

# The Believer's Fight

January 20, 2013

Eph 6:10-24 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. 14 Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, 15 and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; 16 in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 18 With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, 19 and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak. 21 But that you also may know about my circumstances, how I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make everything known to you. 22 I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that you may know about us, and that he may comfort your hearts. 23 Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 24 Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with incorruptible love.

## I. Introductory thoughts about our warfare

### A. The fact of warfare:

You are in it, it is a reality of life (6:11).

Your ability to fight and win depends upon your ability to be strong in the Lord (6:10).

### B. The devil has strategies or schemes against you.

He will size you up to know how you are and what are your weaknesses so that he can take advantage of you at the right time (6:11).

Eph 6:11 ... against the schemes of the devil

schemes = (methodeia) The word rendered "wiles" means properly that which is traced out with "method;" that which is "methodized;" and then that which is well laid-art, skill, cunning. It is appropriately rendered here as "wiles," meaning cunning devices, arts, attempts to delude and destroy us. The wiles "of the devil" are the various arts and stratagems which he employs to drag souls down to perdition. We can more easily encounter open force than we can cunning; and we need the weapons of Christian armor to meet the attempts to draw us into a snare, as much as to meet open force. The idea here is, that Satan does not carry on an open warfare. He does not meet the Christian soldier face to face. He advances covertly; makes his approaches in darkness; employs cunning rather than power, and seeks rather to delude and betray than to vanquish by mere force. Hence, the necessity of being constantly armed to meet him whenever the attack is made. A man who has to contend with a visible enemy, may feel safe if he only prepares to meet him in the open field. But far different is the case if the enemy is invisible; if he steals upon us slyly and stealthily; if he practices war only by ambushes and by surprises. Such is the foe that we have to contend with-and almost all the Christian struggle is a warfare against stratagems and wiles. Satan does not openly appear. He approaches us not in repulsive forms, but comes to recommend some plausible doctrine, to lay before us some temptation that shall not immediately repel us. He presents the world in an alluring aspect; invites us to pleasures that seem to be harmless, and leads us in indulgence until we have gone so far that we cannot retreat. (from Barnes' Notes)

### **C. We are to learn how to fight.**

We are not to fight people even when it feels like it is about people (6:12).

### **D. We have weapons and armor and need to be ready to fight at any time (6:13).**

Eph 6:13 be able to resist in the evil day; What is the evil day?

It refers to today (Heb 3:7; 3:13; 2 Cor 6:2).

### **E. We are to know our authority over demonic powers**

1. Jesus has defeated the powers of darkness (Col 2:13-15; Heb 2:14-15; 1 John 3:8).

2. He gave His authority to His disciples (Mat 10:1; Mk 3:14; 6:7; Luke 9:1; 10:19-20)

### **F. Our weapons are both offensive and defensive.**

Defensive = stand against (verse 11, 13).

Offensive = advancing the kingdom by overtaking the gates of hell (Mat 16:18).

### **G. The forces of evil are organized into a government or a hierarchy of evil.**

Eph 6:12 For our struggle is ...against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

## **II. Our spiritual armor**

### **A. The belt of (loins girded with) truth (6:14).**

The belt was used to hold the soldiers clothing next to his body. This kept his clothing from flapping about and allowed him freedom of movement. The belt was also used to strengthen and support the body (The Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible p. 230).

#### **Where do you get truth?**

1. From Jesus, who is (embodies) the truth.

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

Eph 4:21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus,

2. From the Word of God.

John 17:17 " Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.

3. From abiding in the Word (Jesus) that sets you free.

John 8:31-32 So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, " If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

4. From the Holy Spirit who is the Spirit of truth.

John 14:16-17 "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.

John 15:26 "When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me,

John 16:13 "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

## **B. The breastplate of righteousness (6:14)**

The breastplate covered the body of the soldier from the neck to the thighs. It was used to protect the heart and other vital organs (The Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible p. 231).

2 Cor 5:21 we are the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Rom 10:4 my righteousness is in Christ and not in my performance.

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

Gal 2:15 by nature I am a Jew (people of God).

We are Jews by nature and not sinners from among the Gentiles;

1 Thes 5:8 the breastplate of righteousness is also a breastplate of faith and love.

But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love,

1 John 1:7-10 walking in the light (righteousness) means that I own my sin as I embrace His righteousness.

but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.

## **C. The sandals of the gospel (feet covered with the preparation of the gospel of peace 6:15)**

The Roman soldiers sandals were made with nails that gripped the ground firmly even when it was sloping or slippery (The Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible p. 231).

(Spiritual warfare tries to make you stop sharing the gospel.)

Rom 10:15 as they shared the gospel, we have beautiful feet.

How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!"

1 Peter 3:15 we are to be ready to share our testimony whenever asked.

but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;

Eph 5:15 our walk involves sharing the gospel as God gives us the opportunity.

Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, 16 making the most of your time, because the days are evil.

## **D. The Shield of faith**

The word "shield" does not mean the small round shield which the soldier held in his hand to fight off the weapons of the enemy. It means the great oblong shield worn by the soldier to protect his body from the fiery darts thrown by the enemy. The darts were dipped in pitch and set afire. When they struck, they serve the purpose of small incendiary bombs. (The Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible p. 232).

(Will extinguish the flaming arrows of the evil one.)

Rom 10:17 faith comes from hearing God's Word.

So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

Jesus defeated Satan three times by quoting God's Word; "It is written .."

Matt 4:4 But He answered and said, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.'"

Matt 4:7 Jesus said to him, " On the other hand, it is written, 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.'"

Matt 4:10 Then Jesus said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"

## **E. Helmet of salvation**

The helmet covered the head and the mind of the soldier. The head was the core of the soldiers power to wage war. His thinking ability was the most important factor in determining his victory or defeat. Therefore, the soldier needed a helmet to protect his head and mind. (The Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible p. 232)

The devil seeks to make us believe that we aren't saved.

1 Thes 5:8 the helmet of salvation is also the helmet of the hope of salvation.

But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation.

2 Cor 13:5 the test of knowing if we are Christian or not:

Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you--unless indeed you fail the test?

## **F. The Sword of the Spirit** (the Word of God).

This is a defensive and offensive weapon.

1 John 3:8 Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil.

The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.

Matt 16:16-19 Jesus uses the church to destroy the gates of hell; we are to advance God's kingdom during our time on earth.

Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. "I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven."

Isa 54:17 (in Christ) all of the enemies weapons are rendered powerless.

No weapon that is formed against you will prosper; and every tongue that accuses you in judgment you will condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their vindication is from Me," declares the LORD.

We have the Word of God to know that we have eternal life.

John 20:31 but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

1 John 5:13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

## G. Prayer and worship:

### 1. Prayer

- a. In the spirit (Eph 6:18, 1 Cor 14:15).

Eph 6:18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

1 Cor 14:15 What is the outcome then? I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the mind also; I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the mind also.

- b. Allowing the Holy Spirit to energize and lead you prayer.

Rom 8:26 In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; 27 and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Rom 8:14 For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

- c. Pray from a quality of life that neither quenches nor grieves the Spirit.

1 Thes 5:17-19 pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit;

Eph 4:29-31 Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.

### 2. Worship

Psa 149:5-9 Let the godly ones exult in glory; let them sing for joy on their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand, to execute vengeance on the nations and punishment on the peoples, to bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron, to execute on them the judgment written; This is an honor for all His godly ones. Praise the LORD!

Ps 22:3 But You are holy, enthroned in the praises of Israel (NKJV).

#### Victories in the Old Testament through praise:

- a) Jericho; Joshua 6:1-25 the walls of Jericho fall down as they shouted to God in praise.

- b) Midian; Numbers 31:6 Phinehas made war with trumpets.

- c) Amalek; Exodus 17:8-16 the raised hands of Moses leads Israel to victory.

- d) Amon; 2 Chronicles 20:1-25 Hezekiah leads Israel to victory through praise.

- e) Midianites; Judges 7:19-25 Gideon leads Israel to victory as they broke pictures, blew trumpets and shouted to God in praise.

## III. The example of faithful Christian Soldiers

Eph 6:21-24 But that you also may know about my circumstances, how I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make everything known to you. 22 I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that you may know about us, and that he may comfort your hearts. 23 Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 24 Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with incorruptible love.

## **A. Tychicus**

He was a native of Asia; and a traveling companion of Paul (Acts 20:4).

He was commissioned by Paul as a messenger to various churches (Eph 6:21; Col 4:7; 2 Tim 4:12; Titus 3:12).

He was entrusted to deliver the letters of Paul to the Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon (Eph 6:21-22; Col 4:7-8).

He was sent on a special mission to Ephesus (2 Tim 4:12).

He was to be sent to Crete for the purpose of relieving Titus (Titus 3:12).

He was called not only Paul's beloved brother and faithful minister, but also his fellow slave (Col 4:7).

## **B. Tychicus is described as:**

A beloved brother

A faithful minister

A comforter of believers

## **C. The apostle Paul**

A glimpse into Paul's heart can be gleaned from these two verses.

1. He was always concerned with the welfare of other Christians.

He blesses them with peace love and faith.

2. He was a prayer warrior for other believers.

Eph 1:16-19; 3:14-19; Col 1:3, 9, 12; 1 Thes 1:2; 2 Tim 1:3; Philemon 4