

## Ephesians 6:10-24

### Verse 10:

--**Finally, my brethren**, brings us to Paul's final thoughts. He is going to encourage them to take their stand in all he has already said.

--**Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.** . . is looking for strength of which the quality and quantity is from the Lord.

--In quality the Lord's strength relates more often than not to the inner man and is of a spiritual and not carnal nature. Paul already prayed something similar for them in **3:16: *That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man.*** \*Samson's lesson—God doesn't give power—He gives Himself.\*

--In terms of quantity, to say the Lord is more powerful than Satan is an eternal understatement. Again in Paul's prayer in **3:20: *Now unto Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.***

--To walk with God is to walk in opposition to Satan. Even so, spiritual complacency or deadness is more dangerous than anything the devil can bring against us.

**\*Zechariah 4:6: "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit," says the LORD of hosts.**

### Verse 11:

--Part of being strong in the Lord is putting on ***the whole armor of God***. That is, the armor that God has provided for us. We are to wear it, wear it all, and wear it all *before* the battle begins.

--Why? Because the Church, the Bride of Christ, this new Eve, is called to resist the devil. There is a literal being called the devil, and the Church is called to ***stand against***—hold our ground—him.

**\*1 John 3:8: *For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.***\*

--The Greek word for ***wiles*** (*Methodeia*) is used only one other time and that is in **4:14** where it is translated ***deceitful plotting***.

--Right now, Satan is fighting spiritual battles through deceitful plotting, schemes, methods. We are not to be ignorant of the way he works or that he is working.

**\*2 Corinthians 2:11: *lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.***\*

--We hear very often—and it is true—that God has a plan for our lives. So too does Satan! We are in a war—whether we like it or not. \*This World: Playground or Battleground?\*

--Jesus made the recognition of this war a part of His example in praying. . .

**\*Matthew 6:13: *And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.***\*

--The Bible does not explain to us all of *why* this spiritual war is. But it does make clear *what* is happening and what God wants of us in it.

\*Nee (Let Us Pray): “When God created man He gave him a free will. There thus exist in the universe three different wills; namely, the will of God, the will of Satan the enemy, and the will of man. People may wonder why the Lord does not destroy Satan in a moment’s time. The Lord could, but He has not done so. Any why? Because He wants man to cooperate with Him in dealing with Satan. Now God has His will, Satan has his, and man has his too. God seeks to have man’s will joined with His. He will not destroy Satan all by himself. We do not know entirely why God has chosen this way, but we do know He delights in doing it this way—namely, that He will not act independently; He looks for the cooperation of man. And this is the responsibility of the church on earth.”\*

### Verse 12:

--We are in a wrestling match! Wrestling is close and personal interaction. Strength resisting strength. \*But not by spiritual sounding fleshly methods (holy water/phrases/maps/spiritual links/wooden swords, etc.) that are actually carnal means!\*

**\*2 Corinthians 10:4: For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds.\***

--We are wrestling with wicked spirits of all levels—working even in heavenly realms.

--The word for **heavenly places** is the same as is used in **1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10**. The Bible clearly teaches that Satan has access to the current heaven (**Job 1-2; 2 Chron. 18**) and will one day be cast out and refused access forever (**Revelation 12:7-13**). Theologians don’t like that truth because they don’t understand the implications—but Satan’s temporary presence in heaven is divine revelation.

--So the devil is operating in two spheres—heaven and earth—not hell. \*So many false ideas!\*

--Satan has different strategies revealed in the Scriptures: Adam + Eve, Job, Moses, David, Jesus, etc. but it is not hard to see what he is doing in our day. How are these wicked spiritual beings fighting a deceptive spiritual war in America? \*Sex, drugs, money, freedom, false gospels, etc. Vs. The violence, poverty, and idolatry prevalent in other places of the world.\*

### Verse 13:

--**Therefore**. . . because of the reality of this war and our enemy, Paul repeats his exhortation to **take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand**. . . we don’t make the armor, we take it. \*Did Rome provide for her soldiers? Does America provide for ours? Rest assured God will provide the suitable military equipment for His sons and daughters!\*

--Our job is to **withstand**. . . which is often translated *resist*.

**\*James 4:7: Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.\***

**\*1 Peter 5:9: Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.\***

--This is a short, crisp command. You and I are called by God to hold the ground assigned to us—our post. Yes, God will no doubt win the war, but it matters if we lose all our battles.

--We are called to resist and stand ***in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*** This ***evil day*** is speaking of more than the age in general. It means there are specific days of evil—days where Satan’s strategies are being brought to completion—which are meant to cause us to fall or flee. All of us—because he hates us—will have our fair share. \*Satan is patient, he is the serpent of old, and he is willing to wait years to hatch his plans in your life!\*

--Even so, the Scriptures picture Satan as cunning, deceitful, and shrewd but not wise as God is. Satan has cunning plans for evil days but is unable to predict God’s deliverances. \*Daniel, Shadrach + boys, etc.\*

#### **Verse 14:**

--***Stand therefore.*** . . is now the third time Paul has said this. This is serious!

--Paul, very familiar with Roman soldiers and their garb, is going to take that image and use it to illustrate what he is exhorting them too. Some go through this illustration and give very “tight” elaborations between the Roman soldier and the garb when the emphasis is meant to be on the spiritual virtues that God has given as our armor.

--Paul speaks this way often and the images and illustrations of the armor change based on his particular point.

***\*Romans 13:12: The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.\****

***\*2 Corinthians 6:7: by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left...\****

***\*1 Thessalonians 5:8: 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.\****

--In all of these illustrations, the Christian man or woman is prepared to stand against the devil by being outfitted or armored in God’s strength and virtue.

--The armor matters based on whose kingdom we are fighting for. Are we fighting for our own little kingdom in the world of men or are we fighting the good fight for God’s kingdom?

--What is the armor of men in our day? I would say something like this:

-Wear the belt of right and wrong which fits perfectly as long as nobody gets hurt and we are all consenting adults. Where we may differ in opinion the scholars, scientists, or social media influencers will help us decide based on which we like best.

-Wear the breastplate of good people. These are the respectable people who help themselves and their own and even give a little to the genuinely needy. They don’t force anything down anyone’s throat while they live and love.

-Wear the sandals of gospel of success. Hard work, education, and a bit of ingenuity (A nod to God wouldn’t hurt) will bring you to the place where you can have your best life now. If success is right there—why not have it?

-Hold the shield of self-confidence. Love yourself. Be yourself. Stay true to yourself. Be proud of yourself. And if you cannot trust yourself the counselors and psychiatrists will teach you how for a moderate fee.

-Wear the helmet of security. This is a dangerous world. We live in a dangerous city. How will you make your way? Get a college education, stack some money in the bank, buy a home in the safest city and state you can, and then do all you can to protect the life you love here.

-Take the sword of skill. Unsheathe and swing your sex appeal, witty charm, vibrant youth, charming lifestyle, and cultivated online persona to get what you can. It might not be a happy truth about our society but the ad agencies know it's true (spending billions). It's those people who get ahead and win the personal wars for prime seats in this kingdom.

*\*Buechner (The Magnificent Defeat): "In the war of conquest, that is to say, in the war that we all wage for a place in the sun, it is the armor of man rather than the armor of God that will serve you best; and although I cannot value that armor as highly as some would value it, I also cannot mock it because the armor of man serves its purpose all too well, and because I wear some of it myself, and so do you."\**

--As we read through Paul's description, think very seriously, because if we are not wearing the armor of God, we are no doubt wearing the shoddy armor of man.

--Think of the command ***Stand therefore!*** before each of these pieces of armor:

1) ***having girded your waist with truth:*** Truth is God's, both objective and subjective. There will always be a battle around the truth. *\*We don't just have beliefs—we have The Truth!\**

***\*Jeremiah 9:3: "And like their bow they have bent their tongues for lies. They are not valiant for the truth on the earth. For they proceed from evil to evil, and they do not know Me," says the LORD.\****

2) ***having put on the breastplate of righteousness:*** The righteousness Paul is no doubt thinking of is both that which comes first, in Christ, and second, from Christ. There will always be a battle around what is "right" in the eyes of God and men.

--We stand before God in the righteousness of Christ.

***\*Philippians 3:8-9: Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith.\****

--We stand before men while living a righteous life. This is righteousness in an ethical sense as Paul employs the term in the two other uses in this letter (**4:24; 5:9**). The first speaking of the righteousness of the new man we are to put on, and the second speaking of the righteousness which is the fruit of light from the Spirit of God.

**Verse 15:**

3) ***and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace:*** There is some argument here as to the idea of preparation Paul is talking about—preparing our feet *for* or *with* the gospel. This is clearly a both-and situation as Paul would certainly not refuse either idea.

--There will always be battle to walk *worthy* of the gospel and to walk *with* the gospel.

**\*Philippians 1:27: *Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ. . .\****

**\*Romans 1:16: *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes.\****

--Are you living in a way that people would be shocked if you shared the gospel with them? If not, have you shared the gospel with them?

**Verse 16:**

4) ***Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one:*** *Above all* has the idea of *added to all this* and the shield described was the large Roman shield used to protect and interlock in phalanx.

--John Trapp in his commentary mentions that at the siege of Dyrrachium one Roman soldier was recorded to have 220 darts sticking in his shield.

--The enemy has no shortage of darts to throw—darts that pierce, darts that poison, darts that burn or ignite corrupt passions.

--What protects us from these? Faith. Simple, childlike faith. Faith in God's Word and character. The just live by faith, without faith it is impossible to please God, and by faith we overcome. \*It takes faith to believe everything in chapters 1-3, to walk like chapters 4-5, to be in relationships like 5-6, and to hold our ground in this battle.

**Verse 17:**

5) ***And take the helmet of salvation:*** Salvation in Him—the type of salvation He promises us—from the penalty, power, and presence of sin Vs. that of other gods and the world.

6) ***and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:*** This is the Word of God given by the Spirit of God for the specific battle or evil day—not just the word in a general sense.

--Anyone who doubts or denies the inspiration of Scripture cannot fight with the evil one. They have a sheath with no blade. The question is very simple: Is the Bible the Word of God? If so, then it is perfect and needs no human help. If not, what are we doing?

**\*2 Timothy 3:16-17: *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work* (or evil battle!).\***

--I don't need to prove this to anyone. The Word of God is self-authenticating like God Himself.

**\*Hebrews 4:12-13: For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.\***

--There will always be a battle around the Word of God. Don't defend the sword—use it.

**Verse 18:**

--Paul may have dropped the illustration of armor but he is no doubt still thinking of the soldier of God standing in the evil day through prayer. *\*Communication is essential in warfare!\**

--There will always be a battle around prayer! If you haven't felt it, you haven't persevered in prayer or grown in your prayer life. No struggle means you've already surrendered.

--Notice Paul's repeated use of *all* here:

**1) *Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit:***

--This is a description of a prayer life—each form of prayer in its proper place in our life. This must be developed in and by the Holy Spirit.

**2) *being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication:***

--A prayer life won't develop on its own. It requires watchfulness and perseverance! No one learns to pray by accident. No prayer life was ever won without wrestling and battle. Our prayer life will never grow if Satan can prevent it. We must determine to have it.

*\*Torrey (How to Pray): "Oftentimes when we come to God in prayer, we do not feel like praying. What shall one do in such a case? Cease praying until he does feel like it? Not at all. When we feel least like praying is the time when we most need to pray. We should wait quietly before God and tell Him how cold and prayerless our hearts are, and look up to Him and trust Him and expect Him to send the Holy Spirit to warm our hearts and draw them out in prayer. It will not be long before the glow of the Spirit's presence will fill our hearts, and we will begin to pray with freedom, directness, earnestness, and power. Many of the most blessed seasons of prayer I have ever known have begun with a felling of utter deadness and prayerlessness; but in my helplessness and coldness, I have cast myself upon God, and looked to Him to send His Holy Spirit to teach me to pray, and He has done it."\**

--How sad if the believer has lost the Holy Spirit's burden to pray. . . if there is no more wrestling, no more battle, no more inspiration, no more leading, intuition, or care. Why? There will also be no more victory or reward or blessing—only weakness and vulnerability and temptation.

***\*Luke 22:46: Then He said to them, "Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation."\****

--Satan knows one prayer can utterly destroy in one moment the cunning evil plans he has developed for years.

3) **for all the saints:** We can be so selfish with our prayers! We cannot forget that we don't fight this war with wicked spirits alone, but as a part of God's army. Satan knows that a victory for him over one soldier has a ripple effect on the rest of the troops.

\*Austin-Sparks (Prayer—The works of...): *"I must confess that I am often bewildered by the fact that so many really spiritual people—for so I give them credit for being—will crowd to preaching meetings and conferences, but they are rarely seen at a prayer meeting and leave so few to do the praying in the corporate prayer-life of the assembly."*\*

--Satan also knows that this matter of praying goes beyond you and I. We are praying to Someone. So prayer is ultimately a matter of God's glory and honor.

**\*Psalm 65:2: O You who hear prayer, to You all flesh will come.\***

#### **Verses 19-20:**

--Paul was never afraid to ask for prayer for himself. \*Thank you to all who pray for us!\*

--But look at the type of prayer Paul asks for—prayer for his battle. He doesn't ask prayer to be released from prison but to speak for God.

--This is a prayer that is in line with his character as God's ambassador in chains to Nero and Rome (**Acts 9:15-16**).

#### **Verses 21-23:**

--**(21)** Tychicus is seen often in ministry with Paul (**Acts 20:4; Col. 4:7; 2 Tim. 4:12; Titus 3:12**) either accompanying him, returning with news, or being sent by him. He had brought a report from Ephesus to Paul and now seems to be the one carrying this letter as well as the epistle to the Colossians. \*It is so good to have beloved and faithful brothers and sisters in Christ!\*

--**(22)** This is a very general farewell and is another evidence that this was likely intended to be a circular letter as Paul doesn't name any direct audience or persons as is typical in most of his other epistles.

--**(23)** It is interesting in this epistle which deals with some of the loftiest themes in all the Bible Paul ends with grace extended to ***all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.***

--The Greek word used here for ***sincerity*** (*aphtharsia*) is most often translated *incorruption* or *immortality*. Paul isn't thinking of eternity per se but of sincere and undefiled love that lasts. He gives Titus a similar exhortation and uses this word:

**\*Titus 2:6-8: Likewise, exhort the young men to be sober-minded, in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you.\***

--Paul the apostle knows the highest and most heavenly theology will not help the heart that doesn't love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. \*Similar exhortation at the end of 1 Corinthians.\*