are enemies of God, but in Christ we are reconciled and accepted as children in God's family. Someone said: "We have the standing of Christ before God or we have no standing at all."

D. The shield of faith

This represents our constant faith in God. The word for shield refers to a large shield about 2.5 feet by 4.5 feet that was used to protect the whole body of a Roman soldier. The words "above all" (Eph. 6:16) means first and foremost. Faith is absolutely essential to protect us from the attacks of Satan. In ancient times arrows were sometimes dipped in pitch, then set on fire and shot at the enemy. When the arrows hit their target they would do maximum damage.

The shield of faith is our complete trust in the Lord. Satan often attacks us by tempting us to satisfy our needs in a sinful way. To counter his attacks we trust God to meet all our needs in the right way. We trust His character, promises, goodness, presence, power, and grace at all times. We trust Him at all times and for all things. We don't put faith in our faith. We put faith in God.

Genesis 15:1 *After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.*

Psalms 18:30 *As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler (large shield) to all those that trust in him.*

1 John 5:4 *For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.*