



EPHESIANS 6:1-4

“Fighting in the strength of the Lord”

❖ Ephesians 6:10--*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.*

1. He is not telling you to toughen up. He is telling you to rely on the Lord's strength. The emphasis is **in the Lord**, not be strong
 - ❖ 2 Corinthians 12:9--*But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*
 - *Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing,
Were not the right Man on our side, the Man of God's own choosing:
Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is He;
Lord Sabaoth, His Name, from age to age the same,
And He must win the battle.*¹
2. **Our strength is not sufficient.** Consider what he has just commanded us to do from Ephesians 4:17--6:9...
 - Don't hold on to offense, forgive
 - Don't steal, be generous
 - Don't be a liar, speak truth
 - Don't tear down with words, build up
 - Be kind to one another
 - Live selflessly
 - Let there be no sexual immorality
 - Walk as light, not darkness
 - Discern the Lord's will
 - Don't be full of booze, be full of the Holy Spirit
 - Encourage one another with singing
 - Wives submit
 - Husbands love
 - Children obey
 - Parents instruct and correct
 - Slaves serve well
 - Masters consider Christ as an example for how to be a master

🗣️ He is basically saying, “*you think you can do these these but you just can't Nemo!*” You need God's strength and fortunately for you it is abundantly available.

❖ Ephesians 6:11--*Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.*

- 🗣️ We need God's strength because of the enemy we face is scheming.
- *“The Christian life is a challenge to engage in spiritual warfare against the schemes of the Devil, and we must not confuse deliverance from his power, which we have been promised in Christ, with freedom from his attacks, which has not been given to us. For us to be united with Christ is to be protected from the power of Satan, but it is also to be called to engage in battle with him as Christ did. We have been*

¹ Martin Luther, *A Mighty Fortress is Our God*



EPHESIANS 6:1-4

“Fighting in the strength of the Lord”

given the whole armor of God to aid us in that fight, but there is no safe haven for us this side of heaven and we must not pretend that there is.²”

1. He seeks to destroy

- ❖ 1 Peter 5:8--*Be sober minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.*
- ❖ Job 2:7--*So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord and struck Job with loathsome sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.*

2. He seeks to tempt

- ❖ 1 Corinthians 7:5--*Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.*
- Give nearly any man a thousand years to study math and you will have the greatest mathematician in the world. Give the enemy Satan the entirety of human history to study humanity weaknesses and how great a tempter will he be?³

3. He seeks to deceive

- ❖ 2 Corinthians 11:13-15--*For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. 15 So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.*
- “Perhaps the greatest deception of Satan is that he appears as an angel of light who equips his followers to present themselves as servants of righteousness.⁴ This was a major problem in the early church, where false teachers and apostles did all they could to discredit men like Paul and overturn their teaching. What was true then is still true today. The greatest enemies of the Christian faith are not those who openly reject it but those who claim to accept it while denying everything it stands for.⁴”

❖ **Ephesians 6:12**--*For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.*



We need God's strength because the devil's power is far greater than ours

- “The devil is not all powerful, but he is certainly much more powerful than we are.⁵”



Some emphasize the fact that the struggle is not with people. This is not a bad application because it's true. However, the purpose of the text is not to point out who we do/don't fight against. The purpose of the text is to describe the power of our enemy through contrast.

² Bray, Gerald (2012-03-31). *God Is Love* (Kindle Locations 7747-7749). Good News Publishers/Crossway Books. Kindle Edition

³ Bryan Chapell, the idea from the sermon “Fighting by Grace”

⁴ Bray, Gerald (2012-03-31). *God Is Love* (Kindle Locations 7761-7765). Good News Publishers/Crossway Books. Kindle Edition.

⁵ James Montgomery Boice, *Ephesians An Expository Commentary*. p.237.



EPHESIANS 6:1-4

“Fighting in the strength of the Lord”

- Not flesh and blood, but that which rules over it
- Not earthly power, but cosmic power
- No power on earth is like this. To find power so great you must look into the heavenly places.

❖ **Ephesians 6:13-17**--*Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. 16 In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; 17 and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,*

🗣 Withstand? Stand Firm?

- We have already stated that the tasks before us are too big for us, we have already stated that the enemy that we face is far greater than us? How are we to stand firm?

🗣 Paul reminds us of 6 things God has granted us which enable us to stand firm

1. Belt of Truth

- The belt isn't a weapon, it isn't usually plated in metal, and it provides very little protection. Yet, from it hangs what a soldier needs most. His sword. Many would say that this refers to truthfulness because it doesn't say belt of *THE* truth. However, it doesn't make sense. Paul is describing gifts/armor that God gives us to be able to be truthful. I think it is the truth of God that he makes known to us referenced in John...
- ❖ John 8:31-32--*So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."*
 - Without the truth we would be bound and unable to stand firm
- ❖ 1 John 2:3-4--*And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. 4 Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him,*
 - You know when someone doesn't have the truth of God because they will be totally unable to live righteously.

2. Breastplate of Righteousness

- What does a breast plate protect? The heart. Likewise Christ's imputed righteousness protects the heart of every believer. We can often feel so filthy, so dirty, so worthless that our heart grows faint. We wonder why we even try to live righteously. Yet, when remind ourselves of our true identity in Christ our hearts are encouraged. We remember who Christ has made us to be and we press on in our goal to "*walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,*" (Eph 4:1).

3. The shoes of the Gospel of peace

- The gospel makes you deployable
- ❖ Romans 10:14-15--*How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? 15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"*

4. Shield of Faith



EPHESIANS 6:1-4

“Fighting in the strength of the Lord”

- Trusting in God makes you completely untouchable. Paul demonstrated this time and time again...
- *Philippians 2:18-21--Yes, and I will rejoice, 19 for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, 20 as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. 21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

5. Helmet of Salvation

- ❖ *1 Thessalonians 5:8-9--But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. 9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,*
- ❖ *1 John 5:11-13--And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. 13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.*

6. Sword of the Spirit (Word of God)

- He gives us the sword of the spirit, the word of God
- ❖ *2 Corinthians 10:3-4--For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. 5 We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,*
- Jesus is our example of this...
 - ❖ *Matthew 4:3-4--And the tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” 4 But he answered, “It is written,*
- **Ephesians 6:18-20--praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, 19 and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.**

1. Praying always

- ❖ *1 Thessalonians 5:17--pray without ceasing,*
- This is an example of Pauline hyperbole. Paul is not saying that you should be praying 24/7, non-stop, no excuses. He is simply teaching that the believer must be one who is characterized by constant prayer.

2. The people to pray for

- ❖ *John 17:9--I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours.*
- The best way to pray for the salvation of the lost is to pray vigorously for the church!

3. The purpose of prayer

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REFORMATION
CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

EPHESIANS 6:1-4

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- Prayer is one of God's ordained means of accomplishing his sovereign will. Why? Why not just do it himself? Because he loves us and allowing us to participate in his glorious purposes is our joy