

Living Strong in the Lord
Study 14 – Ephesians – Living In Christ and the World
Ephesians 6:10-18

Message Mate

- Jesus defeated the power of sin, death and the devil when He died on the cross. Why then do we continue to battle with Satan and his hordes since we are in Christ and we are blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ? This is because we live in the now: not-yet Kingdom of God. Now, we have authority in Jesus' name to overcome evil, to experience forgiveness and to pray for healing, but the battle is not yet over and won't be until Jesus comes again. Ephesians 6:10-18 addresses how to be strong and stand firm in the face of temptations and spiritual attacks by putting on the armour of God.
- As we are continually filled with the Holy Spirit, we are continually strengthened in the Lord (Eph 6:10, 1:19, 3:16) so that we can take our stand against the devil's schemes (v11). We need to remember that we are not wrestling with people, but the demonic forces that can cause people to say and do what is wrong (v12).
- We are called to stand firm wearing the full armour of God. Each piece of armour is linked to a character trait of God, with its descriptions coming primarily from the Book of Isaiah, while its application to us comes from previous passages in Ephesians (like jigsaw pieces). When we put on the armour of God, we are putting on the character traits of God (like Eph 4:24). These traits are His truth, righteousness, readiness, peace, faithfulness and salvation, and He gives up His Spirit and His Word. It is necessary to put on the full armour otherwise Satan will attack you in the areas of your vulnerabilities.
- The Belt of Truth (v14, Isaiah 11:5) reminds us that we are in Christ who is truth and we are called to speak the truth (Eph 4:21,25). The Breastplate of Righteousness (v14) calls us to reveal the righteous character of God in our words and actions, particularly drawing up on Ephesians 5 (don't be sexually immoral, greedy or use inappropriate language, seek to have godly marriages, families and influences in your workplaces). Feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace (v15, Isaiah 52:7) calls us to be ready to share the gospel of peace through our words and actions. The shield of faith (v16, Ps 28:7) focuses on having a strong faith in God and trusting God's faithfulness towards you. The Helmet of Salvation (v17, Isaiah 59:17) speaks of God saving us (Eph 2:8). The Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God speaks to the Holy Spirit helping us hear God and be empowered by God to know, understand and use the Word of God, particularly speaking the good news of the victory of Jesus Christ (Isaiah 11:4). A soldier in battle doesn't just need to be equipped with protective equipment, but needs two-way communication with the command centre. This is the parallel to pray at all times for all the saints (v18, Eph 2:18).
- The earlier passages of Ephesians contribute like jigsaw pieces to build up a picture of how to live in Christ and the world and how wearing the armour of God (God's character) helps us be strong and stand firm against the schemes of the devil to become increasingly the people He created us to be, people in His image.

Some Questions to Consider

1. Who enjoys jigsaw puzzles? Why? Discuss how you might now see that the previous passages of Ephesians are like jigsaw pieces building a picture of how to be strong and stand firm in the face of temptations and spiritual attacks by putting on the armour of God.
2. Evil is sometimes overt and offensive, but often it is not. Have you experienced times when you have been vulnerable to temptations or spiritual attacks that normally you wouldn't struggle with? In hindsight, did you see the schemes behind those difficulties, or what helped you stand strong and firm during those difficulties?
3. Ephesians 4:24 says we are created to be like God and Ephesians 6:11,13 tell us to put on the armour (character traits) of God. Discuss one of the following, considering the character trait of God and how you are growing in that area.

Armour	Character Trait	Old Testament	Ephesians
Belt	Truth	Isaiah 11:5	6:14, 4:21,25
Breastplate	Righteousness	Isaiah 59:17	6:14, 4:24, 4:17-6:9
Feet	Readiness		
	Peace	Isaiah 52:7	6:15, 2:14-18
Shield	Faith	Psalms 28:7	6:16, 2:8, 3:12,16,17
Helmet	Salvation	Isaiah 59:17	6:17, 2:8
Sword	Spirit		
	Word	Isaiah 11:4	6:17, 3:16,17, 5:18

4. Ephesians 6:11 and 13 tells us to "put on the full armour of God". If there is one area of vulnerability in the armour, the enemy will target that. To the extent you are willing, consider if you are aware of a vulnerability and how you are learning or have learnt to stand firm and strong against temptations and attacks in that area.
5. For a soldier, prayer is a two-way communication to hear what to do and to send information or requests. Ephesians 6:18 says we are to be alert and pray at all times for all the saints. What does being "alert" mean to you? Do you have a regular pattern of prayer for others and the church?

Pray –

Pray with thanks for who God is and His remarkable character traits.

Pray for us to be able to live with the armour and character traits of God in our everyday lives.