

# THE CHRISTIAN WARRIOR

Bible teachers have divided the book of Ephesians in various ways.

- **Kent Hughes:** 1-3 (Doctrine), 4-6 (Duty)
- **Ruth Paxson:** 1-3 (Wealth), 4-6:9 (Walk), 6:10ff (Warfare)
- **Watchman Nee:** Sit (1-3), Walk (4-6:9), Stand (6:10ff)

**Note:** The Christian life is not a playground; it's a battlefield. In almost every nation, there are soldiers and civilians. Soldiers fight against the enemies on the border. Civilians live their ordinary lives in the society. But in the Christian faith, every Christian is a warrior and is engaged in the battle.

Paul wrote in **Ephesians 4:1**, "I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called..." The rest of the content in the chapters is a description about how to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called.

We have particularly dealt with what it means to live a Spirit-filled life from Ephesians 5:18-6:9 (covering what it means to live a Spirit-filled life in the church, in marriage, in parenting, and in workplace).

Today and in the following weeks, we will be looking at Ephesians 6:10-18, which is Paul's final exhortation in his letter to the Ephesian believers.

**Scripture: Ephesians 6:10-18**, "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. 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. 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. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and

take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, 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.”

## THE CHRISTIAN WARRIOR

1. THE CHRISTIAN'S WARFARE (6:10-12)
2. THE CHRISTIAN'S WEAPON
3. THE CHRISTIAN'S WATCHFULNESS

### I. THE CHRISTIAN'S WARFARE (6:10-12)

**Scripture: Ephesians 6:10**, “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.”

“**Finally**”, after many exhortations above, this is the final exhortation of Paul.

“**Be strong**” (**passive strength**): Remember “Be filled with the Holy Spirit” (5:18). Be strengthened. Find your strength.

**Imperative (command):** Be strong

- You must actively seek to be strong in your Christian life. You cannot be passive from seeking to be strong or you cannot expect yourself to be strong automatically.
- There is no option for a Christian to live a weak, fearful, cowardice life.
- What do you do when you know you have contracted Coronavirus? You take active precautions to strengthen your body against the virus (such as vitamins, antibodies, healthy diet...etc).
- When you see yourself weak or becoming weak, you must immediately seek to strengthen yourself. Passivity worsens your weakness.

**How to strengthen yourself?** Not “believe in yourself” “be strong and brave”

- The strength to stay strong does not come from yourself.

**“Be strong in the Lord” (passive imperative)** – in the person Christ Jesus. Your strength is in the person Christ Jesus. Apart from Him you are as weak as grass in the field. Your empowerment comes from your relationship with the resurrected Lord.

❖ **John 15:5**, “I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.”

**Know:** You are weak and impotent in spiritual warfare. Remember that the devil is mightier and smarter than us.

- **John Calvin**, “for our enemies are such as no human power can withstand.”
- For still our ancient foe  
Doth seek to work us woe;  
His craft and power are great,  
And, armed with cruel hate,  
On earth is not his equal. (Martin Luther)

**This Christ destroyed the devil on the cross:**

❖ **Hebrews 2:14**, “Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil.”

**“and in the strength of His might”**—God is mighty, strong, all powerful (attribute of God). Satan is not greater than Him. Satan is not even equal with God. Nothing can stand against the Lord. Your strength comes from the strength of God.

**Isaiah 40:27-31**, Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel,  
“My way is hidden from the Lord,  
and my right is disregarded by my God”?  
Have you not known? Have you not heard?  
The Lord is the everlasting God,  
the Creator of the ends of the earth.  
He does not faint or grow weary;  
his understanding is unsearchable.  
He gives power to the faint,  
and to him who has no might he increases strength.

Even youths shall faint and be weary,  
and young men shall fall exhausted;  
but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength;  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles;  
they shall run and not be weary;  
they shall walk and not faint.

**Therefore “Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might”**

**Your strength is not in:**

- Knowledge (doctrines)
- Books (information)
- Skills (strategies)
- Principles (moral)
- People (saints)
- ALL THESE MEANS MUST LEAD US TO THE PERSON CHRIST. NOTHING OF THIS IS HELPFUL IF WE DON'T FIND OUR STRENGTH IN THE LORD, THE PERSON CHRIST JESUS

**Note:** Christianity is not a religion of rules and regulations and rituals; it is a **relationship** with the ruler of the heavens and the earth, the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Remember the tiny David's mighty words in his fight against the giant Goliath (over 9 and a half feet height, no need to jump if he is in the basketball team, with mighty and heavy weapons):**

- ❖ **I Samuel 17:45**, “You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel...”. FROM WHERE DID DAVID GET THIS COURAGE? DAVID KNEW THE LORD AND HE WAS STRONG IN HIM. Saul, David's brothers, and the army of Israel knew about the Lord and but David knew the Lord and abided in Him.

**Two things are essential:**

- Identity in Christ (Gospel-bought union with Christ - **position**)

- Dependency on Christ (Gospel-bought fellowship with Christ – **function**)

## BE STRONG IN YOUR FELLOWSHIP WITH CHRIST

**Illustration:** Once I was walking in the park. I observed two boys walking close by me. I asked them what happened, “They pointed me to some dogs of which they were afraid.” I said you need not fear of them. They were strengthened in my presence and were shouting at the dogs with boldness. I smiled at them and thought that’s my position in the Lord against the devil and his demons.

- Did we in our own strength confide,  
our striving would be losing,  
were not the Right Man on our side,  
the Man of God's own choosing.  
Dost ask who That may be?  
Christ Jesus, it is He;  
Lord Sabaoth (the Lord of hosts), His name,  
from age to age the same,  
and He must win the battle. (Martin Luther)

**Remember:** The devil is not afraid of your knowledge, skills and smartness. You are nothing before him. He fears only Christ in you and you abiding in Him.

- ❖ **James 2:19**, “You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!”

### Scripture:

- ❖ **Ephesians 6:10**, “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.”
- ❖ **Ephesians 6:11**, “Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.”

**Note:** We must abide in the Lord (source) and put on the whole armor of God (means, providence of God in Him).

**Two extremes:** Cling to the provider and ignore the providence. Idolize the providence and neglect the provider. **WE MUST DEPEND ON THE PROVIDER AND USE HIS PROVIDENCE.**

**Ephesians 6:11**, “Put on the whole armor of God (your own armor is useless)” (belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, shoes with the gospel of peace, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit/word of God)—detailed explanation in the next sermon

Why should you put on the whole armor of God? “that you may be able to stand against the schemes (*methodeia*, cunning, deceptions, tactics, trickery) of the devil (*diabolos*, slanderer).”

**Attributes of the devil:** The devil (the lord of demons) is a schemer, deceiver

- ❖ **Revelation 12:9**, And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, **the deceiver of the whole world**—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.
- ❖ **2 Corinthians 2:11**, “so that we would not be **outwitted [deceived] by Satan**; for we are not ignorant of his designs.”
- ❖ **2 Corinthians 11:3**, But I am afraid that **as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning**, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.
- ❖ **2 Corinthians 11:14-15**, And no wonder, for even **Satan disguises himself as an angel of light**. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.
- ❖ **What did the devil try to do to the Lord Jesus in Matthew 4? Deceive**
  - “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.”
  - “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, He will command his angels concerning you,”

**Remember:** Deception is the devil’s powerful weapon against the believers. Many times we become victims of his schemes.

**Note:** You cannot stand against the schemes of the devil without the whole armor of God.

**Scripture: Ephesians 6:12**, “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.”

### **Two problems:**

- Some Christians live as if they are not in spiritual warfare. They do not see the devil and demons are active against them. **Martyn Lloyd Jones**, “I am certain that one of the main causes of the ill state of the Church today is the fact that the devil is being forgotten.” DO NOT FORGET YOUR ENEMY.
  - ❖ **1 Peter 5:8**, “Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”
- Some others are only interested in spiritual warfare, often thinking and speaking more about the devil and demons. THE BIBLE SPEAKS MORE ABOUT WHO GOD IS AND VERY LITTLE ABOUT SATAN.

**“Wrestle”**: hand-to-hand Fight, warfare (generally used for the sport of wrestling in the first century)

**“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood”**: We are not wrestling against humans. We are not in physical warfare; we are in spiritual warfare.

**Ephesians 6:12**, “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.”

- The reason Paul writes YOU MUST TAKE UP THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD is because you are not wrestling against humans. In other words, to fight against humans, human strength and resources are enough.

**Ephesians 6:13**, “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.”

**Observe**: “Against” is used 5 times in v. 12, speaking about our fight and our enemies

- “we do not wrestle against flesh and blood”
- “we wrestle against **the rulers**”:

- “we wrestle against **the authorities**”
- “we wrestle against **the cosmic powers** over this present darkness”
- “we wrestle against **the spiritual forces of evil** in the heavenly places (invisible reality, realm)”

**Note:** There is a debate about whether this speaks about the human structures (like political, judicial) through which the evil one is working or directly about the evil supernatural beings themselves. Whatever these may mean, one thing is obvious:

- THESE (rulers, authorities, cosmic powers, spiritual forces of evil) SPEAK ABOUT THE EMPIRE OF THE EVIL ONE. THE EVIL, WICKED SPIRITS ARE ACTIVE IN THIS WORLD, EVEN IN THE CHURCH, IN YOUR PERSONAL AND FAMILY LIFE. WE ARE WRESTLING AGAINST THE POWERS OF DARKNESS.

**In pre-conversion state: Ephesians 2:1-2,** “And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience.”

**Transition: Ephesians 2:4-5,** “But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved.”

**In post-conversion state: Ephesians 6:12,** “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.”

#### **Because of the Gospel of Christ:**

- From devil being our father in the past, we now have God as our father (Eph. 1:2)
- From devil being our ruler in the past, we now have Jesus as our Lord (Eph. 1:2)
- God was our enemy in the past, we now have the devil as our enemy (Eph. 6:12)



- We were in the domain of the devil in the past, now we have become the temple of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 2:22)

**Unbelievers:** If you are not born-again, you are in the domain of the devil. Repent and believe in Christ Jesus and He will deliver you from the evil one by His blood.

**Believers:** To believe in the Gospel of Christ is to engage in spiritual warfare. So be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.

**Second part of the Sermon continued next week... (pray, prepare, prevail)**