

The Whole Armor Of God

Ephesians 6:10-18

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² 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. 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. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; ¹⁸ praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.”

In Ephesians 1, Paul prayed a prayer for the body of believers in Ephesus. In verse 19 he prayed part of that they may know “the exceeding greatness of (God’s) power to (those) who believe.” **That exceeding great power is the same power that God used to raise Jesus from the dead and set Him at His on right hand in the heavens.** In verse 21 he reminds us that Jesus is seated “far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named.”

The work God did in Jesus was supreme. He raised Jesus from the dead and set Him far above all other authority – not only in this world, but also in the heavenly world. In verses 22-23 he reminds us that God has put all things under Jesus’ feet and made Him head over the Church which is His body. In Ephesians 2:1, 5-6 he says, “And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of

the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”

Child of God, that great power that God worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead is the same creative power that God worked in you to make you alive the moment you received Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. And God gave you that power for a purpose!

When we read the last chapter of Ephesians, we find that the epistle that began in the heavens concludes on the battlefield. The Apostle Paul, in the first chapter, **directed our attention to our glorious position in heaven in Christ.** In the second and third chapters, **he traced the glorious union of Jew and Gentile in one body, through the work of the Holy Spirit.** **In the fourth and fifth chapters, he described the walk of the believers in unity.** Then, as he brought the epistle to a close, **he found it necessary to give a warning to those who had received these truths, for the life in unity and in love will be lived on hostile ground.** The apostle desired that those who had received these truths **should be prepared for battle.** **As Christians, we are not only servants but also soldiers.** We live not only in the **home** but also in a **citadel.** We must be equipped for the **life we are called upon to live,** and the **warfare we are called upon to fight.**

I have only vague memories of World War II, but I can still remember watching men stand in train stations and kiss their wives good-bye. They held and hugged their children with tears streaming down their faces. Careers were forgotten ... professions left behind ... comforts forsaken. **They left their homes, their wives and their children.** Why? A madman named **Hitler** was trying to enslave us, to take our **freedom** and to replace the Stars and Stripes with the swastika.

In the fight for political freedom this sacrifice was calculated and expected in the name of patriotism. Thousands of men died in blood soaked foxholes. Thousands more returned home *crippled, blinded, or emotionally unstable* from the horror of war.

But what about our call to spiritual warfare? We are facing today an enemy more evil than *Adolf Hitler, Saddam Hussein, and radical Islam* combined. Every day of our lives we are engaged in an *emotional, physical and spiritual* fight for our lives.

I am amazed that men, at the call of their president, will lovingly kiss their wives and children good-bye. They will forsake their careers and the comforts of home. They willingly risk death or disability in the pursuit of political freedom. **(And that is great.)** Yet these same men will shrink back at the call of Christ to fight the supernatural forces of *Satan*.

For warfare in the natural realm, men will leave home for years. But to fight against the principalities and powers of darkness that are ripping America to shreds, they won't leave home one day a week to visit the house of God.

For warfare in the natural realm, men will freeze in snow-covered foxholes, lying face own in the mud and the blood. Yet the same men find it impossible to spend an hour worshipping God in a warm church with carpeted floors.

For warfare in the natural realm, men will study the tactics of the enemy around the clock. Yet for spiritual warfare, they refuse to pray and seldom open the Word of God, which is their sword.

For warfare in the natural realm, men will spend fortunes for superior weapons systems. Yet for spiritual warfare they won't give 50 cents to a gospel quartet...they won't tithe to their church ... they won't make a pledge to the building program. All they want to give the divine Commander-in-Chief is *their advice*.

The church of Jesus Christ sings about our victory, yet millions live in defeat and humiliation because they do not understand spiritual warfare. They have not heeded the battle cry to suit up in their armor and resist the enemy. Most people don't even know who their enemy really is.

Listen to me very carefully; we are at war with the world, the flesh and the devil. There is no compromise with it. There is only victory over it!

The apostle Paul gave our marching orders in the New Testament: "Fight the good fight of faith ... Endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."

But the church doesn't want to hear about hardship and battles. The church wants to hear about greasy grace and gospel lace, not battles. The church will show up in force for bingo, bazaars and book reviews, but not for battles.

If strict discipline is necessary to excel in the arts, in athletics, in academics, how can the church of God expect to advance against Satan with an army of carnal, compromising, cowardly Christians afraid of conflict?

We've turned the church into a country club for religious fat cats. It is supposed to be the recruiting center for the army of God.

The church is not the punching bag for Hollywood's hell raisers bent on destroying traditional families. The church is not a bunch of tongue-tied patsies sitting on the sidelines of life waiting for the great escape called the Rapture.

The church is the army of God! Our mission is to pull down the strongholds of sin and Satan by putting on the whole armor of God and standing in the evil day.

Some Christians have become traitors to God. Compromise with the enemy is treason in the courts of heaven. James 4:4 tells us that whoever is "a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

Some Christians have become secret agents. What they do for Christ is so pathetic that if they were on trial for being a Christian, the Supreme Court could not get a conviction.

Some Christians are double agents. They can't make up their minds which side they're on. On Sunday they're on the Lord's side. Monday through Saturday they walk on the side of the world.

Satan is looking for those casual Christians without their armor he knows they are easy prey. What would you think of the middle linebacker for the Dallas Cowboys or the Washington Redskins playing in the Super bowl without his helmet or protective padding? You would think, "That guy's not too bright. He's going to get killed." That is exactly what the devil says about you when he sees you without the armor of God.

What is the armor of God? It is the Word of God applied to your life. The Word will protect your mind, your heart, your soul and your body - but only if you know and apply it to your life. Putting on the whole armor of God is the only way to survive in spiritual warfare.

In our last study we talked about being "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." We saw that the strength and power is available to God's children to give us victory in our daily life, as we believe His promises and walk by faith. In the eleventh verse we are told to "Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." **When Paul wrote this to the Ephesians, he was a Roman prisoner.** Perhaps the soldier into whose keeping he had been committed was standing before him even as he wrote. Seeing the soldier would guide Paul as he described the armament provided for the child of God.

The phrase, "put on," in the Greek means "to put on once and for all." **In commanding us to assume this "uniform of the day," Paul is reminding us that the battle to which we are called is *continuous, unceasing, and relentless* because of the nature of our enemy.** Neither the *duration of the battle* nor the *schemes of the devil* will permit us to lay aside our armament. **So he gives us the command, "Put on once and for all the whole armor of God."**

In our next chapter, we will look at what God expects us to wear as we do a lifetime of warfare with our archenemy, the devil.

If you are not saved why not today?

Please stand for prayer.

Father,

Your Word is true. I realize You have called me with an everlasting call and given me Your authority. With that in mind, I realize I am more than a conqueror through Christ Who loves me. In Jesus' name. Amen.