

Message: The Difference to Our *Spiritual Warfare*

Series: Relationships: *The Difference Jesus Makes!*

Text: Ephesians 6:10-20

I. Introduction – Armor Bearer

Last week we had dived deep into [Ephesians 6:10](#) about being strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. We saw how this was a resource for believers that grows with us over time as we face one battle after another. In God's Sovereignty, each battle, though significant in the moment, prepares us for the next as we see His victory lived out through our lives against the strongholds of our hearts.

Paul the Apostle, the author of this letter, is about to walk us through the Armory of the Lord. It is here believers are fitted out for the battle that lies ahead of them. We see God's plans for our lives, our marriages, our families, our jobs- we have the promise of His strength and commitment to bring victory in and through our lives. However, to the dismay of many who start out following Jesus, the reality that Jesus does not hand us these victories against strongholds is realized when He puts a sword in your hand.

“Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35 For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. 36 And a person's enemies will be those of his own household. 37 Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38 And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39 Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.” -[Matthew 10:34-39](#)

Before we jump into the armor, I want to identify the following 3 Kingdom Keys:

- 1) I, as your pastor, am your armor-bearer. I am here to train and equip you in the Spirit to face your strongholds and see the victory of Jesus in and through your life.

6 Jonathan said to the young man who carried his armor, “Come, let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised. It may be that the Lord will work for us, for nothing can hinder the Lord from saving by many or by few.” 7 And his armor-bearer said to him, “Do all that is in your heart. Do as you wish. Behold, I am with you heart and soul.”

And Jonathan said to his armor-bearer, “Come up after me, for the Lord has given them into the hand of Israel.” 13 Then Jonathan climbed up on his hands and feet, and his armor-bearer after him. And they fell before Jonathan, and his armor-bearer killed them after him. 14 And that first strike, which Jonathan and his armor-bearer made, killed about twenty men within as it were half a furrow's length in an acre of land. 15 And there was a panic in the camp, in the field, and

among all the people. The garrison and even the raiders trembled, the earth quaked, and it became a very great panic. [-1 Samuel 14:6-7;12-15](#)

- 2) These pieces of armor are meant to be unutilized, not collecting dust. The weapons formed against us do not rest; they do not sit idle collecting dust. There is a reason no weapon formed against us shall prosper.

“And as they led him away, they seized one Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross, to carry it behind Jesus.” [-Luke 23:26](#)

Simon is the only armor-bearer named in Scripture; his was the unique and precious role of carrying the weapon formed against us that would bear our Messiah. As the armor-bearer followed Jonathon, Simon would carry the 200 lb. cross after Jesus. It was to the hill called Golgotha, or The Skull, where Jesus would be hung to death upon this weapon formed against Him. *However, it was a death far from defeat; for in this Resurrection came and a victory that broke the power of that and any weapon form against Him and those who belong to Him!*

“No weapon that is fashioned against you shall succeed, and you shall refute every tongue that rises against you in judgment. This I the heritage of the servants of the Lord and their vindication from me, declares the Lord.” [-Isaiah 54:17](#)

- 3) These pieces of armor are to be prayerfully donned every morning before we experience the day ahead of us. I am going to close with what some may see as a challenge; I prefer to look at it as an invitation.

II. *Standing Firm in our Identity (Ephesians 6:10-13)*

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil 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 firm.” [-Ephesians 6:10-13](#)

The full armor of God is reflective of the Roman Armor soldiers would have, making up a complete militant outfit for battle. Just as the necessity of the Lord’s strength is not an option for us as believers, we need it, nor is this armor. We must prepare for battle.

Stand in each of these verses means *standing firm*, **histemi**, which embodies the idea that we are rooted deeply in our identity in Christ. Regardless of where our YES! to Jesus may lead us—even into the face of trial, persecution, suffering, or death, we are strengthened in our identity in Christ to stand firm. *Immovable*.

Immovable against what?

The *schemes* of the devil. Schemes, **methodiah**, is the cunning arts, deceit, craft, trickery- namely, deception. The Greek implies a *lying-in wait*; along a path that the enemy knows we must walk along.

Ezra, the Scribe / Priest whose name means Jehovah Helps, led the deported Jews from Babylon back to Jerusalem. The journey he describes captures the sentiment of the devil's schemes:

“For I was ashamed to ask the king for a band of soldiers and horsemen to protect us against the enemy on our way, since we had told the king, ‘The hand of our God is for good on all who seek him, and the power of his wrath is against all who forsake him.’ So we fasted and implored our God for this, and he listened to our entreaty... The hand of our God was on us, and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy and from ambushes by the way.” -Ezra 8:22-23; 31

CS Lewis wrote, “You can give the Devil too much or too little attention.” This is very true. We must be very cautious to embrace all that the Bible teaches and refuse what it does not. If we truly receive it as the Living Word of God, it is sufficient for us to journey well through this world to that which is to come.

John MacArthur captures a summary sufficient for us today regarding the devil:

“Scripture refers to him as *an anointed cherub* (Ezekiel 28:14), *the prince of demons* (Luke 11:15), *the god of this world* (2 Corinthians 4:4), and *the prince of the power of the air* (Ephesians 2:2). He *opposes God's work* (Zechariah 3:1), *perverts God's word* (Matthew 4:6), *hinders God's servant* (1 Thessalonians 2:18), *hinders the Gospel* (2 Corinthians 4:4), *snare the righteous* (1 Timothy 3:7), and *holds the world in his power* (1 John 5:19).”

We are not resourced to stand firm directly against the Devil, for our Lord did that and defeated him, sin, and death. That is His Victory, by faith, we are invited to share in. That victory of Jesus is lived out through us as we wage our warfare against his efforts to detour us from obedience to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Wrestle, *pale*, is hand-to-hand combat in which an opponent is down with the victor holding / keeping him down with his hand upon the neck. While it may be through people the schemes of the devil come at us, our battle is not with them but with the source of their blindness, hate, and wickedness.

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities- all things were created through him and for him.” -Colossians 1:15-16

All that we are waging our battle against is in the spirit realm living in active disobedience to the Creator. We are targets of these rebellious spiritual forces because of the identity we are firmly rooted in, our identity in Christ as God's sons and daughters!

So again, realizing the breadth of the battle and enemy in front of us, will you dear saint neglect further to take up the armor- all of it- that God is offering you?

III. The Full Armor of God (Ephesians 6:14-17)

*14 Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. 16 In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; 17 and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," **-Ephesians 6:14-17***

As already noted, a full Roman Armor outfit would consist of 6 pieces. It is this that Paul the Apostle refers to when encouraging us to take up the full armor of God.

Worn continually on the battlefield

Belt

Breastplate

Shoes / Boots

Kept ready for use when actual fighting began

Shield

Helmet

Sword

Again, while these pieces of armor were worn by Roman Soldiers against the things of this world, we must clearly understand the context Paul is dealing with here- spiritual forces, or our spiritual warfare. In all transparency, the state of this world is the fruit of what is happening in the spiritual realm, just as the behaviors of a person are reflective of what is going on in the heart. Therefore, Jesus begins with each of us as sons and daughters, transforming us from the inside out.

Jesus is bringing His victory into our lives before overflowing it out of our lives into the world around us through relationships/marriages, families, work ethics, etc. Strongholds in our hearts must fall!

Remember, look to your pastor and elders as armor-bearers- training and resourcing you with all that you need to face the battle(s) in front of you!

1) Belt of ***Truth***

Romans wore loose robes which, since most of the combat was hand to hand (wrestling), loose clothing would hinder a soldier's ability to fight well and achieve victory. A soldier would gather the loose ends of their garments and then fasten them tight with a belt.

*"Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." **-1 Peter 1:13***

“No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him.” [-2 Timothy 2:4](#)

Wearing the ***belt of truth*** means that we bind our lives by the Truth of God’s Word- we live before we preach. In this, as we battle against personal sin and spiritual forces around us, at work against us, we can remain anchored and victorious in our identity in Christ!

2) Breastplate of ***Righteousness***

This was a sleeveless over garment that was made of a tough leather or hide, often with bone or hoof pieces sewn on to make penetrating to the vital organs of the soldier extremely difficult. This symbolizes our hearts beating to the rhythm of God’s- *as God is Holy, in Christ, we are Holy*. We are to be protecting our hearts, living out with transformed lives God’s Truth.

“Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.” [-2 Corinthians 7:1](#)

We don’t obey God because we must, we obey because we long to. *It is who we are.*

3) Gospel Shoes of ***Peace***

Roman soldiers wore boots with nails in the soles to grip the terrain in combat. Everything about the armor worn was to resource the soldier to stand firm in facing down their enemy. For believers, our boots are anchored with the nails that bore our Savior to the Cross, bringing us God’s peace.

“For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.”

[-Romans 5:10-11](#)

“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?”

[-Romans 8:31](#)

“No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” [-Romans 8:37-39](#)

4) Shield of ***Faith***

The shield here is ideally the size of most of the body, a bodily shield. ***Faith***, *pistis*, is a conviction rooted in the promises of God from His Word. This implies that we as believers trust God against any effort of the enemy to attack our identity in Him.

“No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.” [-1 Corinthians 10:13](#)

*“though he fall, he shall not be cast headlong,
for the Lord upholds his hand.” [-Psalm 37:24](#)*

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” [-1 John 1:9](#)

5) Helmet of **Salvation**

A soldier can experience all sorts of injury and continue to press forward. A wound to the head, however, can be the end of that soldier. Even in the military today, marksmanship is rated by the ability soldiers have to hit the head silhouette at varying distances.

Paul is not talking about earning or holding on to our salvation. He is addressing the enemies' efforts to cause us to lose sight of the hope that we are saved by faith in Jesus Christ.

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, 5 who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 8 Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, 9 obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. [-1 Peter 1:3-9](#)

6) Sword of the **Spirit**, the **Word of God**

For the majority of soldiers, the sword was their only weapon. Again, keep in mind the close proximately hand-to-hand combat would imply. For the believer, the Word of God, or the Bible is the only weapon we need. To know it, to gain experience with it, and to embrace and be transformed by it are the greatest weapon we have and threat to the enemy.

“12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.” [-Hebrews 4:12](#)

“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.” [-2 Timothy 2:15](#)

IV. Conclusion: The Power, Place, and Role Prayer Has (Ephesians 6:18-20)

“praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, 19 and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

-Ephesians 6:18-20

This final piece is the invitation I leave you with for the entire month of November. Commit to begin each day by praying on each piece of armor. As your armor-bearer, reach out to me for any areas you need to be strengthened in, prayer over, or someone to come alongside you to stand firm with you in Christ. I, the eldership, ministry leaders- those sitting next to you- we are in this together as the church, the Body, the family of Christ.