

Epistle to the Ephesians V

Chapter Six

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I think it's very appropriate that we have been going through this series in the book of Ephesians. We're going to go back to do the third chapter; you'll see why when get to the third chapter, because I feel that the third chapter is very inspiring and uplifting.

Here in Ephesians 6, Paul continues with his day-to-day instruction on how to live our lives. You notice all the way through there is no statement saying 'the day of the Lord is at hand.' The reason is because Paul is writing this so that he can solidify the Church in preparation for the fact that Christ was not coming really soon, and they needed to know how to conduct their lives and how to live their lives so that they then could fulfill and accomplish the plan of God in their lives so the brethren and the elders could continue after his death, in spite of all the things we mentioned in part five concerning what Paul knew what was going to happen to the Church and to the ministry and to the brethren.

Paul then deals with the situation continuing with the family relations. In Eph. 5 we have husband/wife relations, and in Eph. 6 he covers a little bit about child relations, a little bit about employer relations, and in this case servants and slave relations. Then he comes down to how we need to be fighting Satan the devil and what our spiritual warfare, in fact, really is.

Ephesians 6:1: "Children, obey your own parents and be in compliance with them in the Lord, because this is fair and equitable." In other words, there's nothing that God is asking of children to do that is not right. We've got the world out there telling all of the children in school—and every place else—'your mother and dad are old fogies and this nonsense about God has no standing in this school, and your parents are only going to hinder you from expressing yourself in your life because they don't want you to have sex, they don't want you go out and experiment with drugs, they don't want you to be rebellious to them.' So, that's what's happening in the world today.

As a matter of fact, that's what they're teaching in the schools. All of you who have children going to public school, it's a tremendous job to keep on top of all of those things, because that's just the way the world is, and that's just the way that it is with their friends, too.

So many times the things that I hear and you have heard is, 'Well, that's not fair!' when it comes

to one of your children wanting to do something. As I've explained to my children, there's nothing fair in this world and we're not living in a communist society here at home. What is right is what we need to do. Still, that becomes almost insurmountable for some of them. It becomes most difficult rearing and training and teaching children in this world.

There are so many factors beyond our control, especially when you consider that they go to school all day, when you consider that they spend time with their friends all the time, when you consider the activities before school and after school and all this sort of thing. When you get right down to it, the parents have virtually no time with their children at all to help them, teach them and do different things with them. So, it really makes it very, very difficult. It's a tremendous task and burden on every parent

- to fight the world
- to fight Satan
- to live in the Church
- to teach their children
- to rear them up
- to have good relations—husband and wife

All of these things become a tremendous job for us!

Paul says here that that is the fair, the equitable thing, or it is right. Then he quotes a Scripture, v 2: "Honor (and always hold in esteem)... [that's what honor mean] ...your father and your mother, which is the first commandment with a promise, in order that it may be well with you, and that you may be long-lived on the earth" (vs 2-3).

Today because that commandment is being broken, what do we have as the #1 reason for death among teenagers?

1. car wrecks
2. murder
3. suicide

Then all of the degrees of death, or the degrees of the lack of long life, which then is the result of taking drugs, fornication, abortion—which then is a result of all of these things that are crushing in on the children.

What all children need to understand and know is that you need to honor your parents and God will bless you. God is not against you and your parents are not against you. The biggest problem and difficulty is that you are against yourselves, because

you don't really have enough wisdom and understanding, or length of time in life, to know what's going on. And you have believed that because at age 16-21 you know every single thing in the world there is to know. The other thing that is against you is all of these that say they are your friends who want you to drink, to fornicate, to take drugs and rebel against your parents.

With that in mind, v 4: "And father..." It becomes most difficult for fathers because living in this world, if you have any children that have enough get-up-and-go to do things, then they're going to have a lot of direction and personality and strength on their own way. So, you end up sometimes with a lot of knockdown, drag-out, shout-'em-down, who's-in-charge type of thing, especially with the boys.

I talked to a woman once and I said, 'You know, boys are harder to raise than girls; that's been my experience.' She said, 'No, my experience has been that it's harder to raise girls.' So, I give up my hands and say, 'Whatever the circumstances are—boys or girls.' This makes it difficult for all of us, because living in the world the way it is today, it's awfully hard for you to do the things that are right and teach your children the things that are right, and still keep verse 4 in mind and not do this:

Verse 4: "And fathers do not provoke, frustrate or exasperate your children..." That's very difficult to not do that today, because the world is pulling so hard

- to rip them out of the family
- rip them out of your control
- rip their mind out of their cranium
- tear their emotions out of their heart

and all of that sort of thing. You have handle it however you can and be as firm and strong and tough as you need to be, and loving and kind as you need to be. All those things you have to gage and determine in your own family.

"...but nurture and care for them and bring them up in the discipline, instruction and admonition of the Lord" (v 4). I want you to notice one thing here though that Paul does not spend a lot of time delving into a lot of family relations. The reason being is that they didn't have the kind of society then that we have, and they didn't have all of the distractions that we have.

Can you imagine what Paul would have written had he lived in today's society with all the television, the movies, the rock music, and all the nonsense that's coming in; to where if you as an individual—let alone being a parent—do not abhor

and cannot stand any of that stupidity, nonsense and demonic aberrations, *you're nuts!*

- Can you imagine what he would have written?
- Can you imagine the kind of writing and power that would have been there?

I think we all fall short of being able to put up with and keep up with that as it would have been with ministers.

Then he gets into another situation here, which talks about and gives us the guidelines and what we need to be doing as workers.

Verse 5: "Servants and slaves..."—'doulos'—which means *slave, bought and paid for salves*; that you were owned by someone else. Today we don't have slavery, but I'll tell you one thing, we are enslaved to a system that proclaims freedom— isn't that right? *Yes, we are!*

- try doing without electricity
- try doing without paying your bills
- try doing without any money

So, we can abhor all we want the things of slavery, and the way it is depicted in modern day is only showing one side of what it may have been like at the worst end for slaves, because there were a lot of slaves who were treated decently and in a Christian manner. Paul is dealing with that here.

We need to understand that. We need to face reality. We need to face what it was and that's the way it is. Just to make all things sort of equal for all human beings, God has allowed every nation to be in slavery of form or another to another nation, so no one can say, 'Oh, God, you made us slaves!' Let's understand that.

Verse 5: "Servants and slaves be obeying and be in compliance with those who are your masters in this physical life, with respectful deference, veneration and reverence, and do so in genuine sincerity and straightforward simplicity from your heart, just as you would to Christ."

That shows the whole attitude. When we have in our working relations with people this kind of attitude—not that we are to be politically climbing and you can turn that coin on the other side and have all the vanity and all the stupidity and power grabbing that goes on today in our society. People on the lowest level are even trying to crawl over on the ones next to them. It just becomes a 'mad dash' as it were.

But all of that aside, if we have this kind of attitude here with genuine sincerity and with straightforward simplicity; just from the heart as we would to Christ. If we do that to each other, let alone

to our bosses or employers (if you're not working for yourself); but then if you are self-employed, you have to be that way to your clients—don't you? Do you think that if you're self-employed you can go out and beat up your clients and be mean and nasty with them and still have a business? No way possible! This applies to everything, every circumstance, to have this kind of attitude.

Verse 6: "Never with eye-service..." Isn't that the way it always is? When the boss is away the workers will play. When the boss comes around, everyone hurries up and scurries up and does everything.

So, I put this parenthetical statement: "... (only while you are under scrutiny or inspection), aiming to please men..." (v 6). Then you'll find out in the long run is what you need to do is do the best you can do and let everything go from there. If you don't do the best you can do, then you're going to be falling short. If you only do what you're supposed to do when others are around, then it's going to create other difficulties for you. This is just straightforward and good and Christian advice for all of us.

"...but rather, be as the servants and slaves of Christ..." (v 6). It's awfully hard, especially if you have a harsh taskmaster for a boss. Keep in mind, you are to serve him as you would Christ, and to say, "This man I need to respect as Christ." Now, that's awfully hard to do—isn't it?

"...performing and accomplishing the will and desire of God from your innermost being and soul" (v 6)—from your heart. That's what we need to do. If we do these things for each other; if we do these things for the people we're working for.... On the other hand, Jesus said, 'Be wise as serpents, harmless as doves.' Don't lay your whole life out there to be tromped on, ruined, run over, trampled down and destroyed. In doing this you lose such simplicity that you become stupid. God says, 'Be wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove.' Do that which is right, because that's what God wants you to do.

Verse 7: "Coupled with goodwill and heartiness... [be zealous; do it with enthusiasm] ...and doing your service as to the Lord, and not to men." I guarantee you that if you do that, you won't have worry about you're going to get fired when it comes time to trim down/cut the workforce, because you're going to be able to have the accomplishment that will help make you a valuable and loyal employee, or whatever it may be.

Verse 8: "All the while knowing... [always keep all of this in mind] ...and realizing that whatever good and right things each one may perform and accomplish, he shall receive back to

himself (his recompense) from the Lord, and it doesn't make any difference whether he is a servant and slave or a free man."

Again, as the Apostle Paul does, he tries to cover all the bases here. So, not only did they have slaves who attended church, but they also had masters who attended church.

Here were the instructions for those masters on how to handle their slaves. Or, if we could do it today, if you are in charge of people then here are some good things that you need to realize and always keep in mind, and to be practicing in your relationship with your employees that either work for you, or that you as a foreman or supervisor may be in charge of:

Verse 9: "And you masters, also be doing and practicing the same toward them, omitting and refraining from threatening and harsh language..." Of course, you know how that goes over—like a lead balloon—and every time you get angry, it's happened with me, there's always something you say and there's always hurt feelings, and there are things that happen that are awfully hard to go back and undo. Isn't that right? *Yes, that's right!*

When you work in a situation where your boss is always threatening you—if *you don't do this you're going to be fired*—and you live under tension, you live under harshness—it creates problems.

What if you were a slave to a master and you couldn't get away? You couldn't say to this guy, 'I quit!' Couldn't do it because you were *owned* by him. It really put everyone in a difficult situation. Keep that in mind when we're reading this, also.

"...always knowing and remembering that your own Master is in heaven..." (v 9). Remember what it says: 'Give and it shall be given back to you.' It's the same way, if you are difficult and harsh and hard-hearted, then you know it's going to come back to you one way or the other. What Paul is saying to those who were slave masters is, 'Look, treat them with love, kindness, fairness, and I want you to remember this, whatever you're doing with them, remember that your Master is in heaven.'

"...and there is never respect of persons or partiality toward anyone, with Him" (v 9). There is no person that God is going to respect, because that person is that person.

Let's go to John 8 and we'll see a good example of this of what Jesus did during the Feast of Tabernacles when there came those to him—while he was preaching at the Feast of Tabernacles—and they were reminding Him of *who they were!* Remember, this was during the Feast of Tabernacles and Jesus was performing miracles, and all of this

sort of thing. This is actually on what we know as and we call *The Last Great Day*—the last day of the Feast.

John 8:31: “Therefore, Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him... [How deep was their belief? *Not very deep!*] (He told them): ...‘If you continue in My Word... [in My message; what I’ve told you] ...you are truly My disciples. And you shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall set you free” (vs 31-32).

One little insight into this: ***Truth is never understood unless you do it!*** You won’t know about God’s Word unless you do it. You won’t understand about God’s Word unless you follow it. Just a very simple thing, and Jesus was trying to teach them: “...the Truth shall set you free.”

Notice their answer; these are the ones who said they believed in Jesus, v 33: “They answered Him, ‘We are Abraham’s seed, and have never been in bondage to anyone. What do You mean by saying, ‘You shall become free?’” The truth was, all of Judea and Jerusalem were in fact under the Roman boot and heel of captivity! They were in bondage to them even though they didn’t have the chains and shackles on their wrists and ankles of being slaves being sent off to a galley to row one of these boats (as you might remember from *Judah Ben Hur!* How he went out there and he was shackled as a slave and chained to the oar.

Jesus brings it out very clearly. He says, ‘It really doesn’t matter whether you’re free or whether you’re bond in this particular case, because, v 34: “Jesus answered them, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a servant of sin.’” In the final analysis in everything that there is, we’re a slave one way or the other—either to God as a servant of God, or to sin as a servant of sin.

Paul said, ‘We be thanked that you *were* the servant of sin, but *are now* the servant of righteousness (Rom. 6_[transcriber’s correction]). That’s what he’s saying here. If you’re going to be sinning, you’re the servant, you’re the slave, you’re held into that sin by that sin, and to whom a person is brought into bondage, he is that person’s slave.

Verse 35: “And the servant does not live in the house forever; *but* the Son lives forever. Therefore, if the Son shall set you free, you shall truly be free. I know that you are Abraham’s seed...” (vs 35-37).

God doesn’t respect people. It doesn’t matter who you are. As a Christian before God that is what is important. Who your father was, your mother was, and what your ancestry and genealogy is has no standing before God. God isn’t going to be any

respector of persons. And to prove that whole very thing, the summation of what happened here was that God sent that whole nation off into captivity because they didn’t believe and they rejected Christ. Did God respect them because of who they were and hold back the captivity from them? *No! Not at all; not in any way!*

“...but you are seeking to kill Me, because My words do not enter into your *minds*. I speak the things that I have seen from My Father, and you do the things that you have seen from your father.’ They answered and said to Him, ‘Our father is Abraham.’ Jesus said to them, ‘If you were Abraham’s children, you would do the works of Abraham” (vs 37-39).

What did Abraham do? Genesis 26:5—the promise came to Isaac, “Because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.”

- What else did Abraham do?
- *Abraham believed God!*
- Did these people believe Christ?
- *Well, it says they believe on Him!*
- How much did they believe on Him?
- *Just long enough to go through this conversation and try and stone Him!*

John 8:40: “But now you seek to kill Me, a man who has spoken the Truth to you, which I have heard from God; Abraham did not do this. You are doing the works of your father.’ Then they said to Him, ‘We have not been born of fornication...’ (vs 40-41). Doesn’t this tell us an awful lot? Doesn’t that one statement tell us an awful lot? That tells us that

- they *knew* Who Jesus was.
- they *knew* the circumstances of His birth
- they *knew* when He was born

Also, the false rumor went around that He was born of illicit sex. Is that story still spread around to this very day? *Yes!* So, they threw it back in His face.

“...We have one Father, *and that is* God.’ Therefore, Jesus said to them, ‘If God were your Father, you would love Me, because **I proceeded forth and came from God**. For I have not come of Myself... [or that is by Myself or by My authority or on My own] ...but **He sent Me**. Why don’t you understand My speech? Because you cannot *bear* to hear My words” (vs 41-43).

Why could they not hear His word? Verse 44: “You are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father you desire to practice. He was a murderer from *the* beginning, and has not stood in the Truth because there is no Truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he is speaking from his

own *self*; for he is a liar, and the father of it.”

You can read the rest of the account there, but that just leads into the next section in Eph. 6, because there is always going to be that encounter that we are going to have. Not only with the forces of evil, but also with the things that are in the world. Right then, Jesus was right up against it with the people there, and later on concerning the whole thing concerning the crucifixion of Christ and how that Satan was behind that 100%.

Ephesians 6:10: “Finally, my brethren, for whatever else remains, **be strengthened in the Lord...**” That’s where our strength needs to come from; everything.

- Let this Feast of Tabernacles strengthen you in the Lord!
- Let the Word of God strengthen you in the Lord!
- Let the Spirit of God strengthen you in the Lord!

“...and in the might of His very own dynamic power and energy” (v 10). Brethren, that means using God’s Spirit to grow, change, overcome, to put away sin, to grow in righteousness and all of this.

Verse 11 becomes profoundly and absolutely important: “Be clothing yourselves, putting on the complete armor...” The whole armor of God, the complete armor. Don’t just have part of it. Don’t just use a little bit of it. Don’t get bogged down in such a way that you really don’t know how to use it.

You can go clear back to the time when David went out to fight Goliath. He came out and everyone said ‘We can’t get out there and fight because this Goliath is out there and all of the armies of Israel can’t fight.’ David came in bringing food to his brothers, and he said, ‘Why aren’t you fighting. This Goliath out here, he’s just holding the armies at bay.’ So, David went up to Saul and said, ‘Look, I’ve killed a lion, I’ve killed a bear, I’ve done this and that, now let me go fight him.’

What happen was that Saul took him in put his helmet on him, put the armor on him, gave a sword, and David stood there and looked at all of this and he could hardly move and use it; took off all that because he couldn’t fight with that. So, he took the five smooth stones and he used a slingshot and killed Goliath and took Goliath’s own sword and cut off Goliath’s head.

There’s a good lesson for us in that. We’re to put on the whole armor of God, but ***we have to make sure it’s the right armor:***

- not the wrong armor
- not that which doesn’t fit

- not that which doesn’t work
- not that which we cannot use

It’s the whole armor ***of God!***

“...(that is, the entire array of spiritual weapons—both offensive and defensive), that you may be able, being inwardly fortified, to stand against and resist the crafty scheming and deceptive methods of the devil” (v 11). That’s so true for us. The devil is right there all of the time.

Let’s get our bearings and understand a little bit more about that. Let me read to you from James 4 concerning the devil and what he has done. This is exactly what is happening to the whole world and what the Church has been subjected to.

James 4:1: “*What is the cause of quarrels and fightings among you? Is it not mainly from your own lusts that are warring within your members?*” Lusts then become a field of activity for Satan to work against us, because he is there with all of the greed, with all of the lust, with all of the things pulling forward against us. which “...are warring within your members.”

Verse 2: “You lust, and have not; you kill, and are jealous, and are not able to obtain; you fight and quarrel, but still you do not have, because you do not ask. *Then* you ask, and you do not receive, because you ask with evil motives, that you may consume *it* on your own lusts. *You* adulterers and adulteresses, don’t you know that the friendship of the world is enmity *with* God?...” (vs 2-4).

Why? *Because the world is Satan’s territory! The world is Satan’s playground!* If you want to be a friend with the world you’re going to be an enemy with God. We have to choose what we want.

“...Therefore, whoever desires to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, ‘The spirit that dwells in us lusts with envy?’” (vs 4-5). Do you think that Bible says in vain how evil and horrible and rotten that human nature is? *or* Is there for just some sort of spiritual antidote for us? *or* Some sort of spiritual explanation for our sin? NO! Human nature is evil, wicked, deprived, avarice, greedy, lustful and murderous (Mark 7:21—from within come all of these things out of the heart of men).

Verse 6: “But He gives greater grace.... [to Christians who are really asking] ...This is the reason it says, ‘God sets Himself against *the* proud, but He gives grace to *the* humble.’ Therefore, submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (vs 6-7). That’s one of the greatest things you need to do: Resist the devil! Resist those temptations! And he will have to flee from you.

Verse 8: “Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you...” There’s the way to do it: resist the devil, draw close to God and God will draw close to you. We have to seek God. God says we will find Him.

“...Cleanse *your* hands, you sinners, and purify *your* hearts, you double-minded! Be grieved and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into grieving, and *your* joy into mourning. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you” (vs 8-10). This is what James is telling us how to avoid the fight, difficulty and becoming a victim of Satan the devil.

Let’s go to 1-Peter 5, and there are some really good instructions for us here in what we need to do considering our relationship with Christ and how to fight the devil. One of the things the devil can work on is pride and vanity, then comes jealousy, lust and greed—all of these are the avenues and approaches that Satan can use to get a wedge in the door to start going against your life.

1-Peter 5:2—talking about the ministers: “Feed the flock of God *that is* among you, exercising oversight not by compulsion, but willingly; not in fondness of dishonest gain, but *with an eager attitude.*” So, the same attitude that Paul is telling the servants and slaves to have toward their masters, those who are serving and feeding the flock need to have that same kind of attitude.

Verse 3: “Not as exercising lordship over *your* possessions; but *by* being examples to the flock of God. And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested... [that is coming] ...you shall receive an unfading, *eternal* crown of glory. In the same manner, *you* younger men be subject to *the* older men; and all of *you* be subject to one another, being clothed with humility...” (vs 3-5).

Sounds like they were having a problem with vanity among the ministry—right? Stop and think! All the problems that there has ever been in the ministry have been from vanity and self-exaltation. What has happened to every one of them?

- Is God able to abase them?
- Is God able to take care of them?
- Is God able to correct them?
- *Yes!*

But how much easier it would have been for the ministers and all the brethren involved in this if they would have followed what he said here.

He said to humble yourself and be “...clothed with humility, because God sets Himself against *the* proud, but He gives grace to *the* humble. Be humbled therefore under the mighty hand of God so that He may exalt you in *due* time; **casting all**

your cares upon Him, because He cares for you” (vs 5-7).

One of the wedges, the openings, or the fiery darts, or the missiles of passion that Satan is going to throw at any one of us is when we have a lot of worry, a lot of anxiety, and we have all of these things that we’re holding and bundling up in ourselves, then this gives an open door and opportunity for Satan.

Verse 8: “Be sober! Be vigilant! For your adversary *the* devil is prowling about as a roaring lion, seeking anyone he may devour. Whom resist, steadfast in the faith...” (vs 8-9). That’s how we are to resist the devil! This is how then we clothe ourselves with the whole armor of God!

“...knowing *that* the same afflictions are being fulfilled among your brethren who *are* in *the* world” (v 9). That is a tremendous thing for us to know and to understand in relationship to all of these things that we’re doing.

Let’s go back to the book of Ephesians and let’s finish this section as we’re going along here; there’s quite a bit here for us. We need to be really aware of the activities and the motives and the movements of Satan the devil. We covered a lot of that when we did the series: *Satan’s Ten Most Believable Lies!*

Ephesians 6:11: “Be clothing yourselves... [that is a command; that’s in the imperative tense, something you should be doing] ...putting on the complete armor (that is, the entire array of spiritual weapons—both offensive and defensive) that you may be able, being inwardly fortified, to stand against and resist the crafty scheming and deceptive methods of the devil. Because for us... [as Christians] ...the struggle, conflict and fight is not against, or directed toward flesh and blood, but rather, against the principalities and rulers, against the authorities and powers, against the world rulers and paramount powers of this age of spiritual darkness...” (vs 11-12).

It’s going to appear as light, it’s going to appear as great, it’s going to appear as marvelous, because Satan the devil was the one who was Lucifer, to be the *light bringer*, and the light that he is going to bring is *darkness* on all of this world. Those of us who are living in the end of the age—the end of the time—we need to be especially and particularly aware of this.

- We know that *the mark of the beast* is going to come.
- We know that being Christians sooner or later is going to expose us to the world for what we are—and they aren’t going to like us.

- We know that Satan would like to derail everyone of us at any time to cause us to give up on salvation; to cause us to give up on the grace of God.

This is why Paul is saying, ‘Look, our struggle is not just against human beings, but against these spiritual powers of darkness.

“...(which holding sway and exercising control over the unbelieving and ungodly, constantly enslaving them to their own avarice lusts)...” (v 12). Nothing could be any more descriptive than what happens with all of those who enslave people to the terrible condemnation of drugs: cocaine, heroin and all of this sort of thing. Guess who the power is behind that. Guess who? *Satan the devil!* Who gets the wealth and riches from it? Who said, ‘I will give you all the wealth and the riches in the world if you would but bow down and worship me’? *Satan the devil!* That’s what he told Jesus.

“...yes, our struggle is actually against the demonic spirits of wickedness, who are influencing and controlling those in high places” (v 12). That’s the way it is in the world today. That’s what we have to fight against constantly, not only in our own lives, but also in everything around us, because we are bombarded like no other generation ever has been.

Verse 13: “Because of this, take up the entire array of God’s armor so that you may have the power and capacity to withstand and resist the onslaught in the evil day, and having done everything... [that is in the name of Christ whatever we do in word or deed do in the name of Christ] ...(that is, being always spiritually prepared) to stand.” We have to stand for the Truth every day, but there’s a time when we are going to have to absolutely stand and resist the evil, the world, the lusts and everything that there is. In our lives on a daily basis, we have to be able to take that stand.

Verse 14: “Stand, therefore... [here’s how to do it] ...having **your loins girded, protected and encased with Truth...**” Because the easiest place to get you is just thrust a sword, spear or knife right into your inward parts and BAMO, you’re dead!

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They can get a knife and slip it between the fifth rib and get the heart and you’re a goner! Spiritually speaking it’s the same way. We have to have our loins—our midriff, our whole body—“...encased in Truth...” as it were.

“...and having **put on the armored breastplate of righteousness...** [that means the strength and power of the righteousness of Christ] ...(which is your right standing with God, by His grace, through Christ)...” (v 14). That’s the only

way you’re going to fight; it’s got to be a spiritual battle; it is a spiritual thing that we are against.

- when we have this *right standing*
- when we know that Christ is there
- when we have *the faith* that God will do it

God will help us! It doesn’t matter what anyone can do to us; it doesn’t matter one wit!

This is “...to protect and safeguard your hearts and minds; and having your feet shod with the preparation and basic foundation of the Gospel of Peace (that is, the peace, harmony and tranquility of God); in addition to everything else, having taken up the shield of the faith and belief, with which you will be able to extinguish and totally suppress the burning, fiery darts and missiles of passion, temptation and lust from the Wicked One (thereby preventing an entrance into the door of your mind, so that he cannot exploit an opportunity to cause you to sin)” (vs 14-16).

Let’s understand something that happens to Christians: You go along nicely minding your own business, nicely doing what you want to do and your mind is not anywhere on any kind of sin at all whatsoever, and all of a sudden here comes a thought in your mind. Where did that come from? Did you want that thought? *No!* You didn’t want that thought. That’s one of those *fiery darts* that Satan is throwing trying to get you to think *his* way.

That’s why then you have to be able to fight off those things. What do you do? *Just pray right then and ask God to give you the strength to get rid of it and put it away from you!* Get it away. If you don’t, then sin is going to be there and lust is going to take place, and it’s going to work and brood and ferment and manifest it’s own way. Then it’s going to bring forth sin. And James says, ‘Then sin, when it is done, brings forth death!’ That’s why it’s so very important with this spiritual fight.

- that we grow
- that we change
- that we overcome
- that we use the spiritual things that God has given us

Verse 17: “Also, **putting on the helmet of salvation...**” He saves it for last, not that any of the ones before this are of any less importance, but this is the most important. This is the most important. You can be wounded in the arm and still live. You can be wounded in the side and still live. You can be wounded in the legs and still live. You can even have your feet cut off and still live. But if you have your mind blown out there’s no way you’re going to live. That’s why he put it here concerning the “...helmet of salvation...”

“...(for the protection of your mind and your inward, Godly character—which is Christ in you by the Spirit of God the Father)... [That’s why we have on this symbolic *helmet of salvation*:

- to guide us
- to protect us
- to keep our mind
- to bring us to the day of salvation

—which the whole Feast of Tabernacles is picturing—

- to live with Christ
- to be in the Kingdom of God

This is what we need to do to get there, because it is a spiritual fight, which is Christ in you by the Spirit of God the Father.

“...take up and always be using the Sword of the Spirit, **which is the Word of God**” (v 17). That’s why it’s so important that we know and understand the Word of God and be able to use it, be able to live by it, be able to have it in our heart and mind and inward parts, and let it always be there. Let that Word of God be that thing, which is going to give the tool of the Spirit of God within our minds to work.

- How are you going to cut out and exorcise those thoughts? *By the Spirit of God that is in you!*
- How is the Spirit of God going to work? *Through the Word of God!*

That’s why

- You know why study is important!
- You know why praying is important!
- You know why using the Word of God is important!

This then is the sword that cuts out those things of lust, passions and the missiles that come from Satan the devil to disturb you and upset you. Always be using the *sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God* and have it sharp so that you know! Have it meaningful so that you’re able to use it!

Verse 18: “And all of these things are **accomplished through prayer**...” That’s how they’re all done. Brethren, I think one of things where people fall short most of is in praying, then in studying. When those things accumulate and you get a guilty feeling and you don’t pray and you don’t go back to God and you don’t do those things—you’ll do it later or whatever—that’s when things deteriorate and begin to fall apart. That’s been my experience and I know that’s been your experience. That’s why Paul is saying that “...all of these things are accomplished through prayer...”

“...(which is the source of your spiritual strength, and enables you to be fully ready for battle)...” (v 18). How powerful is Satan’s way? We can even have the case where people have not been exposed to Satan.

Let’s go back to Rev. 20 and let’s see what happens when Satan is again loosed. We’ve gone through the whole Millennium and what happens? Satan has been bound, everything is glorious and wonderful, people are entering into the Kingdom of God and all that sort of thing. Notice what happens immediately when Satan is loosed. If you don’t think Satan is powerful, and if you don’t think that our adversary has ability:

Revelation 20:7: “Now, when the thousand years have been completed, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison; and he shall go out to deceive the nations that *are* in the four corners of the earth...” (vs 7-8). As soon as Satan gets out he deceives.

- Did these people know about God?
- *Sure they knew about God!*
- Did they understand what was going on?
- *Sure they understood what was going on!*

But I want you to notice the severity and the power that Satan has. He gathers them to battle. He incites them and they are ready to fight God—those that become obstinate and rebellious and disobedient to God. It’s really quite a battle that’s going on there—isn’t it? *Yes, it is!*

Satan has power and ability, and you see what happened. These people were deprived of the Holy Spirit because they didn’t *believe God*. Then when Satan was loosed on them, immediately they went into this rebellion and fighting God.

While we have the Spirit of God—which is true—we are living in this world that is controlled by Satan. We, in fact, are the enemy of Satan!

- Does he want to destroy the enemy? *Yes, he does!*
- Does he want to destroy us? *Yes, he does!*

Any way he can!

- by whatever subtle means
- by whatever lust or temptation
- by whatever thing he can put out there to you *to get you*.

Satan will want to, so we don’t want to give him any kind of opening. or any kind of permanent foothold into the door of our mind or the activity of our lives. We have to use prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit so that God will give us the strength.

Ephesians 6:18: “And all these things are accomplished through prayer (which is the source of

your spiritual strength, and enables you to be fully ready for battle)...” Do you realize how important that is; how absolutely necessary that it is. We don’t want to let ourselves get out of training—do we? We don’t want to let ourselves be unclothed and naked to the enemy—do we? Isn’t that what has happened to the Laodiceans? *Yes!* They are naked, blind, open to the enemy and he has enticed them

- with riches
- with wealth
- with standing
- with understanding

—so that they become lukewarm.

Go back and study again all the seven churches in Rev. 2 & 3. Who was the great adversary against the people of God? *Satan the devil!* This is absolutely important what we have through the power of prayer and God’s Spirit, this battle array on us for that we’re ready for battle.

“...even by earnest supplication and entreaty at all times in the Holy Spirit of God...” (v 18). There are times we have to really beseech God; we have to go to God and say: ‘Oh, God, I don’t understand, give me understanding. This is too much; I cannot handle this. Help me with this, this is a battle! Please give me the strength! Please give me the armor! Please give me the ability through Christ to understand and go through this thing!’

There are times when we just have to go to God that way in “...supplication and entreaty at all times in the Holy Spirit of God; in this very thing (the spiritual battle for your soul)...” (v 18). That’s what it is. Satan the devil is there.

- He doesn’t want us to see you attain to the resurrection.
- He doesn’t want to see you in the Kingdom of God and live with Christ and rule and reign with Him a thousand years.
- *NO!*

He wants you to be a victim; he wants you to be:

- shipwrecked
- car-wrecked
- destroyed
- self-destruct
- do spiritual suicide

—as Esau who sold his inheritance for a small, pitiful bowl of porridge. He is there!

“...always be watchful and vigilant, with all perseverance and supplication concerning all of the saints” (v 18). That’s why we need to pray for each other, brethren,

- that we can be healed
- that we can be strong
- that we can grow in grace and knowledge

- that we can overcome all of our little difficulties and problems; and major difficulties and problems that we have

I’m not without need for your prayers for me. I need them! In the work and business that I am in right now, real estate has been absolutely the bottom of the stack. It has been very difficult for me to even make enough to just exist. God has helped me in it, and I have been able to have enough to exist and get by. I’m trusting in God to do so. That’s just the way that it is. But the only thing that is going to solve the problem is for God to intervene and bless me and bless you. We pray for each other that God is able to be with us. That’s what Paul is saying here in everything that we do.

Verse 19: “And even for me... [Paul’s saying being in prison here] ...in order that an opportunity for speaking and preaching with all boldness and courage may be given to me, to make known the mystery of the Gospel” (vs 18-19). We need that, too, brethren.

The time has come that now we need to ask God to help us to grow. That we ask God to help us to really reach out and help other people. I think that we have had enough time to be healed from the spiritual battles of the past. I think we have had enough time to overcome what we have gone through. Now that we can be strong enough, now that we can—with God’s Spirit—ask God to help us, to open an opportunity for these things. If God wants me to, I will. If there is someone else that I can help and do it with, that will be practical, that’s fine.

Whatever God wants, that it will be opened up so that we can preach with all boldness and courage that God can possibly give us to make known the *mystery of the Gospel*, which then is everything about the Gospel and Christ, being God, being human, dying and being resurrected, and intervening and sending His Holy Spirit. Those things just need to be and God can do it.

Verse 20: “For which (on behalf of which) I am an ambassador and envoy in bondage and chains, in order that, even in this condition... [Paul was not waiting to be loosed from prison to preach. He said, even in this condition]: ...I may be as bold and courageous as it is necessary to speak. But that you may also know and understand the things and circumstances concerning me, what I am doing and how I am fairing, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful and believing servant in the Lord, shall make known everything to you; whom I have sent and dispatched to you for this very purpose, that he might make known the things concerning us, and that he might encourage, comfort and uplift your hearts” (vs 20-22).

I don't have anyone to send to you, so we're going to do the next best thing: we send these DVDs, CDs, etc.—which if Paul would have had them there I'm sure he would have used them to send to the brethren.

Verse 23: “May the peace, harmony and tranquility of God be to the brethren, and may you have that Godly Divine love, coupled with faith and belief, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace (God's Divine favor, blessing and goodness, even God's generous gift) be with all of those who are loving our lord and Master Jesus (with Godly divinely inspired love) in sincerity, integrity, genuineness and incorruption. AMEN” (vs 23-24).

That is the expanded version of the book of Ephesians to this point, and in part six we are going to go through the third chapter and we're going to see the tremendous and absolutely elevated exalted heights of Paul's understanding of ***the mystery and revelation of God, that God gave to him of God's plan and purpose for us and for the calling that He has given us!***

Scriptures in Ephesians from *The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians, An Inspirational Study* by Fred R. Coulter

All other Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Ephesians 6:1-9
- 2) John 8:31-39
- 3) Genesis 26:5
- 4) John 8:40-44
- 5) Ephesians 6:10-11
- 6) James 4:1-10
- 7) 1 Peter 5:2-9
- 8) Ephesians 6:11-18
- 9) Revelation 20:7-8
- 10) Ephesians 6:18-24

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 6
- Mark 7:21

Also referenced: Sermon Series:

Satan's Ten Most Believable Lies!

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