

# The Christian's Warfare

Ephesians 6:10-24

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## Introduction

- A. In Ephesians 1-3, this Letter taught us about “the Christian’s **wealth**”
- B. In Ephesians 4:1-6:9, this Letter instructed us about “the Christian’s **walk**”
- C. Here, in Ephesians 6:10-24, this Letter will focus-in on “the Christian’s **warfare**”
  - 1. The **spiritual war** | 6:10-12
  - 2. The **spiritual armor** | 6:13-20
  - 3. **Conclusion** | 6:21-24

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## The Spiritual War

6:10-12

**6:10** <sup>10</sup>Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

- A. There exists a spiritual war between the kingdoms of **God and Satan**
- B. Ephesians 6:10-18 teaches us how to stand firm in Christ in this war:

1. We need to recognize the source of our strength (6:10)
2. We need to recognize who our enemy is (6:11-12)
3. We need to put on the full armor of God (6:13-18)

C. The source of our strength: “the Lord” and “the power of His might”

1. In order to stand in God’s strength, we must first recognize **OUR deficiency**

Jesus said: “Without me you can do nothing.” (John 15:5)

2. Once we recognize our deficiency, we can stand in **God’s sufficiency**

a. First, we can rest in the victory that Christ has already won for us by His death and resurrection—

**Colossians 2:14-15** (NLT)

He canceled the record that contained the charges against us. He took it and destroyed it by nailing it to Christ's cross. In this way, God disarmed the evil rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross of Christ.

b. Also, we can daily walk in the victory that *Christ achieved* and in the *power of His might*—

**Romans 8:37**

We are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.

**6:11** <sup>11</sup>Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

A. Our enemy is the “devil”

1. “Devil” literally means “slanderer” (used 35 times in the Bible)

2. His name is *Satan*—“adversary” (used 52 times in the Bible)

3. The Bible also calls him:

- The great dragon
- A roaring lion
- The vile one
- The tempter
- The accuser of the brethren
- The spirit working in the sons of disobedience

B. Our enemy *schemes* against us—“wiles of the devil”

1. In the Greek, the word “wiles” carries the idea of **craftiness, cunning, and deception**

2. The devil searches for our moral weak-points in order to “bring us down” (see Job 1:8-12)

3. If he finds it, he will strike with temptations to sin

4. Where are your defenses down?

- Pride
- Bitterness and anger
- Discontent and covetousness
- Sexual sin

C. Before we move on we need to clear up two false ideas lots of people have:

1. First, God and Satan are *not* co-equals

2. Second, Satan is *not* all-powerful, all-knowing, and everywhere present

**6:12** <sup>12</sup>For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

A. We should never lose sight of this fact: The war we are engaged in is a *spiritual* one

B. “Principalities, powers, the rulers of the darkness of this age, spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” refer to angelic beings in their military rankings

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## The Spiritual Armor

6:13-20

**6:13-14** <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. <sup>14</sup>Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth...

A. The devil is a **liar**

**John 8:44**

He was a murderer from the beginning and has always hated the truth. There is no truth in him. When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar and the father of lies.

B. Therefore we must oppose him with God's **truth**

1. In oriental countries, people wore girdles to bind up their flowing garments and hold everything together

2. God's TRUTH that must **hold everything together** in our lives

a. We must be motivated and directed by *truth*

b. Jesus prayed—"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (see John 17:17)

c. God's truth will protect us from the harmful lies and heresies of the devil that comes against us

**6:14** <sup>14</sup>having put on the breastplate of righteousness

A. This piece of armor covered the front of the soldier's body, from the neck to the upper part of the thighs—it **protected the vital organs**

B. Paul is referring to the **righteousness of Christ** that has been imputed to us the moment we started trusting in Him as our Savior

1. Remember that Satan is the *accuser*, and he often attacks us by reminding us of our sins—he stirs up feelings of condemnation

2. But God's truth reminds us that we are *justified*, and that Christ's *righteousness* has been imputed to us

3. We rest in the finished work of Christ

a. It should be noted that the breastplate covers the *heart* (the seat of our emotions)

b. Our feelings ought to be protected by *Christ's righteousness*

**6:15**<sup>15</sup> and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

**A.** Roman soldiers wore hob-nailed shoes for stability and mobility

**B.** The Christian with solid footing is going to have confidence as he faces the enemy, and will be able to respond to Satan's various attacks should the enemy change his strategy

**C.** We stand because of the **Gospel** (see 1 Corinthians 15:3-5)

**D.** The word "preparation" means "equipment, readiness"

1. It means that the Believer is ready for the devil's attacks—he **stands**, therefore, he is ready to **fight**

2. Our Savior has already won the victory, and we stands in His victory

**6:16**<sup>16</sup> above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

**A.** The Roman shield was 2 feet by 4 feet made of wood covered with leather and metal

It served as a moveable wall behind which the soldiers could hide and protect themselves from the burning arrows shot by the enemy

**B.** It is our faith in Christ that quenches these "fiery darts" (lit. missiles)

1. Satan fires at us the missiles of condemnation, doubt, fear, evil thoughts and imaginations, and depression

For example, how often have we been reading the Bible or praying and some wicked and bazaar thought came flashing into our minds—thoughts that cause us to feel condemned that we could have ever thought such a thing

2. At that moment take up the shield of FAITH—*immediately* (don't give it time to grow into a blazing inferno!)

a. The Bible says in Romans 10:17 that “faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God”

b. As the fiery “missiles” come, lay a hold of God's Word

**6:17**<sup>17</sup> And take the helmet of salvation...

A. There is a battle for our minds

1. Our thoughts controls our actions

2. Satan wants to control of our minds, and we must not allow him to do—

**2 Corinthians 10:3-5**

<sup>3</sup>For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.

<sup>4</sup>For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, <sup>5</sup>casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ...

3. We must arm ourselves with “the helmet of salvation”

**B. 1 Thessalonians 5:8** refers to “*a helmet, the hope of salvation*”

1. This refers to our assurance; confidence in the **return of Jesus Christ**

2. Satan often attacks our minds with discouragement and depression

3. We resist him by setting our hope on Christ, and His promise to come again and rescue His people from this corrupt world

**6:17** <sup>17</sup>And take...the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;

A. Until this point, the armor-list has been **defensive**; now it becomes **offensive**

B. The Bible is called a **Sword**—

**Hebrews 4:12**

The word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

C. The Greek word translated “**word**” is “**rhema**”—it refers to a **specific word** for a specific situation

D. We should not merely possess God’s word; we should know how to use it—

**1 John 2:14**

I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one.

**6:18** <sup>18</sup>praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—

A. First, we put on each piece of armor through prayer

B. Second, we battle in the spiritual realm through prayer

1. “Praying always with **all** prayer...”

This includes: Adoration, confession, thanksgiving, intercession, and petition

2. “Praying always with all prayer and supplication **in the Spirit**”

This is Holy Spirit led and Holy Spirit empowered prayer

3. “**Being watchful** to this end with **all perseverance and supplication** for all the saints”

a. Pray with spiritual alertness in *perseverance*

b. Pray with spiritual alertness in *petitions*

C. Application:

1. Prayer is powerful—it’s the deciding factor in spiritual warfare

2. Satan seeks to disarm God’s soldiers of prayer, because he knows that “the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much!” (see James 5:16)

3. “The Christian soldier marches forward on his knees”

**6:19-20** <sup>19</sup>and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, <sup>20</sup>for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

A. Paul solicited prayer

B. This is an example for you and me—“solicit prayer from others”

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## The Conclusion

6:21-24

**6:21-24** <sup>21</sup>But that you also may know my affairs and how I am doing, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make all things known to you; <sup>22</sup>whom I have sent to you for this very purpose, that you may know our affairs, and that he may comfort your hearts.

<sup>23</sup>Peace to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>24</sup>Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.