

Battle Ready

Ephesians 6

10 Finally, 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. **14** Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place,

Ephesians 6

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.

Paul first compels his readers to stand firm for God, with His strength, not our own. Paul explains that our struggle is less a physical one than a spiritual one, against our true enemy, the devil.

Verse 10 begins the last main section of the book. This is Paul's plea for the church to stay strong in their fight against the devil's schemes. After many

years of faithful service, Paul knew first-hand that the enemy was always working to undermine the people of God, and that his methods were crafty. Believers needed to be alert and ready to fight, standing against the powers of this dark world.

I believe the evil day is not a single day but refers to the times in our lives where we are facing circumstances that seem overwhelming. These are times of unusual pressures and challenges where we mainly feel we need to react to what is happening rather than responding with intentionality and wisdom (putting out “fires’ and dealing with a seeming onslaught of bad news, tests, uncertainty, and problems). This evil day can happen to us personally, as a family, a church, or even as a nation. Whatever the case, after we have done what we know to do, **We stand in the midst of the things happening, knowing that God is working on our behalf.** It is in these times that we are told to put on the whole armor of God and, having done all, to stand.

Let’s look at the phrase having done all. This implies we have done what we know to do, whether it is prayer, actions, involving others in our situation, or something else. After doing all these things, we are to stand. **Standing means holding our ground and not moving backward, even when things seem to be against us.** I have found the following keys help me stand well.

Keep moving forward! The Children of Israel were told to move forward when it looked impossible in Exodus 14. The Red Sea parted as a result. Feed yourself faith and hope! Magnify the Lord, not the problem

Psalm 34

1I will extol the LORD at all times;
his praise will always be on my lips.

2I will glory in the LORD;
let the afflicted hear and rejoice.

3Glorify the LORD with me;
let us exalt his name together.

4I sought the LORD, and he answered me;
he delivered me from all my fears.

Increase your worship and intake of Scripture because the truth will make you free **First in your emotions and then in your circumstances.**

Keep connected to others - Isolation makes the problems seem bigger than they are. Elijah became suicidal and delusional in 1 Kings 19 when he was alone in the cave. What he thought was true was not, even though it felt really true.

Speak life. Hold fast the confession of your hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful

Hebrews 10

22let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. **23**Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.

This is a freeing belief. Even if the worst happens, I will be okay. The three Hebrew children in Daniel said this to the king who was threatening to kill them; Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. But if not, they knew that even if they were not delivered from the trial they were facing, they would be okay. Once we bottom line things and face the worst that could happen (which usually does not happen), we take the fear out of that and can move forward in building our faith and lives.

Avoid major decisions or conclusions - Avoid making major conclusions or decisions during these times.

Recommit to building your life on the rock And the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. (Matthew 7:25). As we live committed to God's heart and God's way, we will be less impacted by storms we face in life.

There is grace for us to stand in any evil days we face. As we remain in hope and vision for the future, and continue to believe in God's goodness, we will find strength and confidence in the present.

Psalm 27

13 I remain confident of this:

I will see the goodness of the LORD
in the land of the living.

14 Wait for the LORD;
be strong and take heart
and wait for the LORD.

Ephesians 6

14 Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist,

The belts of Roman soldiers were crafted from strong metal and leather. It was sturdy enough to hold a sword and keep everything else in order. Think of the belt as a foundation for all other pieces of the armor.

The belt must be worn first to balance and hold the rest.

For the believer, this foundational piece represents truth.

What is the truth?

The truth is that we desperately need Jesus. The truth is that He died to protect us from eternal death. And we regard God's word as true above all else. The truth is based solely on the word of God!

John 14

6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7 If you really know me, you will know ^b my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

Using this truth as the foundation of our spiritual armor, we are able to stand against deception and temptation and be used by God.

John 8

31 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. 32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

With the belt of truth, we are free to live the life God intended for us. This truth is found in Jesus' saving grace.

Jesus' teaching proclaimed the truth. We must know this to guard ourselves against the enemy of this war, Satan, the father of lies (John 8:44).

The truth is that God is love, and sin is the opposite of love. We are saved through Jesus Christ, through His sacrifice and promised Second Coming. Truth is His forgiveness of sins. These truths prevail against Satan's lies.

Believers hold fast to truth.

We must be careful that we are not inviting the lies of the enemy into our homes!

The belt was also used for stability

What God has called you to is too heavy to carry yourself

We have the enemy's playbook

Stand for the truth, not your truth. Your truth can change with pop culture or circumstances, but the Truth never changes because Hebrews 13:8 says that the Truth is the same yesterday, today, and forever. John 14:6, You have to stand your ground for the truth; there is only one Truth, His name is Jesus Christ.

It's time to cling to the truth!