

Title: Spiritual Warfare

Text: Ephesians 6:10-17

Ephesians Chapter 6, beginning with Vs 10...Ephesians 6:10....

(Read Ephesians 6:10-17)

Prayer

This is a wonderful portion of scripture. It is parable one of the most familiar stories in the N.T. We can remember our Sunday School teachers telling this story and illustrating with a fannal graph of the soldier putting on his armor for battle.

This story is really the <sup>completion</sup> ~~complex~~ of Paul's teaching on CHRISTIAN LIVING. Look at your outline, please.

Paul began discussing the Christian life back in Chapter 4 verse 17. And these chapters, 4-5-6, deal with HOW WE OUGHT TO RESPOND AND LIVE AS A BELIEVER IN CHRIST JESUS.

And so <sup>we</sup> come to this portion of Scripture which summarizes all that <sup>Paul</sup> has been saying. And he puts it into a battle sense. And he says that in this life that we are called upon to live for Christ, we are in spiritual battle with satan.

And I believe that Paul has a great point here. Something that we all need to understand, if we are going to experience VICTORY - and Blessings. SO LET'S LOOK AT IT.

(1) First of all, there is a basic requirement if you are going to get victory in the battle. In this spiritual battle,, there is something very basic. And it is stated so beautifully in Vs 10..."BE STRONG IN THE LORD, AND IN THE POWER OF HIS MIGHT."

If you were to ask me why many christians have difficulties and problems in living the christian life, I would respond by saying that too many of us are trusting ourselves and not the Lord. That is basically what is wrong. And I believe that there are several things which indicate this truth.....

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Ephesiansa chapter 6 beginning at Vs 10.....

(Read Eph. 6:10-17)

Join me in a moment of prayer

There is a basic requirement if you are going to get into the battle. The real battle that is going on. And it is a spiritual battle. And it requires something very, very basic. Which Vs 10 so beautifully states...  
"Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."

If you ask me what is really wrong, I think that too many of us are trusting ourselves and not the Lord. That is what is wrong. And I believe there are several things which indicate that.

(1 ) One, we often under estimate the power of the enemy. Either by ignoring him or making jokes about him or whatever.

(2 ) And secondly, we offer over esitmate ourselves. We think what we can handle it. A lot of us are running our chirstian lives on our <sup>own</sup> ~~own~~ gas. Let's face it. We think we han handle everything. We think we can handle human relationships...We think we can handle tasks and jobs that are set before us.

(3 ) And <sup>that</sup> I think ~~also~~ we fail to understand the powerful resources that we have in the Lord. Therefore, because we don't understand them and don't apply them, we keep going on in our own way in our own strength. It is no wander that we get ourselves into a big mess.

(10) <sup>so</sup> There is one basic requirement. And that is to be stroang in the Lord. And <sup>we need to ourselves</sup> ~~not~~ remaind ~~yourself~~ that the source of this strength is not in ~~you~~ <sup>us</sup>.

(11) The Bible says that it is "in the Lord."

As a matter of fact the command to be strong is in the passive voice. That means that the strength is being provided to you. That you don't all of a sudden go out and flex your muscles and say, "Boy, I am going to be strong in the Lord today!"....NO!!!...The Lord is giving that strength to you...<sup>and me</sup>

According to that very form "be strng." It is present tense...meaning: that you need it all the time. Meaning: you cannot live a dayd without it. But the moment you try to live without God's strength you are headed for trouble..

That you cannot face the spiritual battles that are really going on unless you have the strength of the Lord, himself. *So, The Source of our strength is in the Lord*

It is interesting the way this is phrased. It says "in the strength of His might." Those are two different words. And there is a big difference.

The first word "strength" is that "manifested strength." But the second one is the "inherent strength."

Now, this is something that every christian must understand if he is going to live the christian life successfully. And that is that "inherent strength" is not ~~enough~~ enough. We have no "inherent strength". The Bible describes us as being weak and total unable to live the christian life. It is God, alone, who has "inherent strength." Because of who he is. His power, his ability. And then he manifest that strength *to us*

So, I am not even able to manifest it in my life. Not counting the fact that I don't even have it, inherently. It is coming all from the Lord.

(2E) ) And the ~~scope~~ scope of this strength. That is "How extensive it is"..... It is very interesting that in the first part of Verse 11, *Paul* says: "Put on the full armor of God".

The extent of that strength. You know sometimes when we evaluate what the strength of the Lord means in our life, we only tap it for something that we think is an emergency. Or, when you get into really deep trouble, and you have no where to turn but God, then you cry out to God to give you a little strength in this area because you are not handling it well.

When the truth of the matter is that we need His strength for everything and we need the full armor of God.

The ~~scope~~ scope of that strength means that you need it for every area and phase of your life. You need to be totally clothed, totally outfitted, with the armor. And notice it is the armor of God. Not our armor, Not the armor of man.

2 Cor 10 says "that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal. They are spiritual. To the pulling down of strong holds and to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ."

You see there is a war going on that is centered in the mind. AND in order to have victory I need God's strength. I can't trust victory to myself. So, we have a requirement. Spiritual strength is necessary in order to face the real spiritual battles that are going on.

(2D) Now, there are reasons for this. And I would like to give you two reasons according to this text. There are two reasons why you and I need spiritual strength.

(1E) Number one, deals with the schemes of the devil. (2E) The second one deals with situations that we face. And I will show that in a moment.

The first reason why I need spiritual strength is because of the schemes of the devil. From the word "schemes" we get our English word "method." .. Vs 11 says "stand firm against the methods of the devil."

Turn back to chapter 4 and let me show you where that word was used. In chapter 4:14 Paul says, "as a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the tickery of man, by craftiness in deceitful scheming."

It is the same word. The point is that the devil has all his methods and plans. It is not just hit and miss. He is not trying to get you only when he has a chance. The Bible teaches that he has a plan to defeat the believer *in his Christian life*

I Peter 5:8 tells us that he is like a roaring lion walking about seeking who he may devour.

The devil is no friend of the believer. The moment you decide that you are going to live for the lord, the moment that you decide that you are going to commit yourself to Christ, at that moment the devil unleashes the plan of defeat in your life. Do not under estimate the plan of the devil.

I like what one writer said, "In the American culture the plan of the enemy is apathy." The devil knows just what to do with everyone of us to defeat us. He knows our weak points and our strong points. And the Bible says that we need spiritual strength because the devil has so many plans. Not just one. Notice in your text that it is plural. The schemes...the methods of the devil. And he can change his plan according to where you are.

I believe that Satan has two game plans for your life....

Number one....to keep you from ever receiving Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Saviour....If he can keep you from walking down this aisle and asking God to forgive your sins.....and to come into your life and save you...if he can do that, you will be lost for all eternity..and you will be his in hell for ever.....

*method: all religions are right, There is no Hell - God will not judge - He is love*

But, if you receive Jesus as your saviour..then he puts plan number two into operation....and that is to defeat your christian life...to make you an ineffective christian.....to make you a negative...discouraged ~~by~~/ christian.....WHY?.....So that your witness will be weak...so that you will not experience the spirit filled life...so that you will not know the joy and peace that comes through a close walk with God....

*method - eyes off Jesus onto people*

So, that is why Paul is saying...STAND FIRM AGAINST THE SCHEMS OR METHODS OF THE DEVIL....AND HE EMPHASES THE POINT....

Vs 11...Stand Firm

Vs 13...Stand firm

Vs 14...Stand firm

WHY?.....( )Because there is a danger, here, that we had all better understand....Vs 12 says....."Our struggle is not against flesh and blood"

Now, keep the content of ~~this whole section~~ in mind, and you will see how interesting and important that statement is.....

*These are the three chapters*

Paul is talking about living this christian life. In Chapter 4 he tells us to stop living like the world....<sup>ch 5</sup>He tells us to stop grieving the Holy Spirit and to develop a life style of walking in love and light and not darkness. Then in Chapter 5 he tells us to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And if we are being controlled by the Holy Spirit certain things will happen in our relationships with one another....in our relationship in marriage and with our children

*Method Negative Outlook*

and

Notice chapter 5 verse 22 and following. Paul talked about wives in submission to their husbands. And then husbands loving their wife. In chapter 6 he talks about children obeying their parents. And fathers not provoking their children to wrath. Then in Vs 5 slaves beings obedient. And Vs 9 masters treating them correctly.

Do you understand the content of all of this? Where is the spiritual battle? It is in the arean of the family. Home...marriage...<sup>an relation with on</sup>business... And Paul is reminding us that our struggle and our fight is not with the poeple in those areans..

So often we say that the real problem in my life and why I am not getting victory is my husband.....or, my wife...or my kids....or my job.... That is why I cannot have victory.

But Paul remains us that our struggle is not against flesh and blood. I like this word "struggle". It is the Greek word for "hand to hand combat. And what he is trying to say is that the ~~str~~ struggle that we face is an "individual struggle." It is like hand to hand combat.

and

Don't you think that the devil is not going to develop a plan just for you. There is some sort of comfort and security in thinking that he has a plan for all the christians in which I am in general a part. But NO... The Bible teaches that there is a plan develop just for you, the individual believer. And there is hand to hand combat. And it is a real struggle.

Our struggle is not against flesh and blood.

So, who are we really fighting. Vs 12 gives us the answer. It is a four fold discription of who we are really fighting.

Notice carefully what it says. "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but aginsst <sup>the</sup> rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places." *That is who we fight against. IT is against Satan who wants to defeat us*

x  
x

I believe he is talking about demons. It is interesting that in the context of Ephesians He has already mentioned these beings.

Turn back to chapter 1, please, and notice Vs 21...In chapter 1 vs 21 when he said that christ had come back farom the dead and was now seated at

*guy*  
You had bettera f~~lee~~ to the cross of Jesus Christ if you want to experience victory over the demonic world. The demon world has influenced society in such a tremendous way it is hard to draw the lines anymore. Everything the Bible says they would do, they have done.

But, that is all a part of the plan of God. The christian isn't worrie  
In I John 4:4 it says "greater is he that is in you then he that is in the world."...

I make this statement with great reverance. You, as a believer are more powerful than Satan and all his demons. There is a sense in which you as a believer <sup>are</sup> ~~is~~ more powerful. There is also a sense in which your power is restricted. It is based upon your dependence upon God's power which is greater than Satan and his angels.

As we come back to Ephesians 6, Paul says, Vs 12, "rulers, authorities" then he calls them "the world forces of this darkness."

That is talking about sin and isn't effect. How it corrupts and pollunts the world. And he says that these are world forces. They are dominating the world system.

In 2 Corinthains 4 it says "that ~~only~~ if our Gospel is veiled or hid, it is hid to those who are lost, in whom the god of this jworld has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ."

What I am saying is that instead of the light, the light of Jesus, instead we have darkness. The darkness of sin and despaire and no hope. And who is causing that inthe world? The prince of darkness, the devil himself and all the ~~exp~~ demons. They are world forces.

The O.T. teaches that Satanic demons acturally are motivating and leading the rulers, the unbelieving rulers of the nations of this world of this world.

Would it be interesting if we all had a view into the world situation fsrom God's point of view. As we saw the enemy and all of his forces under the divine permission and authority of God, Yes. But they are working and moving through all the forces of the world.

And do you know what is happening? What they are doing? According to the book of Revelation, God is allowing these unclean spirits to come to one great ~~apn~~ climax, the day of God, when he will gather all of them in their rebellion and hostility and he will gather them to a place that God calls "Armageddon." You can read it for yourself. They are unclean spirits. They are gathering in the ~~m~~ middle East, all the kings of the world, against Israel and against God himself. I find that a little bit important, right now, don't you? Because that is exactly what is happening in the world. Don't you ever forget that when the Devil talked about demons and his plan, it not only involves you, and attacking you as a believer, and trying to defeat you, but it is a part of a tremendous <sup>world</sup> ~~plan~~ force of darkness that is dominating the world. Satan is the god of this age and the world system. But he is operating under the divine permission of God. And everything that he is doing is on the time schedule of the Lord. I like that..... There is a climax coming.

Also, Vs 12 ~~cl~~ calls them "the spiritual forces of wickedness." There is only one direction that Satan can go. It is to wickedness. And it is spiritual.

There is a very important distinction that is being made here for our understanding. You cannot put demons into a test tube and look at them in the physical realm. There is no way that you and I can see them with our physical eyes, or, to touch them with our physical hands. They are spiritual in substance these world forces. They are spirit beings.

Who, by the way, have the ability to inhibit unbelieving people. And the major way that they do ~~th~~ that, in order to deceive, is to come out as mister clean.

In 2 Corinthians 11, the Bible says that these being have the ability to transform themselves into angels of light. And they will look like apostles of righteousness. And we are not to be deceived.

~~Well, the Bible teaches that there is a dwelling place of these forces. And this great battle is going on in the heavenly places.~~



Well, the Bible teaches that there is a dwelling place of these forces, And according to Revelation Satan when he rebelled against God pulled down with him 1/3 of the angels in heaven. So, 1/3 of the host of angels in heaven are on the devils side. The remaining 2/3 are on God's side.

And this angelic conflict is going on all the time. And the Bible says "in the heavenly places." 5 times in Ephesians it says "in the heavenly places." That means that the devil does have access to God in heaven. He will not be kicked out until the tribulation period in Revelation chapter 12. And I believe the devil is not really working on the earth like some people conclude. I believe he is using demons to work on the earth. I believe the devil, himself, is in heaven right now. I believe the Bible teaches that in Revelation 12. I believe it teaches it also in the O.T. in the book of Job. The devil is at the throne of God accusing the believers day and night the Bible says. Constantly accusing us of the sin that is in our life as though we are unworthy. And he is a prosecuting attorney in the throne room of God. ~~And~~ But praise God there is a defense attorney, we have a better case. The Bible says that our defense attorney is Jesus Christ, the righteous one. And he is defending us on the basis of what he has done. Not what we are like. ~~Aren't~~ Aren't you glad of that? Boy, I am.

It is not my performance that earns heaven. I cannot score enough points to get there. But through Jesus Christ our Lord, I am cleansed, I am forgiven, and no matter what the devil says about me or tries to do to me, the power of God has already been declared. The righteousness of God has already been announced. The cross of Christ has already ~~been~~ defeated him.....

Praise the Lord.

Well, I said that there were two reasons. Two reasons why you need spirit strength. One, is because of the schemes of the devil. And secondly, because of the situations we will face.

Look at Vs 13... "Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day and having ~~done~~ <sup>done</sup> everything, to stand firm."

Now, what is he talking about? Two views here. One, view is that he is talking about a coming day. The day of the Lord.

When he comes in power and ~~great~~ glory. That I will be able to stand if I have the full armor on. I don't like that view. And let me tell you why. Because when that ~~day~~ comes I will not have any worries at all. I will not even need any armor. <sup>The</sup> Lord is going to come with his saints. And I intend to be a part of that coming. I will not need to stand up to that battle. I am going to be with the lord <sup>J.C.</sup>

So, I don't like this view. When he talks about the "evil day" I believe he is talking about "the day of temptation and evil that hites us" whenever ~~it~~ it does. The particular moment of trial <sup>in the life we are now living</sup>

In other words, the situation that you face, now, requires that you take the full armor of God instead of trusting yourself to try and defeat it and handle it. When the temptation hits you, when the resistance hits you, when the struggle faces you, don't try to handle it yourself. TRUST THE LORD... Stand <sup>firm</sup> ~~in His strength and in his power.~~ in His strength and in his power.

(20) Well, the results of spiritual strength. How beautiful is the discription in Vs 14 to 17. ....(Read Vs 14-17)

I don't think I will have time to look at each of these in the way that I want to. But I want to get started.

(1E) "THE GIRDLE OF TRUTH"....I want you to visulize a Roman soldier for a moment. There is a leather girdle that goes over the breastplate and holds the breastplate in place, front and back.

It also has hanging from it leather strips which are protecting the goin area from any shoots <sup>of</sup> ~~is~~ spear or arrow. On the belt is ~~also~~ found a place to hange a small sword. It is called a dagger. It is two-edged sword of Hebrew 4:12.

There is also a place to hang the board sword. The sword used in combat.

There is also a shield mentioned here. There are seveal kinds of Roman shields. This one is the one that covers the entire body. It's acatural sieze is 4 feet by 21/2 feet. They would get behind this shield. And it would protect them from arrows.

Vs 14

The girdle of truth...Is that referring to the Word of God?...NO...

It says "~~gird up~~ your loins". And boy, you talk about scripture on this one. The Bible uses this word in servants terms. Girding ourselves about in order to serve someone.

<sup>So</sup> But, the girdle of truth, I believe, <sup>what is it</sup> is referring to honesty and sincerity. Not, the truth of the word. That is down in Vs 17 which is the ~~sword~~ sword of the spirit. The girdle...the thing that holds it all together is ~~a certain~~ honesty and sincerity.

Boy, when you get dishonest, you are heading for trouble in the battle <sup>with Satan</sup> ~~of the Lord~~. Because the devil is the father of lies. The Bible says "don't lie to one another since you have laid ~~aside~~ the old man." (Col 3:9)

The Bible says "to speak the truth in love that we may grow up in all aspects unto him who is the head, even christ." (Ephesians 4:15).

I could go on and on. But in Isaiah 11:5 it says "that righteous will be his belt about his loins and trustworthiness the belt about his waist." It is honesty, sincerity that ties <sup>The Christ L.F.</sup> ~~it all~~ together.

When dishonesty, lies, characterizes the christians' life, you are open to defeat by the devil.

It is only when you girt yourself about with truthfulness, trustworthiness sincerity, that you will conquer in the battle.

(2E) And the breastplate of righteousness...Well, certainly His righteousness we stand in. But, also there is a particularly aspect to that. In order for us to be effective in the warfare with Satan, we need to have a conduct and a life style that is pleasing to the Lord. <sup>Dear friend</sup> (The quickest way to get defeated is to say one thing out-off your mouth and to live another way. That is the fastest way to get defeated. To publical confess Jesus, but in the way you live you prove otherwise....

The Romans shined the breastplate so that you could see your face in it. Why? Not so that they would have a mirror. But because in battle when the Roman wedge went towards the enemy they always went towards the sun. And this confused the enemy. As those barbaric hords would stand on the hills

and they would look at the Romans coming at them and they would say, "Boy, we have them. The sun is in their eyes"....And the Romans marched with their shields in front of them. And as the enemy charged that Roman wedge, they would withdraw their shield and the sun would hit on those breastplates and flash back and blind the eyes of enemies and they would cut them down like flies. What a strage.

And Paul seeeing those breastplates, when he saw how they shined them so that you could see your face in them, said: that represenses righteousness. The purity of one's life. A light that shined forth. Let you light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glory your father which is in heaven.

(3E) And the shoes of peace. The very word "shoe" is a word meaning foundation. The Romans ~~shod~~ <sup>had</sup> little clites in them. And the idea is standing firm. Not retreating. Because there ~~is~~ is going to be a struggle here. There is going to be a ~~babble~~ <sup>fight</sup>. So, I am not going to run. I am going to stand ~~there~~ <sup>firm</sup>. Do you know why? Because peace characterizes my life. Ephesians 6:15 says "shod your feet with the preparation of the Gospel of peace."

There is no fear or ~~anxiety~~ <sup>anxiety</sup> conquering me. The fear of man is a trap. But they are the shoes of the peace of God that keeps our hearts and minds. Literally, it is a fort built around us. And we are ~~ready~~ <sup>ready</sup> for the battle.

(Philippians 4:7.)

Also, the Bible uses this to speak of taking the gospel to people. It comes out of a beautiful passage in Isaiah 52 and it is quoted in Romans 10. "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace."

I ask you in the warfare are you sharing ghrist? If you are not out actively witnessing, you are going to face ~~to~~ trouble from the enemy also. The shoes of peace indicating that they were ready to go and share the good news. Not to retreat and to keep our ~~mouths~~ <sup>mouths</sup> shut. But to be bold. We have an enemy to confront and to face.

(4E) And the shield of faith....That is obvious. "To extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one. A lot of us are not able to defeat Satan's ~~atad~~ attacks because we are not putting our faith in the Lord and his word."

Our faith and confidence is in ourselves. And that is why we get discouraged and defeated *and that is why we get stressed out*

(5) | And the helmet of salvation. You know, a Roman helmet was a beautiful thing. Helmet of all ancient times were to protect the head. And the Roman helmet was a beautiful thing. It had a ~~bed~~ slash.

And I believe Paul when he saw that thought of the blood of the Lord Jesus christ. He calls it the helmet of salvation. Which ~~again is an O.T. picture~~. And in I Thess 5:8 it says "that helmet will keep us from the day of God's wrath which is coming. Beautiful illustration. *Sung W. says (266)*

(6) | Then ~~finally~~ finally, the sword of the Spirit. There is one offensive weapon. Which ~~ought~~ <sup>should</sup> tell you something. One offensive weapon. The sword of the spirit. This is referring to that two-edged ~~and~~ dagger. Hebrews 4:12 says that the word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword.

And here Paul says, "take the sword of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit. What is the sword? What is the one weapon of the Holy Spirit? ANSWER: THE WORD OF God. The Holy Spirit takes the Word of God and defeats the enemy.

How did Jesus resist the devil ~~at~~ the mount of temptation? By quoting the Word of God.

The word has power against the enemy. The word brings victory.

Well, I don't know where you stand. But I know ~~one~~ thing. This passage *teaches* ~~remains~~ me that I need to trust God completely. Every aspect of my life.

Let's close in prayer

*I need to put on the full armor of God, if I  
am to experience victory in my life.*

*Have you put on G.'s armor -*