

*The Epistle To The*  
**EPHESIANS**  
**SPIRITUAL WARFARE (PART 3)**  
*Ephesians 6:13-17*

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*Therefore take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;*

## The Story So Far

### The Battle

- We Are In An Army
- We Have An Enemy
- We Have A Victor
- We Have The Victory

In light of this Paul exhorts the Ephesian Christians to:

***Ephesians 6:10***

*"be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might."*

### The Enemy

#### His Army

- The devil does not operate alone
- He has an army that fights with and for him

***Ephesians 6:12***

*"we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers"*

#### His Mode of Attack

The devil comes in two modes of attack

1. Dragon      Open Attack                      (e.g. persecution)
2. Serpent     Disguised Attack                      (e.g. false teaching)

#### His Method of Attack

The devil's modus operandi is "lies"

- The devil is "*the father of lies*" "*does not stand in truth*" **John 8:43-45**
- Eight of the devil's biggest lies

# Standing In The Evil Day

## Our Defence

Having understood the conflict, the enemy, his strategy, we ask the question:

**Question:** How to we effectively defend ourselves against the enemy and his schemes?

**Answer:** Put on the whole armour of God

### **Ephesians 6:11**

*Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*

The Lord has given us a heavenly armour

- To help us as we wrestle against principalities and powers (i.e. the devil and his army)
- To help us stand against the wiles/schemes of the devil

**Question 1:** What is the armour of God?

## The Armour

The armour of God is first spoken of in the Old Testament **Isaiah 59:17-19**

- In **Isaiah** It is the Lord who wears the armour
- In the New Testament, the Lord shares that armour with his children (so that we put it on)
  
- In one sense the armour is from God
- In another sense the armour is God
  - He is our truth (belt of truth)
  - He is our righteousness (breastplate of righteousness)
  - He is the source of the gospel of peace (shoes of the gospel of peace)
  - He is the source of our faith (shield of faith)
  - He is our salvation (helmet of salvation)
  - He is the word of truth (Sword of the Spirit)

### **Romans 13:14**

*But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil its lusts.*

## The Evil Day

Paul tells us, being clothed in armour of God enables us:

- to stand against the wiles of the devil* **Ephesians 6:11**
- to withstand in the evil day* **Ephesians 6:13**

- The evil day is not the occasional day
- The evil day is not 1 day in 7
- The evil day is not the 9 to 5
- The evil day is every day

### **Ephesians 5:15-16**

*See then that you walk circumspectly [prudently, cautiously], not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*

Every day is evil

- Therefore, every day we need to stand
- Therefore, every day we need to be clothed in the armour of God

## Our Position

### Stand Your Ground

**Question:** What does it mean "to stand"?

**Answer:** Stand our ground / Maintain the position we are in

### Illustration

Battle of Rorke's Drift

- 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1879
- Engagement during the Anglo-Zulu War

The defence of a British mission station with church and hospital

- 150 British soldiers (Royal Engineers)
- 3,000 – 4,000 Zulus
  
- Started 4:30pm
- Lasted all night
- 16 British soldiers died
- Almost every man had some form of wound
- Estimate 500 Zulu's died
- The station was defended, and the soldiers made their stand

Depicted in the 1964 film, "Zulu"

*"Zulu's to the Southwest - thousands of 'em!"*

The British had a standing

- They had a position at the mission station
- The Zulu's wanted to take that position and steal their standing
- The British stood their ground and defended their standing

We have a standing in Christ

- The devil wants to take our position in Christ and steal our standing
- We must stand our ground and defend our position

### **John 10:10**

*The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

## **Stand In Christ**

We have a standing in Christ:

### **Ephesians 1:3**

It is a standing that contains *"every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ"*  
The devil wants to deprive us of those blessings

### **Ephesians 2:8**

It is a standing that comes *"by grace...through faith"*  
The devil wants to blind us from that grace and destroy that faith

### **Ephesians 2:14**

It is a standing that *"has broken down the middle wall of division"*  
The devil wants to defend and maintain that wall

### **Ephesians 2:15**

It is a standing that has *"abolished...the enmity, that is, the law of commandments"*  
The devil wants to reinstate legalism and the bondage of law

### **Ephesians 2:18**

It is a standing that grants us *"access by one Spirit to the Father"*  
The devil wants to barricade and divert us away from that access

### **Ephesians 4:3**

It is a standing that gives us a *"unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"*  
The devil wants to destroy that unity and peace, and bring division

### **Ephesians 4:12**

It is a standing that gifts us *"for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry"*  
The devil wants suppress those gifts, keep the saints ill-equipped, weak and ineffectual

### **Ephesians 4:23**

It is a standing that causes us to *"be renewed in the Spirit of [our] minds"*  
The devil wants our minds carnally orientated, not spiritually renewed

### **Ephesians 5:2,8,15**

It is a standing that enables us to “walk in love, light and wisdom”  
The devil wants to bind us to hate, darkness and folly

### **Ephesians 5:18**

It is a standing that results in us being “filled with the Spirit”  
The devil wants us to be drunk with wine and filled with the world

### **Ephesians 5:22-6:9**

It is a standing that blesses our marriages, our employment our parenting  
The devil wants to destroy marriage, family and society

We need to maintain our position in Christ

- Not give the devil a foothold

As Charles Wesley put it

#### **Soldiers of Christ, Arise**

*Leave no unguarded place, no weakness of the soul;  
Take ev'ry virtue, ev'ry grace, and fortify the whole.*

## Our Battleground

### **2 Corinthians 10:3-6**

*For though we walk in the flesh, we do no war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.*

The battleground for spiritual warfare is the mind

- That is where arguments are fought and won or lost
- That is where, “every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God” attempts to be lodged
- That is where worldly, fleshly, sinful thoughts need to be held captive (bound)
- That is where obedience or disobedience to God is determined

## The Armour Of God

### The Armour To Have

The first three parts of the armour of God

- Are things you must “have”
- These are fundamental / core
- You will be laughed out of the army without these

### Truth (A Belt)

#### **Ephesians 6:14a**

*Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth*

When a Roman soldier was at ease and sitting down

- They would not wear a belt
- When it was time to rise for battle
- They would gird their loins
- By lifting their tunic and holding it in place with a belt

Paul uses this illustration of getting ready for battle to say

- The soldier of Christ needs to be clothed with truth if they are to be ready for battle
- I.e. you need to know the Bible (the word of truth)

This means you need to

- Read your Bible in a disciplined and regular way
- Meditating on and memorising Scripture
- Attend a solid, bible-teaching church
- Have fellowship with other Christian's where you can discuss the word of God
- Listen to teaching in the car

- Do everything to instil truth in your mind

Just, as its no good for a Roman soldier to go to war without first girding his loins  
So, it's not good going to battle without a knowledge of the word of God

- The devil will have you running in circles in no time
- You can't fight for Christ with the feather-duster of the social gospel
- You can't defend against the devil with bread-stick of human psychology
- You need to have the solid word of God in you, around you, holding you together

## Righteousness (A Breastplate)

### **Ephesians 6:14b**

*Stand therefore, having put on the breastplate of righteousness*

A Roman soldier would wear a breastplate to protect their vital organs

- The core of their being was defended with the breastplate

Paul uses that breastplate as picture of righteousness

- Jesus is not only the "Sun of righteousness" **Malachi 4:2**
- Jesus is our righteousness

### **Romans 3:21-23**

*But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even righteousness of God which is through faith in Jesus Christ to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God,*

All people are born in sin and by nature are sinners

- There is no work to be performed
- There is not gift to be given
- There is no service to be rendered
- That absolves us of our sin and guilt
- That confers on us a righteousness that makes us acceptable to God

It is by faith in Christ Jesus

- And His work on the cross
- That our sins are forgiven us
- That God's righteousness is put in us and on
- By which we are made acceptable to God

### **Isaiah 61:10**

*For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness...*

The enemy will attempt to deceive you

- By getting you to work for your own righteousness
- By trusting your works and not the work of Christ

Never be deceived that you are pleasing to God because of something you have done

- You are only ever pleasing to God because of what Christ has done
- Any good performed for Christ by you, is performed through Christ and through Christ alone!

## Gospel (Sandals)

### **Ephesians 6:15**

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

A Roman soldier would not go to war barefooted

- A thorn or stone would disable them immediately
- A muddy battleground would slip them up

The sandals worn by Roman soldiers

- Were bound to the foot, ankle and shin
- Had nails at the bottom (like golf shoes) to provide firm grip on unstable ground

They were called, "caligae"

- The third Roman emperor Gaius Caesar Augustus Germanicus was nicknamed 'Caligula'
- Which means, "little boot"

We stand with the "*preparation of the gospel*"

- The only way we can be prepared for the battle
- The only way we can be sure footed in the battle
- Is if we have firm grasp of the "*gospel of peace*"

Our entire salvation and walk with Christ is founded and rooted in the gospel

**Question:** Can you give a clear explanation of the gospel?

**Question:** What is sin?

**Question:** Why we need a Saviour?

**Question:** Why Jesus died on the cross?

**Question:** Why the resurrection is so important?

**Question:** How this impacts your life?

If not, you need to make these things certain and sure in your mind

- Otherwise you are laying yourself wide open to attack

We should never tire

- Learning about the facets of the gospel
- Discussing the gospel
- Singing about the gospel

## **2 Corinthians 11:4**

*But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you put up with it well.*

## **The Armour To Take**

These next three parts of the armour of God

- Are things you must "take"
- They are more about the items we must wield or use

### **Faith (A Shield)**

#### **Ephesians 6:16**

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

When the phrase, "*above all*" is used

- It means, in addition to the previous
- Not that this is more important to the previous

The Roman soldier would wield a shield called a "scutum"

- Rectangular in shape
- Curved in design
- 2½ft Wide x 4ft High

It could protect the whole body

- When united with other shields
- Create an impenetrable shield-wall
- Able to fend off stones, spears, arrows and fiery missiles

The enemy is constantly hurling assaults against our faith

- Throwing arguments
- Casting doubt
- Tempting us to sin
- Inspiring fear

Our faith in Christ

- His work
- His word
- Will defend our minds against these assaults

**Romans 10:17**

*So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

The more familiar we are with the Word of God

- The stronger our faith will be
- The stronger our faith, the more we will be able to repel the fiery darts of the wicked one

Commit yourself to studying the word of God

- If needs be find a study partner

Remember the shield wall of the Roman army

- Stand alongside seasoned warriors
- When your faith falters, their shield will protect you

**Salvation (A Helmet)**

**Ephesians 6:17a**

*And take the helmet of salvation*

A 1<sup>st</sup> century Roman soldier's helmet was

- Fashioned from brass
- Many different designs and plumes
- Largely to identify the soldier to his regiment
- Served to protect the head

Paul talks about this helmet in:

**1 Thessalonians 5:6-9**

*Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,*

This is a call to vigilance, dedication and alertness

- As opposed to the sluggishness and dullness of **Hebrews 6**

In the face of conflict and opposition

- It is easy to be demoralised
- To think the battle is too great
- The enemy too strong
- There is no let-up in this hardship and affliction
- Thus, to be discouraged

But Paul exhorts the believer not to give up

- We do not await wrath
- We look forward to a fuller, deeper salvation
- Our hope is in Christ

**Illustration**

- Canoeing to Allington
- Food, drink rest awaited us
- Sense the joy of achievement

The helmet of salvation is a helmet of hope

- The conflict you face is part of God's salvation process
- He is using the hardships to perfect you and make you complete
- The conflict will end, rest will come
- You again will be able to feed on Christ, drink of the Spirit

## Scripture (A Sword)

### **Ephesians 6:17b**

*And the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;*

The Roman soldier wielded a sword called a gladius

- It was typically 600mm to 850mm long (24inches to 33inches)
- Double edged

Our sword is Scripture, the Bible, the word of God

Used effectively it can

- Defend us
- Fortify us
- Embolden us

**Question:** How do we use scripture effectively?

**Answer:** With the aid of the Holy Spirit

It is the “*sword of the Spirit*”

Before we read the Bible

- Make sure you are in right relationship with God (so this does not restrict the work of the Spirit)
- Pray and ask God to guide you by His Spirit as you read

### **John 16:13a**

*However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth;*

In prayer

- The Holy Spirit will bring Scripture to mind
- It will enhance prayer, guide prayer and make prayer more effective

In worship

- The Holy Spirit will bring Scripture to mind
- It will enhance our worship, bring emphasis in worship and make worship more effective

In warfare, battles of the mind

- The Holy Spirit will bring Scripture to mind
- It will bring perspective in warfare, guide in warfare and make warfare more effective

Consider Jesus in the wilderness

- Three times the devil came to attack
- Three times Jesus defended Himself using Scripture
- The Holy Spirit guided Him to the right Scripture

**Question:** How do I know this?

**Answer:** The Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness

Work hard to understand Scripture

- Then you have a ready-made arsenal in your mind
- That the Holy Spirit can draw from in a time of need