



## Session 6: We Stand Together in Spiritual Battle

**QUESTION 1:**

*When have you been surprised  
by something totally unexpected?*

## THE POINT

We stand strong with  
God's armor and the  
support of others.



## THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

A friend of mine recently prepared his house for sale. He cleaned, painted, and tastefully staged it. Pride of ownership was gleaming in every room. Buyers flooded the home and boasted of its beauty. Everything was going great until the home inspection revealed a significant problem: an army of termites was damaging the structural integrity of the floor. No amount of paint and redecorating could erase the unseen threat hidden deep beneath the visible surface. My friend eventually did sell his house. But he learned a valuable lesson in the process: things aren't always what they seem on the outside.

Spiritually, things might look OK to the outside world, but below the surface a war rages. No one is immune to this conflict. It's not a physical war; it's a spiritual battle. Christians might not always think in those terms, but the battle is still there. Only by realizing we are in this fight can we stand against Satan and his wiles. Thankfully, God does not send His children into battle ill-equipped. He provides a spiritual armor by which we can engage the enemy and stand strong.

# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

## EPHESIANS 6:10-13

<sup>10</sup> Finally, be strengthened by the Lord and by his vast strength. <sup>11</sup> Put on the full armor of God so that you can stand against the schemes of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this darkness, against evil, spiritual forces in the heavens. <sup>13</sup> For this reason take up the full armor of God, so that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having prepared everything, to take your stand.

A lot of people, both inside and outside the church, view the Christian life as an effort to be better people, help others, and be good neighbors. But Jesus didn't save us to make us better people; he saved us to make us new people. The life Jesus has called us to live is not a leisurely stroll down the religious boardwalk. The Christian life is a spiritual battle; it's open warfare for our allegiance.

is for us to conform to the ways of the world rather than submit to Christ and allow Him to conform us to the character and plan of God.

### QUESTION 2:

***What have you been taught about spiritual warfare?***

Paul could not have made that any clearer! Look at the imagery he used to describe the Christian life: armor, a stand against the devil, the struggle with spiritual forces of evil, and a call to resist and be prepared. Paul described warfare, plain and simple.

In this battle, we fight against a shrewd enemy—the devil. The “schemes of the devil” describe his tactics of craftiness and deception. Satan knows how to spin things to his advantage and our demise. And, he does it primarily by twisting God's truth. He tries to convince us that God's way is not best. His goal

### QUESTION 3:

***What can we learn from these verses about our role in spiritual battles?***

Christians are most assuredly involved in a war of eternal proportions, but it's an invisible fight. “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this darkness, against evil, spiritual forces in the heavens.” Our fight is not a fight against people of other religions. Neither is it a political fight against governments or political parties. The fight we face is not a visible, physical war; it's an invisible spiritual battle.

If anyone could feel justified in fighting against people, it would be Paul. He had faced “far more labors, many more imprisonments, far worse beatings, many times near death” (2 Corinthians 11:23)—all at the hands of people. But this battered and bruised apostle pointed away from physical attacks against other people; he called us to be vigilant in a spiritual battle.

## EPHESIANS 6:14-17

<sup>14</sup> Stand, therefore, with truth like a belt around your waist, righteousness like armor on your chest, <sup>15</sup> and your feet sandaled with readiness for the gospel of peace. <sup>16</sup> In every situation take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. <sup>17</sup> Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit — which is the word of God.

Spiritual warfare certainly warrants an appropriate level of seriousness, but Christ-followers have no reason to be afraid. In addition to informing us that we are in a spiritual battle where the stakes are monumental, Paul also revealed that God equips us and protects us completely. Therefore, we can stand firm with no fear.

Since our battle is not a physical struggle, no physical weapon will do. Spiritual battles require spiritual resources. Not just any spiritual resource will do either. We need God's resources for the battle at hand. As Christians, we can know and be confident that our God abundantly supplies spiritual resources. He promises to supply everything we need to fight the wiles of the enemy. Let's take a deeper look at some of the resources with which God supplies us.

► **God supplies His protection.** Using a Roman soldier's armor as a metaphor, Paul wrote that God sufficiently clothes us for battle through the spiritual resources Jesus provides. From head to foot, we wear the helmet of salvation, the breastplate of righteousness, the belt of truth, and the sandals of peace, while holding the shield of faith and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Rather than shrinking back in fear before the enemy, we can stand in confidence because God protects us with His armor.

## QUESTION 4:

*What are some real-life situations in which this armor is essential for Christ-followers?*

- **God supplies His people.** From this passage, we can infer a third resource God provides His people for battle—one another! God doesn't deploy us into spiritual battle alone. Throughout his Letter to the Ephesians, Paul wrote to a group of people—not just one person. We need one another—the body of Christ—standing together against the schemes of the enemy.
- **God supplies His power.** Let's remember that undergirding all the resources God has given us is His power. "Be strengthened by the Lord and by his vast strength" (v. 10). Nowhere was the power of God more evident than in the tomb where Jesus was resurrected. Now consider this: through the power of the gospel, the same Spirit who raised Jesus from the grave also lives inside of us (see Romans 8:11) and empowers us to stand in the face of the enemy.

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## DRESSED FOR BATTLE

*In the space below, draw yourself outfitted with the armor of God  
as listed in Ephesians 6:14-17.*

*What part of God's armor have you found most important in your spiritual battles?*

## EPHESIANS 6:18-20

<sup>18</sup> Pray at all times in the Spirit with every prayer and request, and stay alert with all perseverance and intercession for all the saints. <sup>19</sup> Pray also for me, that the message may be given to me when I open my mouth to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel. <sup>20</sup> For this I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I might be bold enough to speak about it as I should.

Since the Christian life is a spiritual battle for our allegiance, then the gravity of that truth compels us to pray with one another. Praying for one another is our greatest weapon in spiritual warfare. Prayer is about so much more than asking God to meet tangible needs for us. In addition to praying for physical provision, Christ-followers should also pray for spiritual needs in one another's lives.

### QUESTION 5:

***How does prayer contribute to our efforts in spiritual warfare?***

We see several truths in verses 18-20 about the way we should pray for one another.


- ▶ **Pray all the time.** Prayer is not something we do only on Sunday mornings or before meals. We are to “pray at all times.” Christians should set aside a special time every day that they devote entirely to prayer. But we also should pray throughout the day.
- ▶ **Pray in the Spirit.** We “pray ... in the Spirit” because prayer is a form of worship. The Holy Spirit of God lives inside us, enabling us to know God, worship God, and pray to God.
- ▶ **Pray with engaged minds.** As we pray, we are to “stay alert with all perseverance.” We are to stay spiritually engaged.

▶ **Pray for the church.** It may be easy to pray for our families, but Paul also told us to pray with “intercession for all the saints.” We have a responsibility to pray for the physical and spiritual needs of our brothers and sisters in Christ.

▶ **Pray for the gospel's advance.** Whether it's for our church leaders, fellow church members, or missionaries we've sent, we should pray for them.

▶ **Pray for the persecuted.** At the moment of his writing, Paul was in prison, “an ambassador in chains.” Believers all over the world today experience similar sufferings and imprisonment. Of course we can pray for persecution to stop, but we must certainly pray that those currently under persecution would have the strength to endure and boldness to speak the gospel, no matter the cost.

As the body of Christ, praying with and for one other is the greatest support we have to give. It's also our greatest weapon in spiritual warfare. So, let's pray for one another as we stand together in spiritual battle!



*“We’re fighting a spiritual war*

*with an enemy whose primary tactic  
is deception.”*

MATT ERICKSON



## LIVE IT OUT

What will you do to stand with the body of Christ in the face of spiritual battle? Consider the following ideas.

- ▶ **Take your stand.** Through prayer, commit yourself anew to standing firm in the strength of the Lord in spiritual battle.
- ▶ **Stand with your church.** Take spiritual ownership of your church by praying regularly for your pastor(s), teacher(s), and fellow church members. Begin a prayer journal as a guide to help you pray.
- ▶ **Stand with the nations.** Research the global church including missionary needs, unreached people groups, and persecution. The following websites are valuable resources to help shape your mind and your prayers: [imb.org](http://imb.org), [joshuaproject.net](http://joshuaproject.net), and [operationworld.org](http://operationworld.org).

When we come to Christ for salvation, He gives us a new identity and a new family in His church. **In that family, we pray, support, encourage, and strengthen one another as we stand together in spiritual battle.**