

Ephesians 6:10-12 – Warfare of the Church – Principles

TSK, GreekLexicon, Gill, JFB, Poole, Robertson, Doule, Trapp, Clarke, Barnes, Rienecker, Handfuls, Gaebelein, Calvin, Henry, Pulpit, INT

Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ:

The church is wealthy. (Chapter 1-3) She was chosen by the Father, redeemed by the Son, sealed by the Spirit, have all her sins forgiven, and made to sit in heavenly places, watching the kingdom expand.

The church has a wonderful walk! (Chapter 4-6:9) She is equipped with essential gifts and encouraged in her Christian walk to put-off all her bad habits and put on good habits.

The church must now be engaged in serious warfare, after all, she has been equipped with gifts and trained to be strong! Yes, the church must fight. And that is what you will hear about in this last section. (Cruising Christians, living an easy life, is a figment of the deceived mind. The Christian life is war!)

Our headings are:

Your Admonition

Your Armor

Your Adversary

Our goals are: **That you will fight your real enemy so you can defeat him and bring honor and glory to your Savior.**

Your Admonition

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

1. Apostle Paul commanded, not suggested, the Ephesians to be strong in the Lord.

a. First, notice he called the Ephesians “brothers,” so he was speaking to fellow Christians.

b. Both Apostle Paul and his Ephesian brothers were given the strength from the Lord Jesus to fight. Non-believers didn't have power to fight the devil. Only Christians did! And the more Christians trusted in the Lord, the stronger they would be.

Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

c. “Strong” here is like having potential energy. It is internal. It is an inner resolve necessary to fight the Christian fight.

2. Apostle Paul commanded, not suggested, the Ephesians be strong in the power of Christ's might!

a. Jesus was the source of this power.

b. “Power” here is used like kinetic energy - active. The inner strength that was going to be put to action!

c. Christians needed this power...for fighting, serving, and suffering.

3. Keep in mind the context: The Ephesians had to live as Christian in a wicked world, even knowing their weaknesses.

They had to be kind to their enemies, stay sober, submit to their husbands, love their wives, obey parents, raise kids well, submit to masters, and take care of servants! **They had to fight the Devil, the world, and their flesh to do these things!** They had to fight enemies **in their hearts**, those **visibly around them**, and those **invisible demons!** They needed strength and power.

4. Lessons:

a. Since being “strong in the Lord and in the power of his might,” is a command from God, and since it is natural to be weak and cowardly, make it your duty to regularly pray for help from your Lord to be strong and to use his power.

b. And since strength and power come from your Savior, listen to your Savior’s Words often so you can be reassured by his Holy Spirit of his love for you and embolden you for service. Love makes you fight a lion.

c. When you are strong in Christ’s power you won’t be afraid of any of your enemies.

d. When you try to work from your own strength and see your inabilities to fight spiritual battles, you will become afraid. You will become afraid of losing friends...or a job...or relationships that are bad and you won’t stand up for Jesus and confront them in their sins.

Your Armor

11 Put on the **whole armor of God**, that you may be able **to stand** against the **wiles of the devil**.

1. Apostle Paul commanded, not suggested, the Ephesian Christians to put on the whole armor of God.

The armor is prepared by the Lord and given by the Lord.

2. What did Apostle Paul mean by “whole armor?”

This was a picture of a perfectly protected Roman soldier going out to battle. The Roman government provided the correct armor for its soldiers. Similarly, God provided the correct armor for the Ephesians Christians so they could fight and be safe. God’s armor is perfect, however.

3. Some parts of the armor God provided were defensive and some were offensive, as both were necessary.

4. Why was it necessary to have the whole armor of God?

a. The Ephesian Christians needed this in order to stand against the wiles (or the methods) of the Devil who **used force or fraud**, or a combination of the two to destroy Christians. The Devil is not known as the “Sneaky Snake” for nothing! He knows Christians are prepared to meet him head-on, so he often comes from the side...or from the back...or from above.

Romans 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

2 Corinthians 10:3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. **4** For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds,

When you have the whole armor of God you will then be able to fight the Devil, the world, and your fleshly desires, (the Christian’s enemies). (Romans 6)

b. The Ephesian Christians could not be pacifists against the Devil. They couldn’t win a war by simply defending and waiting out their enemy. The enemy and his people were always trying to destroy Christians and their testimony.

5. Lessons:

a. Every Christian is in a fight. Better said: Every real Christian is in a fight.

b. You are in a fight for your life against the Devil and his agents. You’d better make sure you are able to fight and you’d better be sure you have the right armor to fight. You’d better make sure you have all the preparation. You’d better know the people and institutions – the government, the courts, universities - he uses to fight you. He may use people in your home!

c. One little area of weakness can expose you. One little area between the joints of his armor exposed Ahab to an arrow shot at random into the air and it killed him. Do you know that area of weakness? Lust for money, lust pleasure, pride?

d. Don’t put too much time finding the perfect house to live in and not enough putting on your spiritual armor. Wind, fire, water, age, and earthquakes can destroy that house, but spiritual armor will keep you safe from all spiritual dangers forever. Take the time to get the armor you need for your soul!

Your Adversary

12 For we **do not wrestle** against **flesh and blood**, but against **principalities**, against **powers**, against the **rulers of the darkness** of this age, against **spiritual hosts** of wickedness in the heavenly places.

1. The Apostle Paul then explained the details why the Ephesian Christians had to be strong and had to have the whole armor of God: the adversaries were extremely dangerous.

2. Who were their adversaries?

a. Satan and his kingdom were their enemies. Satan, their ruler, is described as the ruler of this world. John 14:30.

b. Satan's kingdom has principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness, and spiritual hosts of wickedness in high places.

One title is notable: "Rulers of Darkness." This term is used in reference to the Angel of Death and the Prince of Darkness.

You can see the hierarchy of these evil ones in Isaiah 14. How do they fight? If someone resists one demon he is able to bring more...and more powerful demons. This makes them more dangerous.

Colossians 2:15 Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

Men are only the tools the Devil uses. The full threat comes from the Devil and his fellow demons.

c. Satan and his demons are filthy, liars, deceitful, and malicious. They wrestle men. To wrestle was the art of throwing a man down by deceit or craft. That was common in the Olympics in wrestling competitions.

d. Of course these demons with all their power are limited. They were even more restricted when Jesus died on the cross. But Jesus showed they were limited even before the cross **when he was tempted** and **when he drove demons into the pigs**. They begged for mercy. These demons are rulers in the air, but not rulers of the universe.

3. What else made demons particularly more dangerous?

a. Demons were not flesh and blood. Man has flesh and blood, but demons are not limited to flesh and blood, though they may use people with flesh and blood. They can hurt man before they are seen. Dealing with bad wives, husband, children, parents, unjust civil magistrates, and employers is hard, but not as hard as dealing with a spiritual enemy. They know cultural weaknesses. **So they knew how to tempt the Ephesians Christians. If they were trying to fit into a bad circle of friends, the demons knew how to make that bad company of friends attractive.** They knew (and see) the weakness of the Ephesians!

b. Demons were close by, even though the Ephesian Christians couldn't see them. So it made no sense for the Ephesians to try to engage the Devil with human strength.

4. Lessons:

a. Don't minimize the danger of the Devil. As kids we were trained to stomp on and slap the Devil, as if we could, and as if those things could hurt him! Today you might hear some preachers say, "Let's power slam the Devil and let's kick him in the face." Those preachers have a flair for the dramatic, but they can't do what they say. Yes, the Devil was

limited by the cross, chained, but even with his chains he can do damage if you go close to him.

b. The Devil is an ever-present danger to you. He can be near you directly or through his agents, and you can't see him. Because he has so many soldiers from hell and from earth, he has a thousand ways of deceiving you. He will come as a roaring lion or as an angel of light. Many of his soldiers may use your friends, or they might come as brazen wickedness—like in the form of false religions. He may encourage you to think that pornography and adultery doesn't hurt anyone...just give you fun...but he is lying!

c. The Devil's power is mentioned, not to make you fear, but so you will be diligent, cautious, and call on God for help so you can resist him.

d. Train your children so they will be protected from the evil one who will tease and tempt your children to sin and to shame the Lord Jesus. Let them hear how much Jesus loves them. Let them learn to hate the Devil. Tell them stories of the Devil's wickedness.

e. Bear good testimony in how you fight and endure temptations. Watch out for heresies the Devil spreads. Use the Word of God to rebut their lies. Don't be passive or think you can squeak by in life. You are at war against dangerous enemies.

f. When all is said and done, you will be able to stand because Jesus is beside you.

Conclusion:

God wants his children to be strong. He has equipped them with all they need to fight. They were chosen by the Father, redeemed by the Son, and sealed by the Spirit. They have teachers and elders. They have God's Spirit. And they have strong families. They have the best armor.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. You are not called to be in the reserves. You are called to serve in active duty against a real Devil who is out to steal, kill, and destroy you, your family, your marriage, and your church. He will want to make you feel like Christ isn't real...that Christ doesn't love you...that you are no good! He is a liar. Doubt this to your own demise.

2. Instead, put on the armor of God and get ready for battle. Know true doctrines. Believe true doctrines. Stand up and fight!

3. Put on the armor of God on your spouse, your children, your pastor and elders, your deacons! Pray for them. Teach them. Encourage them.

Finally, without Jesus, you have no protection from the Devil. So if you are not a Christian, the Devil will destroy your body and take and take your soul to hell. But you can be saved from that horrible end if you ask God to count Christ's life and death as yours!