

## Spiritual Warfare

Ephesians 6: 13- 18

1/5/03

### Intro

- Stages ministry; we look for how God will be using this ministry.

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In this last section Paul is focusing on spiritual victory. This is one of the most important things that Paul wants us to know. So he saves it for his concluding thoughts.

Paul's main concern is that he wants us to be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. That was as much of a problem in Paul's day as it is in ours.

The scripture says that the enemy is like a roaring lion seeking whom he made devour. Paul is telling us that the enemy has many schemes that he would use against us. He doesn't specifically tell us what those schemes are; but he does tell us how to stand against them, and how to stand firm. Three times Paul says to stand firm, and we should.

The key, Paul tells us, is putting on the full armor of God.

**In these verses then, we will discover the keys to standing firm in order to have spiritual victory through the armor of God.**

### **I. Stand firm, having girded your loins with truth.**

**Illus – What does it mean to gird up your loins? The men did not wear pants as we do today, so when they needed to run, they would lift up their garment and tuck it into their belt.**

### A. It's truth that allows you to run.

- Jesus said that it is the truth that sets us free.
- Therefore it's lies that keep us in bondage.

### **John 8: 31-36**

- There is a deception that always comes before a fall.

### B. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly.

### **Colossians 3:15**

- If we abide in His Word, then His Word will abide in us.
- But let the Word abide in us richly.  
(Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.)

**Illus – Psalm 119:11 Your Word have I treasured in my heart, that I might not sin against You.**

**This is the most powerful and sure way to spiritual victory.**

- As the truth abides in us we become true.

### **II. Stand firm, having put on the breastplate of righteousness.**

**Def. – A breastplate is an essential part of the armor because it protects and guards the heart.**

### A. It's important to understand the distinction between holiness and righteousness.

- Holiness is the character of God. It is what He is. "Be holy for I am holy," says the Lord.

- Righteousness is what God does.

“But the LORD of hosts will be exalted in judgment, and the holy God will show Himself holy in righteousness.” Isaiah 5:16

B. The breastplate of righteousness is the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

- The righteousness of Christ is a great protection against the attack of the enemy.
- Our righteous standing before God and our acceptance before Him is because of Christ’s righteousness, not our own.

**II Corinthians 5:21** – He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behave, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

C. The breastplate of righteousness gives us two protections from the attack of the enemy.

- It protects us from pride.
- It protects us from condemnation.
  - Satan is the accuser of the brethren.
  - Many Christians have a constant sense of guilt, unworthiness, failure, and dirtiness.
  - But we have been given the very righteousness of God.

**Illus – In the same way that Levi was in the loins of Melchizedek (Heb 7:1-10), we are in Christ, and all the deeds done by Christ have been given to us.**

**III. Stand firm, having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.**

A. Without shoes, there is no endurance.

- We shrink back from every difficulty.
- But with shoes, even the rocky terrain can be conquered.

**Illus – When growing up we used to walk to a pond where we could swim. It was about a mile on a gravel road. One day I decided to walk in my bare feet. Without peace, everything hurts.**

B. Shod your feet with the –preparation- of ...

- You’re not ready until your shoes are on.

**Illus – We tell our kids to get ready to go, but we know that they’re not ready until we see shoes on their feet.**

- Be prepared for the difficulties that will come. Spiritual battle is a sure thing.

C. Be prepared with the gospel of peace.

- The good news of peace is a great defense against the attack of the enemy.
- When we are disturbed in our hearts we are vulnerable.
- But the peace of God will guard your heart and mind.

Philippians 4:6-7 **Be anxious for nothing...**

D. Peace comes as we are detached from the things of the world and attached to God Himself.

**Illus – “What can man do to me? Paul asks. He was detached even from his earthly existence.**

Conclusion

**As we begin a new year, this is a perfect time to start new with the Lord. The good news is that His mercies are new every morning.**

**We know that there will be spiritual challenge and warfare. Be prepared for victory by renewing your relationship to Jesus Christ.**