



# 6 | EPHESIANS 6:10-18

## WITH ME IN THE BATTLE

*Our greatest growth is in the battle*

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*Psalm 105:1-6*

Oh give thanks to the Lord; call upon his name; make known his deeds among the peoples! <sup>2</sup> Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wondrous works! <sup>3</sup> Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice! <sup>4</sup> Seek the Lord and his strength; seek his presence continually! <sup>5</sup> Remember the wondrous works that he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he uttered, <sup>6</sup> O offspring of Abraham, his servant, children of Jacob, his chosen ones!

### Songs

*O Church Arise*

*Onward Christian Soldiers*

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*A Mighty Fortress is Our God*

# WITH ME IN THE BATTLE

Ephesians 6:10-18

Introduction

## Announcements:

**GIVING:** You can give over Zelle through your bank with no fees. Also, we have a new secured mailbox at the church, so you may also give by sending a check to Living Hope, 6N171 Gary Avenue, Roselle, IL 60172.

**JACK'S WAKE:** Visitation for Jack Soen is from 1-2pm at Salerno Funeral Home on Lake St in Roselle. Visitation will be controlled by the Funeral Home. They will file people and families through slowly.

We are looking at our spiritual armor in **Ephesians 6**. The title of our message today is "With Me in the Battle."

As we consider the Christian's spiritual armor, I love Paul's words in ...


**Romans 13:14**, Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

We are in a war in our country against an invisible enemy, and the most important one is not the corona virus. There is a more dangerous enemy: sin. Sin will destroy you, and sin's greatest proponent is the enemy of our soul. We are in a spiritual battle. But I'm so grateful for God's promise:

**1 John 4:4**, Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

## David and Goliath

I think of the story of David and Goliath. David was so small. He was just a shepherd boy. Goliath was over nine feet tall. The tallest man in recent history was almost nine feet tall, so it's not unheard of. Even this year in the NBA, there's a player on the Celtics, Taco Fall who is over eight feet tall.

 **Pastor Michael, what was King David's strategy in defeating Goliath?**

By all human accounts, David did not look cut out for this battle, but he prevailed with the spiritual armor of faith. So in 1 Samuel 17:47, David gives his strategy. He says, "**The battle is the Lord's**" (vs. 47). That's a pretty good strategy. David had no armor, no spear, and no sword. It appears David was not trusting in his own sufficiency nor in the few simple weapons he had. His total confidence was in the power of the Lord. None of the great victories of the Bible were waged with sophisticated weaponry and massive armies.

There are many verses in the Bible that encourage us to adopt David's strategy. Truly, the Word is clear that the battle is the Lord's!

**Zechariah 4:6**, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts."


Each believer must learn to fight and to follow God. We can't do it in our own power. But truly we can say,

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (**Phil 4:14**).

Today, let's look at the spiritual battle we face from the New Testament. First, let's look at our invisible enemy.

## 1. OUR ENEMY IN THE BATTLE (Eph 6:10-13)

The greatest war we wage is an invisible, spiritual war. We need to always remember, we are fighting a war against an invisible enemy as we read in Ephesians 6.

 Pastor Michael, can you read Ephesians 6:10-13?


**EPHESIANS 6:10-13** | Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. <sup>11</sup>Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. <sup>12</sup>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. <sup>13</sup>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.

Calvin said:

This passage indicates that our difficulties are far greater than if we had to fight against men... Our enemies are such as no human power can withstand.<sup>1</sup>

We need to face our enemy with divine power. We can't battle Satan with mere human power. The battle truly is the Lord's. But we do need to understand our enemy if we are going to fight this battle.

### THE ENEMY'S BEGINNING

 Pastor Michael, how did the demonic world begin? How did evil angels come to be?

**God did not create the devil as we know him.** When God created the world, we are told that God examined it and declared that it was good (**Genesis 1:31**). This means that even the angelic world did not have evil angels or demons in it at that time. Sometime after God created the world, Satan and his angels held a rebellion against God.

Jesus said, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven" (**Luke 10:18**). We read in Revelation 12:4 that the serpent, the dragon "took with him a third of the stars of heaven", likely a reference to Satan's and all the evil angels fall. About that time, Satan was banished to earth, and it was there, after failing to take down God's throne, he wanted to take down the prize of God's creation: humankind.

<sup>1</sup> Hughes, R. K. (1990). *Ephesians: The mystery of the body of Christ*. Preaching the Word (214). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

Satan is an angel, a spirit being. He cannot be battled through mere human strategies. Satan is a created being, yet he is much, much stronger than us. He does not have the limitations of flesh and blood.

Yet Satan is no match for God. He is a created being limited to time and space. He is not everywhere at once. But he has influence and authority over everyone who has given themselves over to him by sinning against God and joining Satan's rebellion.

## THE ENEMY'S PLAN

Of course, we know Satan has a plan for unbeliever, those blinded by sin. We wrestle "against the cosmic powers over this present darkness". Literally, these are the unseen "administrators of darkness". They plan what is going to distract man's attention from God. It is the wicked one and his demons that administrate the fads, fashions, and distractions of this world. They are the planners of the vanity fair. They blind people from the beauty and love of Christ.


**2 Corinthians 4:4**, In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Satan is called the "god of this world" (2 Cor 4:4) not because he created it. Satan is a puny creature compared to Almighty God with no divine attributes to create. He is limited to time and space. Satan is called the "god of this world" because he has enslaved and blinded the human race.

Remember that Adam and Eve had dominion over the earth, but the moment they bought into Satan's lie, they became his slaves. Jesus said, "You are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father you will do".

**Ephesians 2:2-3**, We all followed "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience... and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

Our only hope is Jesus!

 Pastor Michael, I see Satan's plan for unbelievers, but what about his war against true born-again believers?

Satan is right now waging war against believers. Paul says in **2 Corinthians 2:11**, We would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs.

The word for Satan means "accuser" or "adversary". Satan and his angels are now at war with God and his people. He is "accusing the brethren day and night" (Rev 12:10). That's why Peter warns us:

**1 Peter 5:8**, Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

Of course, Satan was stripped of his power through the Cross. Jesus Christ puts down the reign of terror through his Cross.

**Colossians 2:13–15**, And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, <sup>14</sup>by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. <sup>15</sup>He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

Only God's people have been set free from the power of the devil. Truly: Whoever the Son sets free, is free indeed! (**John 8:36**).

So we need to know Christ in order to be free from Satan. When we come to know Christ, we are united with him. We are clothed with him, in his armor, the full armor of God.

## THE ENEMY IS ALREADY DEFEATED

So this enemy is already defeated. I love the description in Revelation 12:10:

And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God (**Revelation 12:10**).

The apostle John tells us:

Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world (**1 Jn 4:4**).  
For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil (**1 Jn 3:8**).

The apostle Paul tells us soon Satan will be completely defeated and banished to hell forever:

The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet (**Romans 16:20**).

Christ has won the war. But Satan is still at war with us, prowling, seeking whom he may devour. You must “resist the devil, and he will flee from you”. We need God to fight this enemy. It's his battle. That's why God tells us to put on **the whole armor of God**. Would you agree that no matter what we go through, “in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us” (**Rom 8:37**)? We are overcomers!

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## 2. OUR STRATEGY FOR WINNING THE BATTLE (Eph 6:14-18)

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### OUR WAR CHEST

Let's look again at Ephesians 6, and look at the Christian's war chest!

- The Belt of Truth
- The Breastplate of Righteousness
- The Shoes of Peace
- The Shield of Faith
- The Helmet of Salvation
- The Sword of the Spirit

What an arsenal! All of it is found in our union with Christ.



Pastor Michael, What exactly is the armor of God?

The armor of God is an amazing way to illustrate our salvation and how we “put on the Lord Jesus Christ.” We need the armor of God if we are going to battle against our unseen evil enemy in this world.

Resist the devil and he will flee from you (James 4:7).

All the armor of God in Ephesians 6 is based on Yahweh’s armor in the book of Isaiah. Theologian Peter O’Brian comments:

“Throughout this paragraph on spiritual warfare Paul’s sustained imagery is drawn from the prophecy of Isaiah, which describes the armor of Yahweh and his Messiah (11:4–5; 59:17; cf 49:2; 52:7). The Isaiah references depict the Lord of hosts as a warrior dressed for battle as he goes forth to vindicate his people. The ‘full armor of God’ which the readers are urged to put on as they engage in a deadly spiritual warfare (vs. 11) is **Yahweh’s own armor**, which he and his Messiah have worn and which is now provided for his people as they engage in battle.”<sup>2</sup>

So basically, the armor of God is putting on Jesus, being clothed in him and his armor. Wow. Our union with Christ is all we need for the full armor of God.

#### FULL GEAR (FIRE FIGHTERS)

One night I was at the church late at night. Someone had donated several hundred books to my library, and I lost track of time. All the sudden the fire alarm goes off. I call the fire department which tells me to call 911. So I get ready to call 911 and suddenly appear two fire trucks and eight firemen decked out head to toe in **full fire gear**! They come running toward the building with pickaxes ready to tear down the front doors. I’m glad I was there to open the doors!

These firemen were ready, decked out in full gear. God says as Christians, we have the full gear, but we need to put it on. We are weak, and no match for the enemy without being aware of our union with Christ and his manifest presence with us.

I find it fascinating that in our towns throughout our nation with only a moment’s notice, firemen can be on the scene in a moment! They are our heroes! We also as God’s soldiers ought to always have our spiritual war gear on! We hear about it in Ephesians 6.



Pastor Michael, would you read Ephesians 6:14-17?

**EPHESIANS 6:14-17** | Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, <sup>15</sup>and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. <sup>16</sup>In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; <sup>17</sup>and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

<sup>2</sup> Peter O’Brian. *Ephesians: Pillar Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 457.

## OUR WEAKNESS

We have all this armor, yet we feel so weak, don't we? **Have you ever seen a tank operator?** They are usually small! But they are operating this massive tank. That's how we are. We are weak. We are small. And that's ok. Paul says:


**2 Corinthians 12:10**, I am well content with weaknesses... for when I am weak, then I am strong.

You've got to be small in order to be one of God's tank operators! Confession of our helplessness apart from God must precede putting on our armor. God only uses weak people in the battle.

## THE FULL ARMOR OF GOD

We may be weak, but our strength comes from accessing Christ's power, not our own. We can't fight with the pitiful weak armor of the flesh. We need the full armor of God.

### *The Belt of Truth*

 **Pastor Michael, the first piece of armor we are told to put on is the "belt of truth". What is this belt?**

**Ephesians 6:14a**, Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth....

The belt of truth points to the soldier's **readiness**. We can imagine the Roman legionnaire, strapping on a wide belt, like a girdle that stretched around the entire midsection. We can almost see the sword and perhaps a knife hanging from it. The Roman soldier wore a long tunic that flowed down to the ground. But when it came time to fight, the soldier would pick up his tunic and tuck it into his belt for mobility in battle. We find this picture frequently used in the Scriptures.

Peter says: **1 Peter 1:13**, Therefore gird up the loins of your mind.

Jesus says: **Lk 12:35**, Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning.

Like the Roman soldier, we must be ready for action! Never be caught in a condition in which you are not focused on the battle. Prepare your mind with the Word of God before the battle.

In war, you don't have time to gather your garment. You have to have your hands free to fight. The soldier needed something to gather his tunic so that he could be unencumbered and free to fight. The belt keeps the soldier from snags.

We need to be ready to fight with the Word of God *before* we get to the battle. We can't be gathering our thoughts in the middle of the battle. We do this by constantly applying and meditating on the Word of God.

**Psalms 1:2** says the blessed man's "delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law he meditates day and night".

If you are not in the Word of God on a regular basis, your mind is going to be tangled up, and you are going to trip up spiritually. Wrap on that Belt of Truth around your soul, and be ready for battle!



## *The Breastplate of Righteousness*

**Ephesians 6:14b**, ...and having put on the breastplate of righteousness...

The second piece of armor we are told to put on is the “breastplate of righteousness”. The Roman soldier’s breastplate protected his heart. What is the best protection for your heart in spiritual warfare? To be covered in Christ’s righteousness, reflected in a righteous lifestyle.

Notice the armor is not our own, but God’s. Paul said he did not have his “own righteousness, but the righteousness of God which is by faith” (**Phil 3:9**). So what is this righteousness? Our own righteousness is filthy rags. In Jesus we are perfectly righteous. We are justified, declared righteous before a holy God when we trust Christ. And he makes us “just as if we’ve never sinned” and “just as if we’ve kept the law perfectly.”


We obtain perfect righteousness in Christ— “the righteousness of God which is by faith”. To be justified means to be “declared righteous” not based on my works but based on the work of Christ in my place. If you are in Christ God sees you through your robe of adoption – there is no stain, no spot in you.

**Romans 4:23–24**, The words ‘it was credited to him’ were written not for Abraham alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.

Daily, indeed every moment, the Christian is to identify with the righteousness Christ obtained and then to let the living Christ flow through us: producing a life of righteousness by faith in our daily walk of sanctification. When we put on the breastplate of righteousness, our heart beats with the heart of God!

The breastplate covers the most important part of the body. It guards our heart!! Even though Satan is a defeated foe, we need to watch our heart. Don’t let Satan condemn you! Always look to the cross. The cross of Jesus protects your heart. **Proverbs 4:23** urges us to “Keep your heart with all diligence; for out of it is the fountain of life”. Look to the righteousness of Christ for assurance, but also for empowerment in holy living.

## *The Shoes of Peace*

 Pastor Michael, the next piece of armor we are told to put on is are “the shoes of peace”. What are these shoes?

**Ephesians 6:15**, ... and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.

These shoes are the soldiers battle boots to keep the soldier firmly in place. The Christian soldier has to stand strong in the Gospel of peace! We have no other message but Christ! Like Paul says, “Necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel” (**1 Corinthians 9:16**).

If you are going to stand firm, you definitely need reliable footwear. The boots of peace represent the aggressive, forward moving, posture and attitude of victory. Paul gets the idea from **Isaiah 52:7**, “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who proclaims peace...”



You cannot play football very well in dress shoes. The bottoms are too slick. You'd be sliding all over. What you need is the firmness of cleats. A soldier does not go out to war in tennis shoes, but in combat boots! We as Christians must always be prepared, alert, awakened, and ready for battle.

These shoes point to a readiness to go anywhere for Christ and preach the Gospel to "every creature" (Mk 16:15). We can't compromise the Gospel, or we will be on shaky ground.

### *The Shield of Faith*

**Ephesians 6:16**, In all circumstances **take up the shield of faith**, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one.


The shield that a Roman soldier carried into battle was about four-and-a-half feet square. The shield was a **community weapon**. Roman soldiers lined up—side by side with their shields together, and all of them were covered as they advanced.

Satan can bring evil into our mind or into our lives, like the **fiery arrows** hurled at advancing Roman troops. These arrows were intended to **break up the Roman formation** by disabling as many legionnaires as possible. In the same way, Satan fires his arrows at us and breaks us away from the saints. The way we fight is by resisting Satan in our minds and gathering with the saints. We need to be ready in our mind...

**2 Corinthians 10:5**, Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

The shield was a group effort for the Roman soldiers. When they put their shields together, they were impenetrable. One of the positive things you can do to take up the shield of faith is to have rich and regular fellowship with Christians.

### *The Helmet of Salvation*

 Pastor Michael, another piece of armor we are told to put on is are "the helmet of salvation". What is this helmet?

**Ephesians 6:17a**, ...take the helmet of salvation...

The helmet protects the head, the control center of the body. The purpose of a soldier's helmet was to absorb blows without causing damage to the head, much like a football player's helmet absorbs the shock of blows to his head.

Have you ever seen a person with a traumatic brain injury? They become paralyzed and mentally handicapped. So it is if we don't put on the helmet of salvation. In Romans 12:2, the apostle reminds us that we are to **"be transformed by the renewing of your mind."**

**Colossians 3:1-2**, Seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup> Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

You will to be tempted in your mind, so put on that helmet of your salvation. You are no longer what you were. You are no longer a slave of the devil. You are free. **You are a child of God: chosen, adopted, loved, forgiven, seated in the heavenly places: a position of victory!** Your identity is no longer in the world: you are a new creation in Christ!

Without the helmet of salvation, always looking to Christ as Savior, we will be subject to the spiritual traumatic brain injuries. In the spiritual realm, that means if you don't deal with the dark places in your heart and mind, where you have been hurt, you will be paralyzed by bitterness, anger, fear, and even crippling despair.

I'm so thankful for the helmet of salvation that helps us to apply the salvation Christ gave us. I'm cleansed. I'm a new creation. I'm not what I once was!

### *The Sword of the Spirit*

**Ephesians 6:17b**, Take ... the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

This was not the soldier's long sword, but a short, daggerlike sword about 10 inches long. It had a needlelike point and was sharpened on both sides. It was used for close-in fighting and could do some serious damage.


What's interesting is that the term Paul used for *word* here does not refer to the Bible as a written book of truth, the way we normally think of the Word of God. Instead, this is *rhema*, the utterance of God, the Word as it is spoken. *Like quoting a specific truth from a Bible verse.*

The best example of wielding the Word was the temptation of Jesus. Satan attacked, but Jesus answered, "It is written," and then defeated Satan with the Word. Jesus hit the enemy with the Word, and the battle was over. It's a waste of time to memorize Scripture if we aren't using it in spiritual warfare.

We need to be tender to the Spirit's use of the Word in our lives. The Word will most definitely keep you from sin and transform you. God says:

**Isaiah 55:11**, My Word shall not return to me void, but it shall accomplish what I please...

### **WARTIME ATTITUDE**

 Pastor Michael, we finally come to one last item. It's not a piece of armor, but an admonishment. Paul says we need to have a certain attitude in the battle.

**Ephesians 6:18**, Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.

Yes, this armor is not complete without an attitude of looking to our General for direction. We need to be praying. That's the walkie-talkie communication with our divine Commander. It is prayer that gains us access to the authority needed for victorious warfare. Let's go "**boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need**" (**Hebrews 4:16**).

### *Conclusion*

None of us can stand against the spiritual forces of evil in our own strength—not even for a moment. But we look to Christ alone for our victory. As we close, I'm thinking again about David—a man after God's own heart. He had a big view of God. That's what faith does. We magnify the Lord over and above all our circumstances.

**Psalm 34:3**, Oh, magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together!