

The Rulers of the Darkness of This World

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Ephesians / Spiritual Warfare / Ephesians 6:10–20

Introduction

In our previous study, we laid the foundation for understanding the spiritual battlefield we inhabit as believers. We explored how God's institutions—from the church to marriage, family, labor, and government—all point to eternal realities and operate under divine authority in both seen and unseen realms. We discovered that our warfare is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers that operate in the heavenly places, seeking to influence minds and hearts through darkness and deception. We learned that Paul strategically places the armor of God at the conclusion of his epistle because everything he has taught throughout Ephesians becomes the very weaponry we need for spiritual combat.

- We were reminded that knowledge alone is insufficient; we must actively put on and use what we've been given.
- We saw that this is a "good fight" that seeks souls, not destruction, and uses spiritual weapons, not carnal ones.
- We are behind enemies lines, having been bought with a price our heart is set on another home and upon the King eternal who is above all.

E Statement - The apostle Paul understands there are many adversaries ([1 Cor. 8-9](#)) and that those at Ephesus are susceptible to Satan's devices and causing them to faint and not be partakers of this grace of fighting ([Php. 1:7](#)), to cause fear ([2 Tim. 1](#)) instead of strength, confidence, and boldness ([Php. 1:14](#)).

H Statement - The confrontation, combatants, and conquest are still the same today who we fight and how we fight have not changed and will not until Christ appears and then shall we appear with Him in glory - thus a text like this enlightens us to what Christ has given us - a spirit of power, love, and a sound mind!

1. The Confrontation
2. The Combatants
3. The Conquest

Sermon

1. The Confrontation

- In [Ephesians 6:10ff](#) we are not simply notified of Christ's enemies ([Eph. 1](#)), or how they work ([Eph. 2](#)), nor God's intent to show them something ([Eph. 3](#)), or a warning of their activity ([Eph. 4](#)), and the nature of their fruit ([Eph. 5](#)), but that we come or will come face to face with them.
- Christ's enemies are not far off, as Christ's Spirit dwells in us, so does the spirit of the world dwell in unbelievers and is nigh unto them.
- [Eph. 6:10](#) - "strong", "power", "might"
- [Eph. 6:11](#) - "whole armour" (panoply), "wiles", "stand against"
- [Eph. 6:12](#) - "wrestle"

1. The Nature of the Battle

- "wiles" (:11), "darkness", "spiritual wickedness" (:12)

1. “wiles” - “methodia” - cunning arts, deceit, craft, trickery

- [Ephesians 4:14](#) “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;”
- Part of the “lie” program - darkness - the cover up of error for its continuance
- “lie in wait” - to conceal oneself with the intent to attack, trap, or deceive someone
 - hunter, thief - waiting for your target to be vulnerable
 - Accidental killing and ambush intentional - [Exodus 21:12–13](#) “He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death. And if a man lie not in wait, but God deliver him into his hand; then I will appoint thee a place whither he shall flee.”
 - [Proverbs 1:11](#) “If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, Let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause:”
 - planned, patient, and purposeful

2. “darkness, spiritual wickedness”

- The subtilty used is to “deceive”
 - [Colossians 2:8](#) “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”
 - Lie in wait to deceive
- To beguile

- [2 Corinthians 11:3](#) “But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.”
- [Colossians 2:4](#) “And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.”
- [Colossians 2:18](#) “Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind;”
- To lead you from proving the will of God to proving your own will, the will of the world, the will of Satan
 - [2 Timothy 2:26](#) “And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.”
 - To believe “doctrines of devils” - [1 Timothy 4:1](#) “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;”
 - in the world
 - in the church
- Darkness
 - The absence of light
 - Privation - secret ([Ephesians 5:12](#) “For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.”)
 - Lack - ignorance ([Ephesians 4:18](#) “Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:”)

- Withdrawal - be not conformed ([Romans 12:2](#) “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”)
- Fruitless - [Ephesians 5:11](#) “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.”
- Contrary to light
 - Manifests - enlightens ([Eph. 1](#))
 - Fills you with knowledge and understanding
 - Access, nearness, nigh
 - Fruitful

2. The Combatants

- Satan has started the war
- Christ has settled the victory and initiated its end

1. Christ and his brethren

- [Eph. 6:10](#) - “the Lord”
- [Eph. 6:10](#) - “my brethren”

2. The Devil, his angels, and flesh and blood

- [Eph. 6:11](#) - “the devil”
 - [Eph. 6:12](#) - “against principalities, against powers”
- [Eph. 6:12](#) - “flesh and blood”

- [Isaiah 14:12ff](#)
- [Ezekiel 28:11ff](#)
 - “multitude of merchandise”
 - Opposite of [Proverbs 3:13-15](#)
 - Multitude of traffick - peddles
 - violence - “hamas” - filled in midst (not goodness, righteousness, and truth)
 - Corrupt wisdom - spiritual darkness
 - Defiled sanctuaries
 - [Job 15:15](#) “Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints; Yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight.”
 - [Romans 5:12](#) “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:”
 - How “darkness”, “subtilty”, “deceiving”, “beguiling”!
 - Power of darkness over all nations
 - [Isaiah 25:7](#) “And he will destroy in this mountain The face of the covering cast over all people, And the vail that is spread over all nations.”
 - Christ temptations - glory of the nations
- “spiritual wickedness” - evil spiritual practices - living operating upon that which is false

3. The Conquest

- “wrestle”
- “stand”
- “withstand”