

Ephesians 6:10-13

Can you imagine going into the middle of a war zone? Bullets whizzing by over your head. Rockets, grenades, shells, land mines going off all around you? It would be frightening, wouldn't it? What if you went back in time? Can you imagine being in the middle of a field of knights on horseback and foot soldiers, wildly swinging huge swords, maces, and battle axes, as arrows whizzed by over your head? I don't think any of us would really want to be down in the middle of that.

But think about this: is it even conceivable to imagine that you, if you knew you were headed into that kind of war zone, that you would do so with the clothes you have on right now? Take a look at what you're wearing. How do you think those clothes would fare in the middle of battle like the ones I just described?

Keep those images in mind and turn with me to Ephesians 6:10-12. This morning, and throughout the month of February, we are going to talk about a battle, an unseen battle that you and I are engaged in every single day, a conflict, a fight for your heart and your mind.

Ephesians 6:10-13

10Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. **11**Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. **12**For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. **13**Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

Let's break this short passage up into even smaller parts and look together at verse 10, and the first part of verse 11. Paul writes this to the disciples in Ephesus.

10Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

First, we need to be strong in the Lord. This makes it clear that

the strength we need is not our own strength.

How often do you try to live your life according to your own strength?

It's an easy trap to fall into, isn't it? But if you've been on that path before, then you know it always leads to a dead end.

But second, being strong in the Lord means be strengthened with the his mighty power.

Why would we ever attempt to live in our own strength when we have the power of God himself available to us? |

It's like choosing a hamster in a wheel over a nuclear reactor! Don't you want God's strength to be empowering you today, and this week?

Third, notice how Paul represents this strength at the beginning of verse 11. God's strength for us is like armor for the battle. As Paul puts it here, Put on the whole armor of God.

But think about what Paul is saying for a minute: to be strengthened with God's strength is like putting on armor, that is, it is primarily a defensive strategy. As you can see from the next phrase in verse 11, we are strengthened by God, we put on the armor, that we may be able to stand. But who are we standing against?

To understand the battle of spiritual warfare, we need to begin with acknowledging that we are in a war. Battles make up smaller components of the bigger picture. By definition, battles involve combat between two persons, between factions, between armies and they consist of any type of extended contest, struggle, or controversy (Webster-Merriam). **As Christians, we are in a spiritual battle of some**

sort on a daily basis. In warfare, battles are fought on different fronts, for different reasons, and with varying degrees of intensity. The same is true in spiritual warfare. Our spiritual battles and warfare are real, even though we cannot physically see the attacker. But, we can educate ourselves on how the battles are fought and how they impact our lives on a daily basis.

Only need to put armor on if we are in a war.

All of us have strongholds in our lives. Those are the places where our minds are embedded in lies and being set free and renewed by the truth. **Faith over our senses and to believing God's words is definitely a fight of true faith in him.**

2 Cor 10

3For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. **4**The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. **5**We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. **6**And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete.

Spiritual strongholds are conflicts, stances, and ideas opposed to God's intentions. **These mental patterns are based on what we know and believe and eventually begin to shape our actions.** The Bible uses the term to describe harmful thought patterns, arrogant attitudes, or messages from the outside world that have left a lasting impression on Christians' minds and hearts. Over time, these beliefs can become strongholds in the spiritual realm that people need to destroy using the truth of God's Word.

Our real battles are not of the earthly nature, and are not physical.

Psalm 9 (ESV)

9The LORD is a stronghold for the oppressed,
a stronghold in times of trouble

Romans 8

5Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. 6The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. 7The mind

governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. [8](#)Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God.

Spiritual strongholds get stronger the more you feed them.

My own insecurities

[12](#)For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

It's important that we know that we are not fighting against flesh and blood. That is a huge key that one must believe. Otherwise we continually fight against people that are being used by the enemy.

Ephesians 2

[1](#)As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, [2](#)in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the

ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. [3](#)All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh [4](#) and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.

We all have a sense that there is more than what the eye can see. However, since we do not see it, we often fail to believe in it. If we do not believe in it, then we cannot be aware of all that is going on, for and against us. Whether we choose to believe in the existence of spiritual beings and places does not change the fact of their existence and their activities.

Remember Ephesians is written to the church?

We as followers of Jesus are reminded to not make the enemy other followers of Jesus.

Our enemy Can take no ground he's not given

Many believers they are fighting for personal religious freedoms against culture and politics. That's not what the Bible teaches. We wrestle not against flesh and blood, not culture.

As the church is increasingly focused on these culture wars, it forgets our real enemy. There's a spiritual war that's waging that is of much

greater significance. We must shift our focus to this war. Our fight is not against flesh and blood.

How do we fight this battle and remain focused on him?

James 4

7Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. **8**Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. **9**Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. **10**Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

Your level of resistance will always mirror the level of your submission!

Jesus died and rose again, forever defeating Satan and his demons, the responsibility of enforcing His victory remains with the Body of Christ that's you and me, Jesus said in Matthew 16 I will build my church and the gates of hades will not overcome it! The church (ekklesia) called out assembly.

Jesus said,

Luke 10

18He replied, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. **19**I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. **20**However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”

We are Fighting from his victory.

By using the word wrestle from the Greek word *pale*, Paul was telling every reader (and us) that spiritual warfare can be *a bitter struggle* and *an intense conflict*. The first phrase in Ephesians 6:12 really carries this idea.

For our wrestling, our intense struggle, fierce combat, contest, challenge, and ongoing conflict is not really with flesh and blood.

Some people believe that there is no such thing as the devil or evil and that all that happens to us comes from the hand of God. That could not be further from the truth. God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all. God does not need evil to teach you and I a lesson.

Hebrews 2 says Satan is the author of death.

John 16

31 “Do you now believe?” Jesus replied. **32** “A time is coming and in fact has come when you will be scattered, each to your own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me.

33 “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

Not understanding how evil functions or foolishly concluding that evil is something man made up to explain things he did not understand, is a lie. Remember the quote from the movie, “The Usual Suspects? The greatest trick the devil ever pulled was convincing the world he didn’t exist.

But, God does not want you ignorant. Do you ever take time to consider why you struggle with certain aspects of life? Why in some areas you just can’t seem to get it right? The answer is found as a result of an opponent you cannot see nor discern working tirelessly behind

the scenes to lead you astray; to steal your enthusiasm for living, to bring down your good name; to control you and cause you to live in fear every day.

John 10:10

10The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

We may have life depending upon what we choose. **God is always the victor over evil but it is up to us to learn what is true and be able to choose properly.**

He is our covering!

Jehova Nissi (Our Banner)

In Exodus 17 the Israelites were facing the Amalekites a formidable army and The Jewish people were herdsman and masons who had left Egypt as slaves.

Moses built and taught the people the Lord is our banner or covering.