

The Armor of God

Ephesians 6

Pray

Of all of the descriptions that you could think of for a Christian

- probably fighter & soldier is not one of them that came to your mind

And that is what the last section of this book is all about,

- as we deal with the warfare of the believer.
 - And we will learn how to fight as a believer,

Satan has his sights aimed at us & he wants to kill, steal & destroy us!

- And we find this warfare language peppered throughout the Bible.
- When Paul writes to young Timothy, and he says, **fight the good fight of faith.**

He also writes to young Timothy, **endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.**

And then at the end of his life in 2 Timothy, he writes again to Timothy,

- In his closing statement. **I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith.**

the book of Ephesians, can be divided into three sections.

- The 1st is **the Wealth** of the believer chapter 1, 2, and 3.
- The 2nd section is **the Walk** of the believer chapter 4, 5 & some of chapter 6.
- And the 3rd part, beginning in chapter 6, verse 10 is **the Warfare** of the believer.

Paul is going to show us how to suit up for battle & engage in warfare,

- B/c Satan is out to destroy our life & make us ineffective,
 - **the Christian life is not a playground but a battleground**

Paul writing this letter from Prison was surrounded by soldiers

- Paul was able to look at them, study what they were wearing as soldiers,
 - look at their sword, their shield, their sandals on their feet,
 - and uses what he saw as this beautiful analogy of spiritual warfare.

He writes all about how to handle spiritual warfare.

- **to guard against depression, despair, defeat, doubt, difficulty,**
 - **and all the things that get you down.**

Have you ever felt ambushed with a bunch of spiritual attacks

- from trials to doubts to heavy duty Temptations
 - and you wondered what on Earth is happening...

it's called spiritual warfare and we all have a choice to make to either move forward

- or you're going to move backward in this spiritual battle

But before he talks about the battle, he has a few more words on our walk as believers

1Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

If you're a parent, this is probably your favorite Bible Verse of all times

- but this not only means that children have the responsibility to obey
 - but it also means that parents have the responsibility to teach their children

this is one of the most important jobs for a parent to teach their kids in the ways of Jesus!

- You don't need to teach your child how to disobey

but obedience must be taught and this is really essential

- And important in laying a foundation for a godly life because if a child can be taught properly how to obey their parents
 - then the groundwork is laid in that child's life for them to obey God properly

Have you heard the song: Trust & Obey?

- It goes, Trust & Obey, for there's no other way,
- To be happy in Jesus but to trust & obey!

2 "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: **3** "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."

Here Paul quotes from the 10 commandments

- giving practical & good wisdom to children to Honor their parents

So we have covered the Children's role is to Listen

- Now we will look at **the Parents role, which is to Launch**
 - Their children into the world aiming straight for the target to live Godly!
 - It's an archery picture that is used in the Bible for parenting!

Psalms 127:4-5 says **Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one's youth. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them**

Kids are viewed as a Parents **Arrow**

- And the goal is to train them as they have them in their quiver, hands & bow
 - Then 1 day the parents launch them out & release them in the world
- Shooting them out to live Godly lives!

4 And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

Paul starts off by telling Fathers to not provoke their children to wrath

- It means not to irritate them! **Coming down on them to hard**
 - Where nothing but perfection is expected
 - a. They only speak to their kids when they do something bad

It's good to Look for good things they do & not just the bad

- To Praise & encourage your kids & not just bring them down
 - Encourage them. Nurture them. Train them.
 - Explain it to them. Help them understand. Reason with them.

Our relationship to our kids should be like a bank account

- There is deposits & withdrawals taking place

A healthy relationship requires more deposits than withdrawals

We can provoke them to wrath by **trying to live vicariously through them**

- Some parents try to push their kids to pursue their passions & not theirs
 - But they need to train their kids in the Lord & get to know them!
 - Find out what they are passionate about & God-given talents R
 - **We shouldn't just mold them but unfold them to be**
 - **What God has uniquely called them to be!**

There is a principle in Prov. 22:6 **Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.**

It's important for Parents to discipline their kids when they get out of line!

- The most loving thing you can do is to correct your kids when they're wrong

Hebrew 12:6 says **The Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child.**

There is a battle between parents & the enemy to see who can fill their kids up

- With the truth or with lies!

Psalm 127:3-5 says **children are a heritage from the Lord**

- The word heritage means possession, property, or assignment!
 - Children are an assignment from the Lord & our ministry!

So children are to **Listen**, Parents are to **Launch**

- And now we will learn servants are to **Love!**

5 Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; **6** not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, **7** with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, **8** knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether *he is* a slave or free.

In the Roman Empire during this time there was 6 million slaves

- Who were the working class = they did almost everything
 - They were bondservants & they had masters over them

We can apply these verses to us b/c we have masters over us

- Like our bosses at our jobs

Paul is saying **show your love for God in how you work**

- **Approach your job as if your boss was Jesus Christ!**

There will be people that will be impacted by watching the way you work

- B/c they will see the love & example of Jesus in the way you live!

Maybe you're the only Christian that they're ever going to meet

- and God put you in that office in that spot
 - because nobody else is going to be able to represent Christ.
 - So God put you there.

Don't see your job as just clocking in but See it as a mission field.

- The gospel is being presented just by the way you carry yourself,
 - the way you respond.

There should be a difference between believers who work in a place and nonbelievers,

Paul says we will receive rewards in heaven for the way we work & the good we do!

I heard a story of a missionary sailing home after spending 40 years in Africa.

- On the ship with him was President Teddy Roosevelt, returning from a safari. As the boat pulled up to the docks of NY City thousands of people were cheering, bands were playing & reporters were waiting. Everyone was saying Wow! Teddy Roosevelt killed a Rhino & elephant!
- The missionary turned to his wife and said, You know I am a little bit bitter, After 2 weeks of big game hunting Teddy receives a hero's welcome home b/c he killed a rhino & elephant. Yet we spent 40 years in the jungle laying down our lives to help people and no ones here to welcome us home!

That night the Lord spoke to the missionary's heart and simply said, "Your not home yet"

So children are to **Listen**, Parents are to **Launch**, servants are to **Love**!

- And now we will learn Masters are to **Lead**!

9 And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

Paul gives us a few tips to be the world's best boss & master

#1. Be kind & loving

- Paul says give up threatening! Don't be a slave driver & mean!
 - Studies show that bosses who are mean & crack the whip
 - Drive productivity down
 - And you will get better results if your kind & loving to people!

Being kind & loving to people was Jesus's approach to leadership!

- He was the boss of the disciples & He was a servant leader
 - He washed there feet & treated them very well & loved them!

Jesus told them **the way to be the greatest was to be the servant of all**

#2. Paul said masters remember you have a master in heaven

- As God is over them!

The best leader is the best follower of Jesus Christ

- that leads like Jesus did!

Now we are going to move from the workplace to the warfare of the believer

- in this final section which oftentimes the workplace can be warfare.
 - And we will see how we can battle victoriously

we are about to learn how to prepare for the battles we will face

- and what kind of armor & equipment we need to wear.
 - Nobody would go out onto a battle battlefield naked.
- Nobody would go play NFL football without putting on some padding,
 - Suiting up, putting on a helmet,

first of all we will see it involves dependence on the Lord in verse 10

¹⁰ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

if we want to walk victoriously = it involves dependence on the Lord

- depending on his strength and his mind & not our own!

Ephesians 3:16 Paul said that **God would grant you according to the riches of his glory to be strengthened with might and in power through his spirit in the inner man**

Philippians 4:13 Paul said **I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me**

Colossians 1:11 **we're strengthened with all might by his glorious power**

In **Isaiah 41:10** God said **I will strengthen you I will help you**

When Paul wrote strengthen yourselves in the lord

- he probably took the idea from **1 Samuel 30:6** where it says
 - **that David strengthened himself in the lord his god**

this whole passage about spiritual warfare presents two essential components

- i would call them pillars to the idea of spiritual warfare
 - and you know if you've got a structure held up by two pillars
 - you can't take one of them away

the first is that you must be strong in the lord and in the power of his might

secondly you must put on the whole armor of god and paul will explain that shortly

- And a lot of teaching on christian spiritual warfare neglects the first pillar
 - they neglect this idea of being strong in the lord and the power of His might

- but it's absolutely essential
- we can't just jump over it & say I love the armor, the swords and the helmets
- that's wonderful to talk about
 - but you better start with being strong in the lord & in the power of his might
 - if you don't begin there you can't use the armor
- you think of a soldier given the best armor = he's got all the weapons = he's suited up
- but he's a 98 pound weakling and he can hardly stand up under it all
 - he doesn't have any strength
- so what's the first thing that they do for the soldier in the military
- they put you in basic training several weeks months of training and boot camp
- theres physical conditioning because they know
- what's the use of giving you all the armor all the weapons
 - if you don't have any strength to use them

if you want to be an effective spiritual warrior

- the first thing you need to do is you need to be strong in the lord
 - we have to cling to his strength Acts 1:8 says **you shall receive power**
- You say, I came in weak today. Well, you don't have to leave weak today.
 - You can leave with the power of the Holy Spirit to Stand

¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the [w]iles 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.

god gives the believer a full set of armor, all we need to fight the battles we face!

- To be able to stand firm against all the strategies and tricks of the devil.

What are the wiles of the devil? The Greek word is methods, schemes, plottings, plannings,

- It speaks of somebody who studies somebody else to figure out the proper attack. Its like an animal who would study its prey before it would launch an attack.
 - And Peter identified Satan as **a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.**

there is an unseen war going on between God and Satan.
Satan hates us & wants to destroy us & cause confusion to mess up our life.

The good news is the Bible says 1 john 4:4 **Greater is he who is in you than he that is in the world**

Satan has one goal to knock the Christian down from their place of standing

1st Corinthians 15:57 **thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ**

Romans 8:37 **you and I are more than conquerors**

1st Corinthians 15:57 **says our victory is in him**

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**,

We're getting into the weapons section here. Now all the guys are like weapons. Yay!

the first piece is **the belt of truth**? Because it holds everything together.

- If truth goes, everything goes.

In John 14:6 **Jesus said I am the way the truth and the life**

in **John 8:32** Jesus said **you shall know that truth and the truth shall set you free**

we need to know what the truth is so that when deception comes, we can recognize it.

if you've ever watched professional weightlifting

- they will wear a heavy belt that gives them support and stability.
 - It's what holds them together.

And so, the first thing that a centurion would put on would be the belt.

- It was not only strengthening his core, the center of his being,
 - But it also held the weapons that he was going to wear
 - as he went out into battle.

the belt of truth gives your life stability. It gives your life strength.

- If your life isn't based on truth, then you're going to have sinking sands,
 - You have no strong core.

Jesus said in the sermon on the mount, **the person who builds**

- **his life on my truth is a guy who builds his house on the rock.**
 - And when the hurricanes, and the earthquakes come,
 - you're going to withstand it.

But if you don't build your life on truth, it's going to be shifting sands

- and it'll be easy to blow you over.

But then not only do we have that belt of truth,

- but you have **the breastplate of righteousness**.
 - that protects all of the vital organs, lungs, liver, kidneys
 - The heart is a death blow. If You hit me here.

the Bible says that **out of the heart flows, the issues of life,**

- and the devil loves to attack the heart. who you are, your emotions,

The Bible says **to guard your heart**

- in Jewish thinking, the heart was the center of your Thoughts

The Bible says, "**As a man thinks in his heart, so is he.**"

So the breastplate of righteousness protects your thought life and how you feel.

- And Satan attacks those two areas a lot-- what we think, how we feel.

- He whispers to us lies

¹⁵ and having **shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;**

In biblical times, the shoes were so important, especially in battle.

- Romans would kind of have these sandals that had spikes on the bottom of them,
 - like cleats that would allow them to charge up a hill. to hold their ground.

It's kind of like a football cleat or golf shoe so you don't slip.

- **No Roman centurion would go into a battle in crocs.**

If there was anything that was a trap that was set for them, it protected their feet

- These shoes provide stability, protection. **They are a firm foundation to stand on.**

- **And what is the foundation in which we build on and we stand in?**

- **It's the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is the ground that we stand on.**

It is solid. It is firm. I cannot be moved from this.

- The gospel is all about the finished work of Christ on the cross for our sins
 - and the resurrection, That's what we stand on.

And this gospel brings people who are at war with God into peace with God.

- These are the shoes that we are to put on.
 - And the amazing thing is when you put these shoes on every where you go,
 - you take the gospel of peace with you everywhere he leads.

this is how we gain ground in this spiritual battle by marching forward

- as we bring the gospel to people

Romans 10:14-15 says How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? ¹⁵ And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!" the idea is they're beautiful because of what you do with your feet

- you carry the gospel

You have beautiful feet if you are taking the gospel with you wherever you go.

Jesus said in **John 14:27** **Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.**

¹⁶ above all, taking **the shield of faith** with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

Paul says the fourth thing you need in the spiritual battle

- is the shield of Faith

The Shield of faith is trusting the promises of God

- even when everything seems to be going wrong in life
 - its trusting God when all these arrows are coming at me

when satan comes against us one of his most effective weapons is discouragement

Satan loves to throw fiery Darts of discouragement

- saying you're never going to get any better, things are never going to change it's only going to get worse, why do you even try
- that's a fiery Dart of discouragement doubt delay why is this taking so long when things are uncertain & it's all up in the air
- you need the shield of faith in your life as it will help you handle those darts
 - **a lot of people believe their doubts and they doubt their beliefs but doubts are meant to be doubted & beliefs are meant to be believed**
- **doubt your doubts and believe your beliefs**
 - because whenever you start believing your doubts
 - and doubting your beliefs

Satan has just cracked the door open in your life to mess with you & cause confusion

- he wants to create doubt in your heart

you can't stop a bird from flying over your head

- but u can stop it from building a nest in your hair
- you can't stop that Temptation from coming to your mind
- but you don't have to invite it in for tea and cookies
 - we need to reject it & focus on the truth

the Bible says **without faith it is impossible to please God**

- so you have to trust God no matter what my feelings say
 - I'm going to trust God no matter what my eyes tell me
 - I'm going to hold on to the shield of faith
- the devil will try to get you to doubt God & rock your faith,
- but we are to stand by faith. We are saved by faith.
 - We're called to walk by faith.
 - And faith quenches the fiery darts of the adversary.

Jesus said if you have faith the size of a mustard seed,

- you could say this mountain be removed and it would obey.

another thing about these shields is the Roman soldiers would use them together

- They would link their Shields together
 - you have Christian brothers and sisters that are Marching with you
- we need to be putting our Shields together because we're all in this battle together

¹⁷ take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;

now the fifth thing a soldier needs is he puts on the helmet

- and the helmet is probably the most important part of a soldier's wear
 - because if you get a head wound that's often a mortal wound

the purpose of a helmet it is to protect your mind

- we need to protect our mind from Evil thoughts
- if you're going to win the spiritual battles of Life

- you got to learn how to control your thoughts
our mind, thoughts and our imaginations must be guarded
- Because it's here where Temptation starts
it is amazing to me what people allow in their mind what they'll read, watch & listen to

the Bible says in **Colossians 3:2** keep your mind on things above not on worldly things

How much of the spiritual battle goes on right up here? A lot of it.

- So we need to be Taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,
 - **2 CORINTHIANS 10:4-5**

The enemy like a salesman will try and get you to take your mind out for a test drive

- go ahead and run this temptation through your mind to dwell on sin

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

the sword of the spirit is the Bible

- but the Bible does not become your sword until you memorize it
- if all the words of this book are on your shelf it does you no good at all
 - there's no power in them just sitting there
- it's only when you take truth out of here and you put it in here
 - and you remember it then it becomes a sword

now Jesus taught us how to fight Satan in Temptations

he answered Satan's Darts with quoted scripture

- and Satan would say why don't you do this
 - and Jesus would quote the bible it is written he had it in his mind
- He overcame the devil with the word of God.
 - The Bible says that God's word doesn't return void.
 - It's living in powerful, sharper than any two edged sword.

Moody said sin will keep you from this book and this book will keep you from sin
you know God wants you to read the Bible the devil does not want you to read the Bible

when we come under spiritual attack you use the word of God

david said your word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against you

it's a good thing to carry a Bible in your car or your backpack or your purse

- but the best place to carry the word of God is in your heart = memorize it

if you neglect scripture your spiritual life will unravel

1 John 2:14 says, 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.

Now THE WORD OF GOD AND PRAYER ARE INSEPARABLE.

- the leaders of the early church according to acts 6:4 gave themselves continually to prayer and the ministry and study of the word of God

The final thing we will look at how we walk victoriously is also through prayer

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— ¹⁹ 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, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak. ²¹ 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; ²² whom I have sent to you for this very purpose, that you may know our affairs, and that he may comfort your hearts. ²³ Peace to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

I think it is incredible that Paul doesn't pray for deliverance. He prays for utterance.

- Paul was more concerned about being a faithful man than being a free man.
 - He didn't say, pray that I get sprung out here.
 - Just pray that I'm faithful and bold for Jesus!

prayer is how you fight & win the battle and by putting on the armor of God

the best time to get spiritually dressed for battle is Morning

- because your entering the battle of a new day!

it doesn't make a whole lot of sense to end your day with a quiet time

- because you get all dressed up in your War gear & then you get in bed
 - that would be uncomfortable

we need to do it at the start of the day!

I love how Paul sent Tychicus to comfort their hearts!

- Prayer brings comfort to our hearts

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

Pray & share Gospel