

Ephesians Chapter 6 Continued

Ephesians 6:11 "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."

"Put on the whole armor of God":

"Put on", conveys the idea of permanence, indicating that armor should be the Christian's sustained lifelong attire.

Paul uses the common armor worn by Roman soldiers as the analogy for the believer's spiritual defense and affirms its necessity if one is to hold his position while under attack.

In order to take advantage of the strength of God's might, a believer must also put on the full spiritual armor that He supplies (2 Cor. 10:3-5).

"Put on", carries the idea of once and for all, or permanence.

The armor of God is not something to be put on and taken off occasionally but is something to be put on permanently.

It is to be the Christian's lifelong companion.

It provides believers with divine power from "Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy (Jude 24).

"Put on":

Greek ingressive aorist imperative, denotes a sense of urgency, demanding immediate action.

"To stand":

This has military overtones.

This verb was used in classical Greek meaning to resist the enemy and then also hold a critical position in battle.

"The wiles of the devil":

Or, "the Devil's strategy"

Satan carefully devises schemes and tactics against believers.

"Wiles":

Wiles or schemes is a Greek word that carries the idea of cleverness, crafty methods, cunning, and deception.

Satan's schemes are propagated through the evil world system over which he rules, and are carried out by his demon hosts.

"Wiles" is all inclusive, encompassing every sin, immoral practice, false theology, false religion and worldly enticement.

"Schemes" carries the idea of craftiness, cunning, and deception.

The term was often used of a wild animal that cunningly stalked and then unexpectedly pounced on its prey.

Satan's evil schemes (wiles) are built around stealth and deception.

Christians are really in a war.

We are soldiers in God's army.

The greatest battle is between the flesh and the spirit.

The prize they are after is the soul, or the will of man.

Paul wrote this scripture while he was chained to a soldier, so it was not difficult for him to use the dress of a soldier that was ready for battle as an example of what we must wear as armor in God's army.

"The devil":

Scripture refers to him as "the anointed cherub" (Ezek. 28:14), "the ruler of the demons" (Luke 11:15), "the god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4), and "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2).

Scripture depicts him opposing God's work (Zech. 3:1), perverting God's Word (Matt. 4:6), hindering God's servant (1 Thess. 2:18), hindering the gospel (2 Cor. 4:4), snaring the righteous (1 Thess. 3:7), and holding the world in his power (1 John 5:19).

This fallen archangel and his fallen angels who became demons have been tempting and corrupting mankind since the Fall.

They are an evil, formidable, cunning, powerful and invisible foe against whom no human being in his power and resources is a match.

In this life, we are in daily conflict with the devil and his army.

Life is a battle ground.

Preparation is necessary to fight any battle.

Jesus fought the devil with the Word of God.

Our strength is in the Lord and in His Word (Bible).

Evidence of Satan's great power and deception can be seen in the fact that, despite God's miraculous deliverance of Israel from Egypt, His immeasurable blessings, protection and provision in the wilderness and in Canaan, His chosen people repeatedly fell for Satan's seductions, worshipping the hideous and demonic idols of paganism.

After all the predictions of the Messiah that had been given in the Old Testament and after Jesus' preaching, teaching, and miraculous healings, Satan managed to induce Israel to reject and crucify her own Messiah!

In the last days, his final deception of Israel will be to persuade her that the antichrist is instead the Christ (Dan. 9:26-27).

Ephesians 6:12 "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high [places]."

"Wrestle":

Wrestle or struggle which is a term used of hand to hand combat.

Struggling or wrestling features trickery and deception, Just the same like Satan and his hosts when they attack.

Coping with deceptive temptation requires truth and righteousness.

The four designations describe the different strata and rankings of those demons and the evil supernatural empire in which they operate.

Satan's forces of darkness are highly structured for the most destructive purposes (Col 2:15; 1 Peter 3:22).

Paul here reminds his readers that the Christian's struggle is not only against Satan himself but also against a host of his demon subordinates, a vast array of adversaries who, like the devil, are not flesh and blood.

Our greatest enemy is not the world we see, corrupt and wicked as it is, but the world that we cannot see.

"Not against flesh and blood" (see 2 Cor. 10:3-5).

“Spiritual wickedness”:

This possibly refers to the most depraved abomination, including such things as extreme sexual perversions, occultism, and Satan worship.

“In high places”:

As in 1:3; 3:10, this refers to the entire realm of spiritual beings.

“Rulers ... powers ... rulers of the darkness ... spiritual wickedness”, describe the different strata and rankings of those demons and the evil, supernatural empire in which they operate.

Human beings who promote paganism, the occult, and various other ungodly and immoral movements and programs are but dupes of Satan and his demons, trapped by sin into unwittingly helping to fulfill his schemes.

The demonic categories are not explained, but rulers no doubt reflects a high order of demons linked with “authorities” (in Col. 2:15).

Powers are another rank (mentioned in 1 Peter 3:22).

And world forces of this darkness perhaps refers to demons who have infiltrated various political systems of the world, attempting to pattern them after Satan’s realm of darkness (see Daniel 10:13; Colossians 1:13).

The spiritual forces of wickedness are possibly those demons who are involved in the most wretched and vile immoralities, such as extremely perverse sexual proactive, the occult, Satan worship and the like.

Paul’s purpose is not to explain the details of the demonic hierarchy but to give us some idea of its sophistication and power.

We are pitted against an incredibly evil and potent enemy.

But our need is not to specifically recognize every feature of our adversary but to turn to God who is our powerful and trustworthy source of protection and victory.

Several activities in the Bible may involve demons.

Sometimes they cause physical disease or mental suffering.

However, not all mental disorders are demonic in origin.

Demons also tempt people into immoral practices.

They originate and propagate false doctrines taught by demons (Mark 1:23).

Although demons are committed to do evil, God will use them to accomplish His plan during the end of the age (Rev. 16:14).

Demons are also objects of worship in various occult practices forbidden by God.

These include divination (an illegitimate means of determining the will of God), necromancy (efforts to communicate with and interrogate the dead), magic (using formulas and incantations), sorcery (perhaps the nonmedical use of drugs), witchcraft and astrology (Deut. 18:10-12).

Dealing with demons in one's Christian life is not a matter of finding the technique to send them away, but of being committed to the spiritual means of grace that purifies the soul, so that there is no unclean place that demons could occupy or by which they might gain advantage.

James gives the only formula for deliverance from the demons or the devil himself: "Resist the devil and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).

When the Ephesian Christians who were "dabbling" in the occult repented, there was a great revival in that place.

No Christian can ever justify his participation in demonic activities (Exodus 7:11; Hebrew 1:4).

"Wrestle," used of hand to hand combat, emphasizes the personal and individual nature of spiritual warfare waged against each local church and Christian.

"Flesh and blood" refers to humanity.

Such is not the church's adversary.

Instead she opposed "principalities (rulers), "powers" (authorities), rulers (world rulers), "Spiritual wickedness (wicked spiritual beings), that is, all of the fallen angels, demons, and old Lucifer himself.

One thing that we must do to fight against our enemy, is try and to learn who he is and, what are his tactics.

That is what the above verse is about.

The enemy that you cannot see with your physical eye is the most dangerous, because you do not know when he is on the attack, or just which way he is coming from.

This is a spiritual battle, spoken of here.

The devil (old Lucifer), and his angels (demons, or devil spirits), are the enemy.

His tactics are to tempt the flesh of man. The flesh of man is earthy.

These are real battles.

The Father has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son (read Col. 1:11-13).

No Christian is any longer in Satan's domain and every Christian has the resources of God's own Holy Spirit within him to free himself from any demonic entanglement, no matter how severe.

Where sin is confessed and put away, Satan and his demons are expelled.

We are to put on God's armor and report to Him, perfectly confident in the knowledge that "greater is He who is in us than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4).

The very "gates of Hades shall not overpower" Christ's church (Matthew 16:18).

Ephesians 6:13 "Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

"Wherefore":

This means because of this," That is, because we face such a formidable foe, we must avail ourselves of God's provision lest the enemy destroy our Christian witness and ministry.

"Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God":

Paul again emphasized the necessity of the Christian's appropriating God's full spiritual armor by obedience in taking it up, or putting it on (verse 11).

It is possible to live the Christian life in lethargy, indifference and in perfect satisfaction with the way things are, and still spend eternity with the Lord.

Because He has eternally secured the salvation of every believer (John 10:28-29).

We cannot lose the ultimate war, because we belong to the Lord and the battle is His.

But we disregard obedience to Him at great cost.

We bring our heavenly Father and ourselves grief instead of joy.

We leave lost souls in darkness and damnation instead of bringing them to the light of salvation.

And we see our work burned up with fire like so much hay, as we forfeit the reward that faithful service would bring.

The first three pieces of armor, girdle, breastplate and shoes/boots (verses 14-15), were worn continually on the battlefield.

The last three, shield, helmet and sword (verses 16-17), were kept ready for use when actual fighting began.

“Having done all, to stand”: Standing firm against the enemy without wavering or falling will be the goal.

“The evil day”:

This refers to the periodic demonic onslaughts and satanic assaults.

“Having done all”:

This includes both dressing oneself in God’s armor and resisting Satan.

Having done all these be ready, for the Devil will attack again and again.

Since the fall of man, every day has been evil, a condition that will persist until the Lord returns and establishes His own righteous kingdom on earth.

This evil day is probably many different days.

The battle sometimes stops for a day or two, but it starts up again when you least expect it.

Our job is to be ready and then stand.

The soldier's job is to stand and remain standing regardless of what the enemy sends your way.

Our strength in this battle must come from within.

Christ in us gives us the strength to stand firm in the battle.

But even the most willing and eager soldier of Christ is helpless without God’s provision.

We have His provision in being His children, in having His Word, in possessing His indwelling Holy Spirit, of having every resource of our heavenly Father.

God is our strength, but His strength is appropriated only through obedience; His mighty armor must be put on (verse 11), and taken up (verse 13).

Some believers have done everything well in the Lord’s work, but they do not continue to stand firm.

The issue is not in what a believer has done, but, when the battle is over and the smoke clears, whether he is found standing true to the Savior.

Verses 14-17

The whole armor of God consists of six pieces.

1. “Truth” (verse 14a), is a knowledge of the truth of God’s Word (4:21). The ancient soldiers “loins” (“waist”), were “girt about” with a leather belt which held most of the other pieces of his armor in place. Similarly, the other pieces of the Christian’s armor depend on, and are held in place by, his spiritual “belt” or his knowledge of the “truth” of Scripture.
2. “The breastplate of righteousness (verse 14b), may be read “the breastplate which is righteousness.” It represents a holy character and moral conduct. Obedience to the “truth” known produces a godly life (“righteousness”).
3. “Preparation of the gospel of peace” (verse 15), means “eagerness that comes from the gospel of peace.” That is, as the Roman soldier wore special shoes called caligae on his feet, enabling him to advance against his enemy, so the Christian must have on his feet (possess), as sense of “eagerness” or “willingness” to advance against the Devil and take the fight to him. Such “eagerness” to contend with Satan “comes from the gospel of peace.” The gospel gives peace to the believer, freeing him from anxiety though he advances against such a powerful opponent.
4. “The shield of” (which is) “faith” (verse 16), means taking God at His word by believing His promises. Such trust will protect one from doubts induced by Satan.
5. “The helmet of salvation (verse 17a): Since the readers are already Christians (2:8), they are not here urged to be saved. (1 Thessalonians 5:8), describes this helmet as “the hope of salvation” that is, the certainty (assurance), of salvation.
6. “The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (verse 17b): The Greek term rendered “word” is not logos, referring to the whole Word of God, but rhema, referring to certain portions or selected verses of Scripture.

Ephesians 6:14 "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;"

“Stand therefore”:

For the third time the apostle calls Christians to take a firm position in the spiritual battle against Satan and his minions (see verses 11, 13).

Satan attacks believers through doctrinal confusion and falsehood.

Christians who are untaught in God’s Word fall easy prey to wrong ideas about the things of God, about salvation, sanctification, morality, heaven and hell, the second coming and every other biblical truth.

The believer who is confused about God’s Word cannot be effective in God’s work.

He is “tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine” (Eph. 4:14).

Whether confronting Satan's effort to distrust God, forsaking obedience, producing doctrinal confusion and falsehood, hindering service to God, bringing division, serving God in the flesh, living hypocritically, being worldly, or in any other way rejecting biblical obedience, this armor is our defense.

Such as when a young child dies or is permanently crippled, a husband or wife is taken away, a child turns away from the Lord, or we lose our business, job or our health, Satan or his demons may attempt to generate thoughts in the mind that place the blame on God.

This arena of conflict also involves attacking the truthfulness and sufficiency of Scripture.

“Girt ... with truth”:

The soldier wore a tunic of loose fitting cloth.

Since ancient combat was largely hand to hand, a loose tunic was a potential hindrance and it was also a danger.

A belt was necessary to cinch up the loosely hanging material.

Girding up was a matter of pulling in the loose ends as preparation for battle.

The belt that pulls all the spiritual loose ends in is “truth” or better, “truthfulness”.

The idea is of sincere commitment to fight and win without hypocrisy, self-discipline in devotion to victory.

Everything that hinders is tucked away; (2 Tim. 2:4; Heb. 12:1).

We are to be tightly secure in the Truth of God.

We are to hold fast to the Truth.

“The breastplate of righteousness”:

The breastplate was usually a tough, sleeveless piece of leather or heavy material with animal horn or hoof pieces sewn on, covering the soldier's full torso, protecting his heart and also some other vital organs.

Because righteousness or holiness, is such a distinctive characteristic of God Himself, it is not hard to understand why that is the Christians' chief protection against Satan and his schemes.

The breastplate of righteousness that we put on as spiritual armor against our adversary is the practical righteousness of a life lived in obedience to God's Word.

The putting on of righteous behavior in line with the “new self” (in 4:24-27), which having been done, will “not give the devil an opportunity”.

As believers, faithfully live in obedience to and communion with Jesus Christ, His own righteousness produces in them the practical, daily righteousness that then becomes their spiritual breastplate.

Lack of holiness, on the other hand, leaves them vulnerable to the great enemy of their souls (Isa. 59:17; 2 Cor. 7:1; 1 Thess. 5:8).

Being filled with God’s Word but not obedient to His Spirit has caused the downfall of very many believers.

Right doctrine without right devotion is a serious pitfall for many Christians.

The person who trusts in his own understanding instead of the Lord Himself (Proverbs 3:5), plays into Satan’s hands.

This very church at Ephesus within a few years became cold and mechanical in the expression of its orthodoxy.

Right theology without deep devotion to Christ cannot prevent the death of a church.

To put on the breastplate of righteousness is to live in daily, moment by moment obedience to our heavenly Father.

This part of God’s armor is holy living for which God supplies the standard and the power but for which we must supply the willingness.

God Himself puts on our imputed righteousness, but we must put on our practical righteousness.

Not to be armored with the breastplate of righteousness will first of all, cost the Christian his joy.

John’s first epistle contains many warnings and commands to believers, and these are given, along with the other truths of the letter “so that our joy may be made complete” (1 John 1:4).

In other words, lack of obedience brings lack of joy.

The only joyful Christian is the obedient Christian. Once saved, unholy living does not rob us of salvation, but it robs us of salvation’s joy.

The breastplate covers the heart.

The righteousness that we have is the righteousness of Christ.

We are clothed in His righteousness.

It was His precious shed blood that made us righteous (in right standing with God).

We have a brand new heart washed in the blood of the Lamb.

The heart of the Christian has the law of God etched into the fleshly part of the heart.

Our heart is stayed upon God.

Ephesians 6:15 "And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;"

“Shod with ... gospel of peace”:

Roman soldiers wore boots with nails in them to grip the ground in combat.

The gospel of peace pertains to the good news that, through Christ, believers are at peace with God and He is on their side (Rom. 5:6-10).

A Christian's spiritual footwear is equally important in his warfare against the schemes of the Satan, the devil.

If he has carefully girded his loins with truth and put on the breastplate of righteousness, but does not properly shod his feet with the preparation of the gospel, he is destined to stumble, fall, and suffer many defeats.

Preparation has the general meaning of readiness.

In this passage the gospel of peace refers to the good news that believers are at peace with God.

The unsaved person is helpless, ungodly, sinful and an enemy of God (Romans 5:6-10).

The saved person, on the other hand, is reconciled to God through the faith in His Son (see verses 10-11).

It is that confidence of divine support which allows the believer to stand firm, knowing that since he is at peace with God, God is his strength (see Romans 8:31, 37-39).

Our feet are secure in the good news of the gospel.

In Leviticus, we find that the big toe of the right foot was covered in the blood, so that our walk was pure before God.

This just means here, that our walk is steadfast, grounded, and secure in the good news of Jesus.

The believer who stands in the Lord's power need not fear any enemy, even Satan himself.

When he comes to attack us, our feet are rooted firmly on the solid ground of the gospel of peace, through which God changed from our enemy to our defender.

We who were once His enemies are now His children, and our heavenly Father offers us His full resources to “be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might” (Eph. 6:10).

Ephesians 6:16 "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."

“Above all”:

This introduces the last three pieces of armor.

The first were for long range preparation and protection and they were never taken off while on the battlefield.

The shield, helmet and sword, on the other hand, were kept in readiness for use when actual fighting began, hence the verbs (in verses 16-17), taking and take.

“The shield of faith”:

The Greek word usually refers to the large shield (2.5 x 4.5 feet), that protected the entire body.

The faith to which Paul refers is not the body of Christian doctrine (as the term is used in 4:13), but basic trust in God, the faith in Christ that appropriates salvation and continues to bring blessing and strength as it trusts Him for daily provision and help.

The believer’s continual trust in God’s word and promise is “in addition to all”, necessary to protect him from temptations to every sort of sin.

All sin comes when the victim falls to Satan’s lies and promises of pleasure, rejecting the better choice of obedience and blessing.

The substance of Christianity is believing that God exists and that He rewards those who seek Him (Heb. 11:6); putting total trust in His Son as the crucified, buried, risen and ascended Savior; obeying Scripture as His infallible and authoritative Word; and looking forward to the Lord’s coming again.

“Fiery darts”:

Temptations are likened to the flaming arrows shot by the enemy and quenched by the oil treated leather shield (Psalm 18:30; Prov. 30:5-6; 1 John 5:4).

The spiritual flaming missiles against which believers need protection would seem primarily to be temptations.

Satan continually bombards God's children with temptations to immorality, hatred, envy, anger, covetousness, pride, doubt, fear, despair, distrust, and every other sin.

The purpose of all of Satan's missiles, therefore, is to cause believers to forsake their trust in God, to drive a wedge between the Savior and the saved.

Without faith, it is impossible to please God.

Our faith in God causes us to be able to ward off attacks from the devil and his crowd.

We should have so much faith that we could move a mountain of problems, if necessary.

Let us look at Abraham the father of faith, and see what God promised him.

Genesis 15:1 "After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I [am] thy shield, [and] thy exceeding great reward."

Faith then is the shield.

Ephesians 6:17 "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:"

"The helmet of salvation":

The helmet protected the head, always a major target in battle.

Paul is speaking to those who are already saved and is therefore not speaking here about attaining salvation.

Rather, Satan seeks to destroy a believer's assurance of salvation with his weapons by using both doubt and discouragement.

Since Paul is addressing believers, putting on the helmet of salvation cannot refer to receiving Christ as Savior.

The only ones who can take up any piece of God's armor, and the only ones who are involved in this supernatural struggle against Satan and his demon forces, are those who are already saved.

This is clear from Paul's reference to the helmet as "the hope of salvation" (Isa. 59:17).

The fact that the helmet is related to salvation indicates that Satan's blows are directed at the believer's security and assurance in Christ.

The two dangerous edges of Satan's spiritual broadsword are discouragement and doubt.

To discourage us he points to our failures, our sins, our unresolved problems, our poor health, or to whatever else seems negative in our lives.

In order to make us lose confidence in the love and care of our heavenly Father.

Satan's most disturbing attack against believers is in tempting them to believe they have lost, or could lose, their salvation.

Few things are more paralyzing, unproductive or miserable than insecurity.

Jesus said, "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace" (John 16:33). How can a doubting heart have peace?

How can a person who lives in continual uncertainty about his salvation be comforted by such promises, when he is not sure that they apply to him or that they will always apply to him?

If he loses his salvation, he obviously loses those promises as well.

How could such a person not have a troubled and fearful heart?

Those promises would be a mockery to him.

But although a Christian's feelings about his salvation may be seriously damaged by Satan inspired doubt, his salvation itself is eternally protected and he need not fear its loss.

Knowing Satan's strategy, Jesus assures us that "all that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out ... And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day" (see John 6:37, 39).

Absolutely no circumstance, no failure, shortcoming, or sin, no matter how serious, can cause either Jesus or His Father to disown a person who is saved.

Satan wants to curse the believer with doubts, but the Christian can be strong in God's promises of eternal salvation in Scripture (John 6:37-39; 10:28-29; Romans 5:10; 8:31-39; Phil. 1:6; 1 Peter 1:3-5).

Security is a fact; assurance is a feeling that comes to the obedient Christian (1 Peter 3:1-10).

The helmet of salvation is that great hope of final salvation that gives us confidence and assurance that our present struggle with Satan will not last forever and we will be victorious in the end.

We know the battle is only for this life, and even a long earthly life is no more than a split second compared to eternity with our Lord in heaven.

We are not in a race we can lose.

“The sword of the Spirit”:

As the sword was the soldier’s only weapon, so God’s Word is the only needed weapon, infinitely more powerful than any of Satan’s.

The Greek term refers to a small weapon (6 to 8 inches long).

It was used both defensively to fend off Satan’s attacks, and offensively to help destroy the enemy’s strategies.

It is the truth of Scripture.

“Of the Spirit”:

This can also be translated “by the Spirit” or as “spiritual,” referring to the nature of the sword rather than its source.

From the context, we know that it is a spiritual weapon, to be used in our struggle against spiritual enemies.

As the Spirit of truth (John 14:7), the Holy Spirit is the believer’s resident truth Teacher, who teaches us all things and brings God’s Word to our remembrance (verse 26).

The sword of the spirit is, first of all, a defensive weapon, and is capable of deflecting the blows of an opponent.

It is the believer’s supreme weapon of defense against the onslaughts of Satan.

Unlike the shield however, which gives broad and general protection, the sword can deflect an attack only if it is handled precisely and skillfully.

It must parry the enemy weapon exactly where the thrust is made.

When Jesus was tempted by Satan in the wilderness, His defense for each temptation was a passage of Scripture that precisely contradicted the devil’s word (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10).

The Christian who doesn’t know God’s Word well cannot use it well.

Satan will invariably find out where we are ignorant or confused and attack us there.

Christians who rely simply on their experience of salvation and their feelings to get them through are vulnerable to every sort of spiritual danger.

They get into countless compromising situations and fall prey to innumerable false ideas and practices, simply because they are ignorant of the specific teachings of Scripture.

The helmet covers the head.

This is just saying that our mind is stayed on the fact that we are saved.

A mind stayed upon the Lord will not be swayed with false religion made attractive to the mind of man.

Our weapon is the Word of God.

Spirit here, is the Holy Spirit.

The Word of God is made clear to our understanding by the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

When Jesus baptizes in the Holy Spirit, it sets us on fire to carry the true Word of God to all who will receive it.

The two most powerful things in the world today are the spoken and the written Word of God.

Win battles for God with the Word of God.

The truly surrendered life is the life committed to aggressive, confrontive and unreserved obedience to all of God's commands.

The Word of God is so powerful it transforms men from the realm of falsehood to that of truth, from the realm of darkness to that of light, and from the realm of sin and death to that of righteousness and life.

It changes sadness into joy, despair into hope, stagnation into growth, childishness into maturity, and failure into success.

No believer has an excuse for not knowing and understanding God's Word.

Every believer has God's own Holy Spirit within Him as his own divine teacher and revealing God's divine Word.

Our only task is to submit to His instruction by studying the Word with sincerity and commitment.

We cannot plead ignorance or inability, only disinterest and neglect.

Ephesians 6:18 "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;"

This verse introduces the general character of a believer's prayer life.

1. "All prayer and supplication" focuses on the variety;
2. "Praying always" focuses on the frequency (Rom. 12:12; Phil. 4:6; 1 Thess. 5:17);
3. "In the Spirit" focuses on submission, as we line up with the will of God (Romans 8:26-27);
4. "Watching thereunto" focuses on the manner (Matt. 26:41; Mark 13:33);
5. "All perseverance" focuses on the persistence (Luke 11:9; 18:7-8);
6. "All saints" focuses on the objects (1 Sam. 12:23).

All the while that we are fighting in the girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, we are to be in prayer.

Prayer is the very spiritual air that the soldier of Christ breathes.

It is the all-pervasive strategy in which warfare is fought.

"Praying":

This is grammatically linked to "stand" (in verse 14).

Without prayer God's armor is inadequate to achieve victory.

Prayer is indispensable.

"Always":

Means "on every occasion," that is when Satan attacks.

"In the Spirit"

Signifies that with the Spirit's help such prayer for divine aid is to be made.

We are to be involved in all kinds of prayer, every form of prayer that is appropriate.

We may pray publicly or privately; in loud cries, in soft whispers, or silently; deliberately and planned or spontaneously; while sitting, standing, kneeling, or even lying down; at home or in church; while working or while traveling; with hands folded or raised; with eyes open or closed; with head bowed or erect.

The New Testament, like the Old Testament, mentions many forms, circumstances, and postures for prayer but prescribes none.

Jesus prayed while standing, while sitting, while kneeling, and quite probably in other positions as well.

We can pray wherever we are and in whatever situation we are in.

“Therefore I want the men in every place to pray” (1 Tim. 2:8), Paul said.

For the faithful, Spirit filled Christian; every place becomes a place of prayer.

To pray at all times, is to live in continual God consciousness.

Where everything we see and experience becomes a kind of prayer, lived in deep awareness of and surrender to our heavenly Father.

To obey this exhortation means that, when we are tempted, we hold the temptation before God and ask for His help.

When we experience something good and beautiful, we immediately thank the Lord for it.

When we see evil around us, we pray that God will make it right and be willing to be used of Him to the end.

When we meet someone who does not know Christ, we pray for God to draw that person to Himself and to use us to be a faithful witness.

When we encounter trouble, we turn to God as our Deliverer.

In other words, our life becomes a continually ascending prayer, a perpetual communing with our heavenly Father.

To pray at all times, is to constantly set our minds “on the things above, not on the things that are on earth (Col. 3:2).

To pray in the Spirit is to pray in the name of Christ, to pray consistent with His nature and will.

To pray in the Spirit is to pray in concert with the Spirit, who:

“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; 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” (Romans 8:26-27).

As the “Spirit of grace and of supplication” (Zech. 12:10), the Holy Spirit continually prays for us; and for us to pray rightly is to pray as He prays, to join our petitions to His and also our will to His.

It is to line up our minds and desires with His mind and desires, which are consistent with the will of the Father and the Son.

To be “filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18), and to walk in His leading and power is to be made able to pray in the Spirit, because our prayer will then be in harmony with His.

As we submit to the Holy Spirit, obeying His Word and relying on His leading and strength, we will be drawn into close and deep fellowship with the Father and the Son.

To pray in the right manner also involves praying specifically.

“Whatever you ask in My name,” Jesus promised, “that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it” (John 14:13).

God answers prayers in order to put His power on display.

And when we do not pray specifically, He cannot answer specifically and thereby clearly display His power and His love for His children.

To pray, as young children often do, “God bless the whole world,” is really not to pray at all.

We must think about particular people, particular problems, particular needs, and then pray about those things specifically and earnestly, so that we can see God’s answer and offer Him our thankful praise.

Most Christians never get serious about prayer until a problem arises in their own life or in the life of someone they love.

Then they are inclined to pray intently, specifically, and persistently.

Yet that is the way Christians should always pray.

Sensitivity to problems and needs of others, especially other believers who are facing trials or hardships, will lead us to pray for them “night and day”, as Paul did for Timothy (2 Tim. 1:3).

“Watching thereunto”:

This means “being vigilant in the very matter” of prayer.

They are to pray not just for themselves but also “for all saints.”

Spiritual combat is both an individual and corporate matter.

"Supplication":

Here, means petition.

So many people do not realize the power of praying in the Spirit.

That is when you have run out of words to say, and you let the Spirit of God pray through you for the matter.

God knows just exactly what to pray for.

Not only are we to petition God for ourselves in prayer, but for all the believers in Christ which are called saints.

Verses 19-20

Paul seeks their prayers in his behalf, that he may “boldly” (or plainly) “make known the ... gospel” (verse 19), and “speak” it “boldly” as it ought to be preached (verse 20).

Paul does not ask for prayer for his personal well being or physical comfort in the imprisonment from which he wrote, but for boldness and faithfulness to continue proclaiming the gospel to the unsaved no matter what the cost.

Ephesians 6:19 "And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,"

Paul did not plead or pray on his behalf, in order that his ankles, raw and sore from his shackles, might be healed.

Or that he might be freed from prison and suffering.

His deep concern was that utterance may be given unto me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel.

When Satan tempted him to keep quiet about Christ, he wanted God’s help to be bold and faithful to proclaim the gospel.

He wanted help in his own battle against Satan, and he pleaded with his brothers and sisters at Ephesus to pray toward that end.

Paul also needed the prayers of fellow believers because he was a leader.

Our enemy knows that when he strikes the shepherd, the sheep will scatter.

This "utterance" of speaking boldly about the mystery of God is speaking as an oracle of God.

I call this letting the Lord speak through your mouth.

Each time a minister preaches or teaches, he or she, should be allowing God to speak to the people through them.

The boldness comes when you realize that it is not you speaking in your own might, but God speaking through you.

Ephesians 6:20 "For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak."

Even in prison it was important to Paul that he would make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, because it was his own boldness that attracted the Praetorian Guard to the gospel and that inspired boldness in other witnessing Christians.

Even when he requested prayer for himself, Paul's purpose and motive were selfless, to further the gospel, to encourage other believers and to glorify his Lord.

We have mentioned before, that an ambassador does not express his own opinion, but is a glorified message carrier for the one who sent him.

Paul is saying, I can be bold, because this is God's message to you, not my message.

Verses 21-22

"Tychicus":

He was a convert from Asia Minor (modern Turkey), who was with the apostle during his first imprisonment in Rome, from where this epistle was written (see 3:1).

He accompanied Paul in taking an offering to the church in Jerusalem (Acts 20:4-6), and was sent by him on several missions (1 Tim. 4:12; Titus 3:12).

Ephesians 6:21 "But that ye also may know my affairs, [and] how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things:"

Realizing that the Ephesian Christians could not pray specifically or intelligently for him without more information, Paul added: But that you also may know about my circumstance, how I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make everything known to you.

And I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that you may know about us.

Tychicus, an Asian, had been chosen to accompany Paul and the others in taking the relief offering to Jerusalem (Acts 20:4-6), was with Paul during his first Roman imprisonment, and was frequently sent on missions by the apostle.

He not only delivered this letter for Paul but the one to Colossae as well.

In both cases being instructed to give the recipients additional information about the apostle's situation (Col. 4:7-9).

In both cases of these texts that he is called the beloved brother, because he was especially dear to Paul.

Ephesians 6:22 "Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and [that] he might comfort your hearts."

Tychicus was going to give them a report on the condition of Paul in his captivity.

Paul did not want to write of himself, but would let others report on his welfare.

He explains that they can trust him, because he is a brother in Christ.

Paul knew that a personal word from someone who had been with him recently would be a comfort to their hearts.

Paul had confided all of the personal news to him, and that he would bring this news to the church at Ephesus.

Paul knew their great fear of prison, and he wanted them to know that he was not suffering in prison.

The man in chains sought to comfort others.

Verses 23-24

This beautiful benediction sums up the major themes of this very personal letter; reminding readers of the peace (verses 15; 1:2; 2:14, 15, 17; 4:3); love (1:15; 4:2, 4:15-16; 5:25, 28, 33); and faith (verses 16; 1:15; 2:8; 3:12, 17; 4:5, 13); from God and Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 6:23 "Peace [be] to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

This is a typical benediction from Paul.

The only real peace is in Jesus.

Paul is trying to convey to them that God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ brings peace, and love, if they have enough faith to receive it.

In its beautiful clarity and simple dignity, the apostle's closing benediction here resists of it's being analyzed.

It is not unlike others of Paul's benedictions, yet it seems uniquely to reflect the themes of this rich epistle.

Certainly peace, love, and faith are recurring touchstones in the thought of this great letter.

Little wonder Paul gathers all three together and prays that they would be the experience and commitment of all believers.

Ephesians 6:24 "Grace [be] with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen."

Grace, or divine favor, was the gift Paul desired for all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with a love incorruptible.

That is the love that belongs to true believers; so Paul is really identifying the ones who will receive grace as only those whose love is not temporary and thus untrue but permanent and is thus genuine!

Unmerited favor "[grace]", be with all who love Jesus Christ and walk in His ways.

Romans 8:38-39 "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come," "Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

To apply obediently in the power of the Holy Spirit the principles of peace, love and faith taught in this epistle will yield to every believer the blessing and favor of God.

Ephesians Chapter 6 Continued Questions

1. Why should you put on the whole armor of God?
2. Christians are really in a _____.
3. We are soldiers in _____ army.
4. Where was Paul when he wrote this letter?
5. Preparation is necessary to _____ any _____.

6. What did Jesus fight the devil with?
7. What do we wrestle against?
8. What must we first do, before we fight?
9. Who is the real enemy of Christians?
10. What is the soldier's job?
11. Where must our strength to fight the battle come from?
12. What does the evil day speak of?
13. What should our loins be girt with?
14. What is the breastplate?
15. What is the righteousness of the Christian?
16. What should our feet be shod with?
17. Taking the shield of _____.
18. What does the shield do?
19. Take the helmet of _____.
20. What is the sword of the Spirit?
21. What are the two real powers in the world today?
22. What does "supplication" mean?
23. What is the "utterance" in verse 19?
24. What is an ambassador?
25. Who was Paul sending to tell of his welfare?
26. What is "grace"?