

In Ephesians 6, the Lord has told us how to prepare for this war:

Ephesians 6:10-13 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.
 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.
 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*. 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.

The time we're most vulnerable is when we aren't aware we have a problem – when we aren't paying attention to where we're going. You're walking down the street not paying attention and WHAM you fall into a hole someone dug. Or, you're driving down the Interstate, enjoying the scenery and WHAM you drive into the cars stopped ahead of you, that you didn't notice. In life, we know we have to pay attention and often some action on our part is required to avoid problems.

It's the same with being a Christian. It doesn't matter what you think, and whether you call it war or not, we have an enemy who wants to kill us – Satan.

1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: ⁹Whom resist stedfast in the **faith**, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

Satan wants to devour us – to consume us. The Lord tells us we **must** “Resist stedfast” – we must resist continually and we must be prepared, and expect, to do so.

And it's a war not just because we have a mortal enemy to resist,
 We have a **captain** to fight for – Christ.
 We have A **banner** to fight under the Cross.
 And we have certain **rules of war** by which we are to govern ourselves – **in the faith!**

Eph 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might

The apostle called them “brethren” this is a good thing. But, do you think he meant: “You're brethren – you're finished, go out and play till suppertime” – NO!
 Yes, we've become his brethren by obedience to the Gospel, but there's more to do!
 We must be strong and have power. For what? Paul told Timothy:

2 Timothy 2:3,4 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. ⁴No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of *this* life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

He's talking about heart here. We must be stout hearted. Soldiers must be both stout-hearted **and** well armed. To be **good** soldiers we must **endure**. **We have to be engaged in the fight – we can't run and hide, or ignore it, and please Christ.**

We can be well armed on the outside, but if we don't have a **stout heart**, armor will do little good because we won't use it.

Spiritual strength and courage **both** are very necessary for our spiritual warfare. We must be prepared in our **minds** for the fight.

That's what he tells us: **Be strong in the Lord**, think of Him, look to His example, His cause, what he left heaven to do:

Hebrews 12:3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

Jesus left heaven to come and suffer here and He wants and **expects** us to do the same!

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.

All soldiers make a sacrifice. That's why it's right that we honor them.

But soldiers must have strength also. We have no sufficient strength of our own. We need Strength of spirit – for courage, to avoid cowardice. We need Strength of arm – for strength, to avoid weakness.

Be strong therefore: be strong for **service**, strong for **suffering**, strong for **fighting**, strong for **encouragement** to others. How can we do these things?

Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

In **his** strength we go forth and go on. **By faith**, we take hold of the grace and help God offers to enable us to do that which we of ourselves cannot do. It's of and from God.

This warfare is a necessary part of our growth – our growth in that thing without which it is impossible to please him – FAITH!

Jeremiah 17:5 Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD.

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

We must put on – get and use - **all** the Christian graces, the **whole** armor, that no part be naked and exposed to the enemy. All the things Jesus showed us:

It is called the armor **of God**, because he both prepares and gives it to us. We have no armor of our own. Nothing will stand except the armor of God.

This armor is prepared for us, but **we must put it on**; Armor sitting in the corner is useless to us – WE WILL DIE!!!

We will die because of our enemy – the Devil. **“that he may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil”**—The Devil by force or fraud will tempt us in every way. He will not overlook or miss any weakness of ours. We should not count or hope he will.

The Lord shows what our danger is, and the great need we have to put on this whole armor, considering what sort of enemies we have to deal with—the devil and all the powers of darkness:

Eph 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.

The combat for which we are to be prepared is not against ordinary human enemies, men of *flesh and blood*,

Nor against **our own** corrupt individual natures, but against the **several ranks** of devils, who have a government which they exercise in this world.

He is a powerful enemy: **Principalities, and powers, and rulers**. They are numerous, they are vigorous; and they rule in these heathen nations which are yet in darkness and they have many, many servants in this world. Satan's is a kingdom of darkness; whereas Christ's is a kingdom of light.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: ⁴In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

Satan has blinded them - We need to guard against being blinded ourselves.

They are spiritual enemies: **Spiritual wickedness in high places**, or wicked spirits, as some translate it. The devil is a spirit, a wicked spirit; and our danger is the greater from him because he assaults us spiritually, to provoke the saints to spiritual wickednesses: **pride, envy, malice, despair, greed, selfishness, cowardice**.

These enemies are said to be **in high places**, or in heavenly places, between us and heaven. Our enemies strive to prevent our ascent to heaven, to deprive us of heavenly blessings and to obstruct our communion with heaven. **WILL YOU LET THEM!**

“Wherefore” Against these then, he tells us our **duty**: to take and put on the whole armor of God, and then to stand our ground, and withstand our enemies.

Eph 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.

(1.) We must **withstand**. We must not yield to the devil's allurements and assaults, but oppose them. Satan is said *to stand up against us*.

1 Chronicles 21:1 And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.

If he stands up against us, we must stand against him;
 We must set up, and keep up, an opposition to the devil – **resist steadfast**.
 Satan is the wicked one, and his kingdom is the kingdom of sin.
 To stand against Satan is to strive against sin – and sin is certainly all around us.
withstand in the evil day,. Each day we're tempted – and we must withstand daily.

John 9:23 And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

Are you thinking; maybe there are some good days? Some days we don't have to be on guard? Then you're on cruise control - cruising for a bruising.

(2.) **And, having done all, to stand**. We have to stand our ground and hold it – not give anything up to the devil. God wants ALL of us, not a part of us. We must resolve, by God's grace, not to yield to Satan – to continue faithful to God to the end.

Romans 5:1-3 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: ²By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we **stand**, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³And not only *so*, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

We must **endure hardness**. Our present business, the work at hand, is to withstand the assaults of the devil. To stand it out; and then, having done all that is incumbent upon us as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, our warfare will be accomplished, and we shall be finally victorious **through** Christ!

James 4:6,7 But **he** giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. ⁷Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

And this is the lesson we must learn. By our humbling ourselves, recognizing we don't have the power that it must come from God, we obtain God's grace. By our doing this; turning (repenting) to God and resisting the devil, by having faith in God, the devil will flee and we will have attained the victory! We have a good example in Rev 3:8:

Revelation 3:8 I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

An open door to heaven that no man can shut. Why? Because they had faith in Jesus and the power of his word to protect them. They did not deny Jesus by looking to themselves for their strength, they acknowledged it was little and trusted instead in Jesus.

However, if we distrust **our cause**, or **our leader**, or **our armor**, we give Satan power over us. Only by putting off the old man and reaching for and putting on what God offers will we win, will we even have a chance of winning.

Romans 13:12 And that, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed. ¹²The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

The choice is up to us. We have to decide to cast off the works of darkness. We have to decide to put on God's armor – the armor of light. God has given us every reason to do so – through Jesus. Through Jesus God showed how much he loves us and how much He thinks of us. And by raising Jesus from the dead he showed he has the *power* to deliver what he has promised – eternal life with Him in heaven.

PART 2

Ephesians 6:14-18 14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; 15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: 18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

In the following verses, the apostle specifies the particulars of this armor, both offensive and defensive. The military girdle or belt, the breast-plate, the soldier's shoes, the shield, the helmet, the sword, and yes, even the radio we need to communicate to Him.

Eph 6:14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth,

Truth is our girdle. The belt that hold everything together and upon which everything hangs and depends.

It was prophesied of Christ ([Isa. 11:5](#)) that *righteousness should be the girdle of his loins and faithfulness the girdle of his reins*. That which Christ was girded with all Christians must be girded with.

Truth will keep us from error, just as a **girdle** restrains and keeps in the body. We are sanctified, made holy, through the truth.

John 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. ¹

This is the Christian soldier's belt: TRUTH; without truth, he is unblessed in his work.

2 Timothy 2:5 And if a man also strive for masteries, *yet* is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.

What we do must be according to truth – God's word.

and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

Righteousness must be our breast-plate. The breast-plate protects our vital organs, it shelters the heart.

Satan's servants attack us and say **"You're Wrong!"** They want to make us waver and be uncertain. Our armor is to know **"We are RIGHT!"**

Another way though to think of this is that the **righteousness of Christ** imputed to us is our breast-plate against the arrows of divine wrath.

Romans 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

The breast plate of soldiers contains identifying marks.

Righteousness, **identifies us as God's children.** Children of the day here:

1 Thessalonians 5:8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love;

If we are children of day we'll put these on – they'll identify us.

Faith and love include **all** Christian graces.

By faith we are united to Christ and by love we are united to our brethren.

Faith and Love will give us a diligent observance of our duty to God, and righteous behavior towards men, in justice, truth, and charity.

God won't hurt us if we do well. The enemy can't hurt us – if do well. And to do well?

When asked what greatest commandment was:

Matthew 22:37-40 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. ³⁸This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹And the second *is* like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. ⁴⁰On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

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

We wear shoes to protect our feet. When we have a long way to go, and the way is rough, we put something really strong on our feet to protect them. We don't wear bedroom shoes for a 20 mile hike.

What we put on has to be strong and able to protect, and we don't take it off.

The preparation of the gospel of peace signifies a prepared and resolved frame of heart. We must stick to the gospel, constantly wear it and abide by it, which will enable us to walk with a steady pace in the way of religion, notwithstanding the difficulties and dangers that may be in it.

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

It is styled *the gospel of peace* because it brings peace between us and God, so we may approach him – put your walking shoes on brother!

Ephesians 2:13,14 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; ¹

Ephesians 1:16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

Faith must be our shield: He says this is more necessary than any of them. Faith is all in all to us in an hour of temptation – the hour of our battle, the battle to give in to sin. The breast-plate secures the vitals; but with the shield we can protect every part of us. *This is the victory over the world, even our faith.*

1 John 5:4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith.

We are to be fully persuaded of the truth of all God's promises; both of reward and punishment. Such a faith is of great use against temptations.

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

What a solid shield faith can be. Through Faith, we receive grace and strength from God so it is like a shield, a sort of universal defense.

Our enemy the devil is here called *the wicked one*. He is wicked himself, and he endeavors to make us wicked. He hates us without reason or cause.

His temptations are called **darts**, because of their swift and unseen flight, and the deep wounds that they give to the soul; **fiery darts**, like fiery serpents, can infect us and inflame the parts which were wounded with them by their poison and spread and kill the whole body.

Violent temptations, by which the soul is set on fire of hell, are the darts which Satan shoots at us. Faith is the **shield** with which we must quench these fiery darts.

Faith in heaven and hell – the good and the bad promised by God.

Faith, acting upon the word of God and the grace, the good will of Christ will quench the darts of temptation that will otherwise kill us. Faith is the antidote, the vaccine, that protects us – a shield.

Ephesians 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation,

Salvation must be our helmet; it protects our head, it should fill our mind with the **hope**, which has salvation for its object

Romans 8:24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? ²⁵But if we hope for that we see not, *then* do we with patience wait for *it*.

The helmet secures the head. A good hope of salvation, well founded and well built by our study of God's word and prayer, will both purify the mind, our hearts, and keep it from being defiled by Satan. This hope of salvation will comfort the soul and keep it from being troubled and tormented by Satan. He would tempt us to despair; He hits us in our minds – our head, but a good strong hope in salvation, wards off the Satan's pounding and keeps us trusting in God, and rejoicing in him.

and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God

The word of God is the sword of the Spirit. The sword is a very necessary and useful part of a soldier's outfit. The word of God is very necessary, and of great use to the Christian, for us to fight in this spiritual warfare and to succeed in it. It is called ***the sword of the Spirit***, because it is given to us by the Holy Spirit and it is effective:

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Satan is a deceiver, he makes us question God and ourselves. The word of God, God's truth, will reveal ourselves to us when we compare ourselves to the scriptures.

The sword keeps an enemy from getting too close. Scripture-arguments are the most powerful arguments to repel temptation with. Christ himself resisted Satan's temptations with, ***It is written***

Matthew 4:3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. ⁴But he answered and said, ***It is written***, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God

The word, being a part of us from diligent study, will preserve from sin.

Psalms 119:11 Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee

The word, the sword of the spirit of God that he gave to us and that we **can** use, will mortify and kill those lusts and corruptions of the flesh.

Col 3:5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth;

And how does the word do this? By our using it, by making it a part of us:

Col 3:15,16 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. ¹⁶Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

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

Prayer is what we must use to **buckle on all the other parts** of our Christian armor. We must pray for all these graces, for our defense against these spiritual enemies, imploring help and assistance of God. It is our radio to communicate to God and tell Him we know we need His help.

Not as though we were to do nothing else but pray, Soldiers that stay on the radio don't get much fighting done. But we should keep up constant times of prayer, and be constant to them. We must pray upon all occasions, and as often as our own and others' necessities call us to it. We must always keep up a disposition to prayer,

We must pray **with all prayer**, with all kinds of prayer: public and private, social and solitary, solemn and sudden; and with **all the parts** of prayer: confession of sin, petition for mercy, and thanksgivings for favors received.

We must pray **in the Spirit**; our spirits must be employed in the duty and we must do it by the grace of God's good Spirit, according to His will as revealed to us by the Holy Spirit through the word.

We must **watch thereunto**, endeavoring to keep our hearts in a praying frame, looking to God, and taking all occasions, and opportunities, for the duty of prayer: When God says, *Seek my face*, our hearts must comply,

Psalms 27:8 When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.

This we must do **with all perseverance**. We must abide by the duty of prayer, whatever change there may be in our outward circumstances; in good times as well as bad; and we must continue in it as long as we live in the world. We must likewise persevere in particular requests, notwithstanding apparant discouragements and repulses.

Luke 1:7,13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John

And we must pray **with supplication**, not for ourselves only, but **for all saints**; for we are members one of another.

None are in so good a condition in this world, that they don't need our prayers, and they ought to have them.

Luke 9:62 And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

If you've heard and obeyed the gospel of Christ, you've put your hand to the plow. We can't turn back.

God has given us everything, a great hope of heaven. A great calling to be His children. He's given us the truth we need in His word to overcome any and every obstacle. He's demonstrated His great Love and His power through His son Jesus. What's not to believe? Believe and obey His great goodness and give all the glory to Him:

Ephesians 3:20,21 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, ²¹Unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.