

THE ARMOUR OF THE CHRISTIAN SOLDIER EPHESIANS 06: 10–20

Introduction: Spiritual Warfare

Paul has been discussing the believer's walk (Eph. 4:1-6:9). Now suddenly he jolts the reader and hearer; he changes course. He says there is another way to look at the believer's life in Christ. The believer's life is a battlefield. Immediately upon receiving Christ, the believer finds himself in a constant struggle. He is engaged in an unceasing fight, an unending war. He is a combatant, a soldier in conflict. His calling is not to a life of enjoyment and ease, but to a life of hard conflict. There are foes within and foes without. From the cradle to the grave there is constant struggle against the corruptible lusts of the flesh and the imposing temptations offered by the world and Satan — a struggle against an excessive corruption that inevitably leads to death (Rom. 7:21; Gal. 5:17; 6:8; Eph. 4:22b; 6:10).

- I. The soldier's charge (vv. 10-11).
- II. The soldier's enemy: the devil and his strategies (v. 11).
- III. The soldier's warfare: not human, but spiritual (v. 12).
- IV. The soldier's duty: to take the full armour of God (v. 13).
- V. The soldier's armour (vv. 14-17).
- VI. The supernatural provision: prayer — always praying (vv. 18-20).

I. Ephesians 06: 10–11 Spiritual Warfare

There is the charge to the Christian soldier. It is Christian believers who need the charge, not the world. Christian believers must diligently heed what is about to be said. There is no other way to conquer the enemies who stand so violently opposed to the Christian believer. Unless the believer heeds the charge and message of this passage, he will cave in to temptation and sin and end up walking through life just as most men do:

- => not experiencing the abundance and joy of life.
- => not experiencing the power and deliverance, care and concern, love and fellowship of God's daily presence.
- => being uncertain and unsure of the future.
- => not having the confidence of being acceptable to God.
- => not being assured of living forever with God.

A believer must heed what God says in this passage; he must do exactly what God says in order to conquer the great enemies of life. The charge is twofold.

1. The believer must be strong *in the Lord* and in His mighty power. Note the stress upon power and strength. Three different words are used:

=> be strong

=> in the Lord's *mighty power*

Each of these words is used to stress the utter necessity of the believer being strong and possessing power.

=> The word *strong* (endunamoo) means power, might, strength. The believer must possess power, might and strength as he walks through the course of this life.

=> The Lord's *power* (kratos) means His sovereign unlimited power and dominion over all.

=> The Lord's *might* (ischuos) means strength, force, ability. It means His ability to use His strength and force wisely, that is, in perfection.

The believer is to be strong in the sovereign unlimited power of the Lord — in His mighty power — in His ability to use His power exactly as it should be used. (See Eph. 1:19-23.)

But note the critical point: the believer's strength is not human, fleshly strength; it is not the strength of anything within this world. The believer's strength is found *in the Lord* — in a living, dynamic relationship with Him. The Lord is the source of the believer's strength. There is no other source that can give man the strength to overcome this world with all its trials and temptations and death.

2. The believer must put on the armour of God. Once the believer is *strong within*, then he is ready to be clothed with the armour of God. But note: no amount of armour is worth the material it is made of unless the soldier has the heart to fight. The believer must — absolutely must — be strong in the Lord before he can be clothed with the armour of God and begin to wage war against the foes of life. Once a man has the presence and power of God within his heart, it is then that he begins to arm himself to wage war against the spiritual enemies of life. But note a most critical point: he must put on the *full armour* of God, leaving nothing out. If he leaves a piece of the armour off, he exposes himself to the enemy and stands a good chance of being wounded, perhaps killed.

The charge is to be strong in the Lord, and in His mighty power. Put on the full armour of God.

Luke 1:37 *“For nothing is impossible with God.”*

Eph 3:16 *I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being.*

Eph 3:20 *Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.*

Col 1:11 Being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully.

2 Tim 1:7 For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.

2 Sam 22:40 You armed me with strength for battle; you made my adversaries bow at my feet.

Isa 41:10 So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

II. *Ephesians 06:11 Spiritual Warfare is against Satan*

There is the enemy of the Christian soldier. The enemy is the devil and his strategies. The word “schemes” (methodei) means the deceits, craftiness, trickery, methods and strategies which the devil uses to wage war against the believer. He will do everything he can to deceive and capture the believer.

1. There are the strategies that appeal to the lust of the eyes. Satan will see to it that something crosses the eyesight of the believer, something that is very appealing to the flesh (sinful nature) and pride of life:
 - => some delicious food
 - => some attractive person
 - => some person who is exposing the body
 - => some possession: clothing, land, cars, houses, whatever
 - => some position
 - => some authority and power

Satan will present something to the eyes that is so appealing, the believer is doomed unless he is clothed in the *full armour* of God. Satan will entice the believer to eat the second helping, take the second look, buy the unneeded possession or begin to selfishly seek more power and more position. He will use all the strategies he can to appeal to the flesh (sinful nature) and pride of the believer.

John 8:44 “You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”

Rom 6:16 Don’t you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey – whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?

Rom 6:19 *I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness.*

Eph 2:2-3 *In which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.*

James 4:1-4 *What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.*

1 John 2:15-16 *Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world — the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does — comes not from the Father but from the world.*

2. Another strategy of the devil is to send a false teacher, a very impressive teacher, across the path of the believer. We must never forget that Satan is not a fiery red person with horns, a pointed tail, and a pitch fork in his hands. He is a living being in the spiritual world — a being who is transformed into a *messenger of light*. And he has ministers who walk about as ministers of righteousness, but they proclaim a righteousness other than that of Christ. Their message is that of self-righteousness, that of...
 - human goodness and works
 - ego and self-image
 - personal development and growth
 - self-improvement and correction
 - mind and will

Such messages appeal to the flesh (sinful nature) of man, and they are helpful. This must be realized and acknowledged, but such messages are not the basic power needed by man. They cannot deliver man *from* the great trials and sufferings of life or death. They can only lead man down the path of all flesh — that of death, decay and eternal judgment.

The point is this: one of the most prominent strategies of the devil is to deceive man with false teachers and ministers and their appealing but false messages. The believer is doomed unless he is clothed in the *full armour* of God.

2 Cor 2:11 *In order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.*

2 Cor 11:3 *But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.*

2 Cor 11:13-15 *For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.*

Eph 4:14 *Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.*

Eph 6:11 *Put on the full armour of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.*

2 Th 2:9 *The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders.*

Rev 12:9 *The great dragon was hurled down — that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.*

III. Ephesians 06:12 The Warfare is Spiritual, not Human

Third, there is the warfare of the Christian soldier. The warfare is not human or physical, but spiritual. Wuest has a descriptive picture of the believer's great spiritual struggle:

“In the word (struggle) [pale], Paul uses a Greek athletic term. Thayer defines as follows: ‘a contest between two in which each endeavours to throw the other, and which is decided when the victor is able to press and hold down his prostate antagonist, namely, hold him down with his hand upon his neck.’ When we consider that the loser in a Greek wrestling contest had his eyes gouged out with resulting blindness for the rest of his days, we can form some conception of the Ephesian Greek's reaction to Paul's illustration. The Christian's wrestling against the powers of darkness is no less desperate and fateful” (*Ephesians and Colossians*, Vol. 1, p. 141).

The point to see is that the believer's struggle is not against flesh and blood. His foes are not human or physical: they are spiritual — spiritual forces that possess unbelievable power. Note exactly what is said: the believer fights...

- against rulers
- against authorities
- against the powers of this dark world
- against the spiritual forces of evil

This reveals some very clear things to us.

1. The forces of evil are powerful forces. The thrust of this verse is to stress the enormous power of evil forces which stand against the believer.
2. The forces of evil are numerous. Rulers, powers, authorities — all convey the idea of a large number of evil forces who are struggling against the believer.
3. The forces of evil are apparently organized into a government or a hierarchy of evil. Again, rulers, authorities, and powers of this world in high places — all point toward a ranking of spiritual forces with enormous authority, position and rule.
4. The forces of evil are the powers of this dark world. Darkness in the Bible means the ignorance of truth and reality, of the real nature and purpose of things. For example...
 - What is the source of man and his world?
 - Where have man and his world come from?
 - What is the purpose of man and his world? Why are man and his world existing?
 - What is the end of man and his world? Is there even a place to go after this life — another world, another life?

Darkness is not knowing these things; it is being ignorant of them. Light is knowing God and His Son, Jesus Christ — that God and Christ stand as the Source and Purpose and end of man and his world. Light is knowing the truth and reality of man and his world: that God created all for Himself, and that He loves and saves all to live with Him eternally — if all will only believe and trust Him (cp. 2 Cor. 4:4).

The forces of evil are the powers of darkness, the powers who blind the minds of men lest they believe the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ of eternal salvation.

5. The forces of evil are spiritual forces of wickedness. They seek to receive the loyalty and devotion that is due God. Therefore, they are after the spirit of man — that part of man that is destined to worship and serve God and exist forever. If they can capture the spirit of man, they have him eternally — his life and presence forever and ever. Therefore, they do all they can to lead *man's spirit* into evil. They are the *spiritual forces of evil*.

Thought 1. Some persons have always scoffed at the idea of a personal devil or demons who actually exist in a so-called spiritual world. They feel they are too educated and intelligent to believe such nonsense. They proclaim that such ideas are outdated and belong to the dark ages of man's ignorance and superstitions. But note a significant fact: man is ever so conscious of what he terms...

- *sub-conscious horrors* that affect both his mind and body.
- *unseen and uncontrollable forces* that greatly affect his behaviour.
- *unregulated behaviour* that he cannot control even when he knows better and wills to do differently.

- *cosmic forces* that affect and determine his behaviour.
- *blind fate* that controls his life like a puppet.

F.F. Bruce words it well:

Satan and his demonic forces “rank among the highest angel-princes in the hierarchy of the heavenly places, yet all of them owe their existence to Christ, through whom they were created [Col. 1:16], and who is accordingly the head of all principality and power’ [Col. 2:10]. But some at least of the principalities and powers have embarked upon rebellion against God and not only seek to force men to pay them the worship that is due to Him, but launched an assault upon the crucified Christ at a time when they thought they had Him at their mercy. But He, far from suffering their assault without resistance, grappled with them and overcame them, stripping them of their armour and driving them before Him in His triumphal procession [Col. 2:15]. Thus the hostile powers of evil which Christians must encounter are already vanquished powers, but it is only through faith-union with the victorious Christ that Christians can make His triumph theirs (The Epistle to the Ephesians, p. 127f).

Think for a moment and be honest. Think of all the wickedness and evil and wrongdoing and selfishness in the world — all the...

- division
- arrogance
- prejudice
- stealing
- favoritism
- lying
- anger
- cursing
- hate
- bitterness
- pride
- arguing
- war
- selfishness
- killing
- immorality

The list could go on and on, ad infinitum. The evil of man consumes the news reports every day. Just think about it! Do we not know better? Do not enough of us know better — enough of us that we could change things? Yes we do. Why then do we not change the world? This passage tells us why:

Eph 6:12 *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*

God — because He is God — has to tell us the truth. He cannot do otherwise. Therefore, God reveals to us a fact that is as clearly evident as any other single fact on earth: there is an evil force that has access to the spirit of man and can influence and enslave man to do evil. He is called Satan, who rules over *the darkness and the spiritual forces of evil of this world*. The only hope for the believer is to put on the *full armour of God*.

Luke 4:6 *And he said to him, “I will give you all their authority and splendour, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to.”*

Luke 22:31 *“Simian, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat.”*

2 Cor 4:3-4 *And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*

Eph 6:12 *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*

1 Pet 5:8 *Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.*

Thought 2. The great Greek scholar Kenneth Wuest identifies the forces of evil as follows:

=> The *rulers* (arche): “the first ones, preeminent ones, leaders.”

=> The *authorities* (exousias): “the authorities, the demons of Satan in the lower atmosphere who constitute his kingdom in the air.”

=> The *powers of this dark world* (kosmokrator): Satan and his demons.

=> The *spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms* (pneumatika tes ponerias): Satan and all his demonic forces. (*Ephesians and Colossians*, Vol. 1, p. 141.)

IV. Ephesians 06:13 The Full Armour of God

There is the duty of the Christian soldier. His duty is to take the full armour of God. Note how the believer’s need for the *full armour* of God is again stressed. This shows how essential the armour is. We must put on the armour of God. It is an absolute necessity. Why? Because of the “day of evil.” What is the “day of evil?”

=> It refers to *today* — to the onslaught of evil that is in the world today: “the days are evil” (Eph. 5:16).

=> It refers to *any day* — to the onslaught of temptations and trials that confront us at any given moment during a day.

=> It refers to the *day of unusual temptation and trial* — to a special onslaught and barrage of evil that is thrown against us.

We must withstand the day of evil. But we cannot withstand unless we have done our duty — unless we have obeyed and prepared ourselves — unless we have taken the *full armour* of God.

Rom 13:12 *The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armour of light.*

2 Cor 10:4 *The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.*

1 Tim 6:12 *Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.*

V. *Ephesians 06:14–17 The Armour of God*

There is the armour of the Christian soldier. Remember that Paul was in prison and under constant guard when writing the Ephesian church. He was forced to stare at the soldier's armour day in and day out. He had an ideal picture of the armour needed by the Christian believer to combat the forces of evil.

1. *The belt of truth.* The belt was used to hold the soldier's clothing next to his body. This kept his clothing from flapping about and allowed him freedom of movement. The belt was also used to strengthen and support the body. The sign of the Christian soldier is the belt of truth...
 - not truth individually or subjectively thought out.
 - not truth as a man or a group of men see it.
 - not truth that is found in a man's novel idea.
 - not truth that is taught by religion.

Such truth is self-centred and restrictive. Such truth is only from finite man — a being so small, so impure and so frail that he cannot possibly discover enough truth to embrace all men. He cannot discover enough truth to bring life to man, not eternal life. God and God alone can possess and give enough pure truth to embrace all men. God alone can share the truth of abundant and eternal life.

- a. What specifically is the belt of truth? What is God's truth that the believer is to put on?
=> First, Christ is the truth. The believer is to put on Christ (see *New Person or Self*, Eph. 4:24).

John 1:14 *The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

John 14:6 *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*

- => Second, the Word of God is truth. The believer is to put on the Word of God. He is sanctified by the Word of God.

John 17:17 *"Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth."*

Eph 5:26 *To make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word.*

- => Third, speaking and living a life of truthfulness is the truth.

Eph 4:25 *Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbour, for we are all members of one body.*

1 Pet 1:22 *Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart.*

Zec 8:16 *These are the things you are to do: Speak the truth to each other, and render true and sound judgment in your courts.*

Mal 2:6 *True instruction was in his mouth and nothing false was found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and turned many from sin.*

b. Truth does several things for the Christian soldier.

=> It keeps him from flapping about from one thing to another, from being tossed back and forth by every attack of the enemy.

Eph 4:14 *Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.*

=> It keeps him from becoming involved in civilian affairs or from becoming entangled with the affairs of this life.

2 Tim 2:3-4 *Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs — he wants to please his commanding officer.*

=> It supports him in the battles and trials of life.

John 14:6 *Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”*

Heb 2:17-18 *For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.*

Heb 4:15-16 *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*

2. *The breastplate of righteousness.* The breastplate covered the body of the soldier from the neck to the thighs. It was used to protect the heart. The believer’s heart is focused upon the Lord Jesus Christ and His righteousness, and that focus must be protected. The sign of the Christian soldier is righteousness. When a man is saved, God imputes the righteousness of Jesus Christ to him, or to say it another way, God counts him righteous (see Gal. 2:15-16). However, it is not enough to stand in the righteousness of Christ. The Christian soldier must protect his heart. This he does by living righteously. Righteousness keeps the heart from ever being wounded and losing its focus. The Christian soldier is...

- to strive after the very righteousness of Jesus Christ.
- to live righteously in this present world.

Mat 5:20 *“For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.”*

Rom 3:21-22 *But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference.*

1 Cor 15:34 *Come back to your senses as you ought, and stop sinning; for there are some who are ignorant of God – I say this to your shame.*

2 Cor 5:21 *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

Phil 1:11 *Filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ – to the glory and praise of God.*

Phil 3:9 *And be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ – the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.*

Titus 2:11-12 *For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age.*

3. *The sandals of the gospel.* The sandals were a sign of readiness – readiness to march and to do battle. The Roman sandals were made with nails that gripped the ground firmly even when it was sloping or slippery. The sign of the Christian soldier is readiness – a readiness to march and to bear witness to the gospel. Wherever the Christian soldier’s feet take him, he shares the gospel that can firmly ground a world reeling under the weight of desperate need and conflict.

Thought 1. Lehman Strauss makes a statement about this point that startles the mind of modern man: “The soldier’s shoes are not the dancing slippers of this world or the lounging slippers of the slothful, but the shoes of the Christian warrior who knows Christ and makes Him known” (*Galatians and Ephesians*, p. 232f).

Mat 28:19-20 *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

Mark 16:15 *He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.”*

Acts 1:8 “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Rom 1:16 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

1 Pet 3:15 But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.

4. *The shield of faith in God.* The word “shield” does not mean the small round shield which the soldier held in his hand to fight off the weapons of the enemy. It means the great oblong shield worn by the soldier to protect his body from the fiery darts thrown by the enemy. The darts were dipped in pitch or some other combustible material and set afire. When they struck, they served the purpose of small incendiary bombs. Satan has his fiery darts — those things that cause the believer...

- to question his salvation
- to question his call
- to question if he is worthy
- to question if he can really serve
- to question if the project can really be done
- to question, doubt and wonder
- to become discouraged, depressed and defeated
- to burn with passion and desire

Such fiery darts often assault the mind — one doubting and evil thought after the other — fighting against the will — struggling to get hold of the mind and subject it to doubt or evil.

However, the sign of the Christian soldier is that of the shield of faith, faith in God — a complete and perfect trust that God will quench the darts of doubt and evil that attack him, that God will help him control his mind and conquer the evil doubts and thoughts. The Christian soldier’s consciousness of God’s presence is so great that *God’s presence* itself becomes his shield and reward (Gen. 15:1). As Scripture says, God is his help and shield (Psa. 33:20; 84:9), his sun and shield (Psa. 84:11).

Psa 3:3-4 But you are a shield around me, O LORD; you bestow glory on me and lift up my head. To the LORD I cry aloud, and he answers me from his holy hill.

Psa 33:20 We wait in hope for the LORD; he is our help and our shield.

Psa 34:22 The LORD redeems his servants; no one will be condemned who takes refuge in him.

Psa 37:5 Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this:

Psa 84:9 Look upon our shield, O God; look with favour on your anointed one.

Psa 84:11 *For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favour and honour; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless.*

Psa 118:8 *It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man.*

Prov 29:25 *Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD is kept safe.*

Isa 26:3-4 *You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you. Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD, is the Rock eternal.*

Mark 11:22, 24 *“Have faith in God,” Jesus answered. “Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.”*

Acts 27:25 *So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me.*

Heb 11:6 *And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*

5. *The helmet of salvation.* The helmet covered the head and the mind of the soldier. The head, of course, was the core of a soldier’s power to wage war. His thinking ability was the most important factor in determining his victory or defeat. Therefore, the soldier needed a helmet to protect his head and mind. The sign of the Christian soldier is the helmet of salvation (deliverance). He must protect his mind and its thoughts, keeping all thoughts focused upon the Leader, the Lord Jesus Christ, and His objective of reaching the world with the glorious news that men can live forever.

The helmet that protects the mind of the Christian soldier is *salvation*. Unless a man has been saved, his mind cannot be protected from the fiery darts of temptation. The mind of an unsaved man is focused upon this earth; it is normal and natural for him...

- to seek more and more.
- to possess more and more.
- to look at the opposite sex with desire.
- to taste and indulge the good things of the earth.
- to feel and experience, satisfying his desires and passions.
- to have and hoard even when others have little or nothing.

The unsaved man sees nothing wrong with being his own person and doing his own thing just so he is reasonably considerate of others. His mind and thoughts are upon the earth; and the fiery darts of extravagance, indulgence, pleasure, self-centredness, worldliness, license, hoarding and immorality are a part of the unsaved world’s daily behaviour.

But this is not so with the saved man. The mind of the saved man is focused upon Christ and His mission of sharing the good news of life, both life abundant and life eternal. Because of this, Satan launches his fiery darts of temptation against the mind of the believer, trying to get his thoughts and attention off of Christ and the conquest and ministry to souls. The Christian soldier desperately needs the helmet of salvation. The *helmet of salvation* means the knowledge and hope of salvation. Knowing that we are saved and hoping for the glorious day of redemption...

- stirs us to keep our minds and thoughts upon Christ and off of sin and this world.
- arouses us to focus upon Christ and His mission to carry the gospel to a needy and dying world.

Rom 8:6 *The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace.*

Rom 12:2 *Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

2 Cor 10:5 *We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*

Eph 4:22-24 *You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.*

Phil 4:8 *Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things.*

Isa 26:3 *You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you.*

Isa 59:16-17 *He saw that there was no one, he was appalled that there was no one to intervene; so his own arm worked salvation for him, and his own righteousness sustained him. He put on righteousness as his breastplate, and the helmet of salvation on his head; he put on the garments of vengeance and wrapped himself in zeal as in a cloak.*

6. *The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God.* The sword was a weapon used for both defence and offense. The sword was used both to protect and to fight off and slay the enemy. The sign of the Christian soldier is his use of the Word of God. By living in the Scriptures, he protects himself from the onslaught of the enemy; and he fights and wins battle after battle, day after day. Remember: Jesus Christ Himself overcame the

onslaught of the devil by using Scripture (Mt. 4:4, 7, 10). The written Word is the one weapon that assures victory for the Christian soldier, for the “Word of God is living and active and sharper than any double-edged sword.”

Heb 4:12 *For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*

Rev 1:16 *In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.*

Rev 2:12, 16 *“To the angel of the church in Pergamum write: These are the words of him who has the sharp, double-edged sword. Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.”*

Psa 119:9 *How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word.*

Psa 119:11 *I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*

VI. Ephesians 06:18–20 Prayer, the Supernatural Provision

There is the supernatural provision of the Christian soldier — prayer — *a constant spirit* of prayer. The soldier enters the conflict fully dressed and armed, but something else is essential: great confidence and assurance and courage. Such comes from a spirit of prayer.

The following things need to be noted about the soldier’s prayer.

1. He must pray — always pray. The soldier who is not always praying is not assured of God’s protection. The Christian soldier must pray all the time to maintain a constant unbroken consciousness of God’s presence and care. Such infuses the needed assurance, confidence and courage.

Mat 7:7 *“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.”*

John 16:24 *“Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.”*

Phil 4:6 *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*

Col 4:2 *Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.*

James 5:3 *Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days.*

1 Chr 16:11 *Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always.*

2. He must pray “in the Spirit,” that is, in the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the only living and true God. Prayer to any other god or to one’s own thoughts or to some other man-made *god* is empty and useless.

Rom 8:26-27 *In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will.*

3. He must be *alert in prayer*. The Christian soldier must concentrate and persevere in prayer. He must go to the point of being *sleepless* in prayer – sometimes so intensely involved in prayer that he actually goes without sleep in order to pray.

Mat 26:41 *“Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.”*

Luke 18:1 *Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.*

Luke 22:26 *“But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves.”*

1 Th 5:17 *Pray continually;*

4. He must pray unselfishly. The soldier is not in battle alone; many are engaged in the same warfare. The outcome of the battle is determined by the welfare of all involved. The Christian soldier must pray for those who fight with him. The Christian soldier must pray as much and as intensely for his fellow soldiers as for himself.

Eph 1:15-16 *For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers.*

Eph 6:18 *And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.*

5. He must pray for leaders in particular. Leaders, their decisions and example, often determine the outcome of the battle. The Christian soldier has leaders who teach and preach and administer throughout the church and around the world. Boldness and decisiveness and purity are needed to put the enemy to flight and to capture souls for the gospel (Acts 28:20).

Acts 8:24 *Then Simon answered, “Pray to the Lord for me so that nothing you have said may happen to me.”*

Rom 15:30 *I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me.*

1 Th 5:25 Brothers, pray for us.

2 Th 3:1 Finally, brothers, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honoured, just as it was with you.

Heb 13:18 Pray for us. We are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to live honourably in every way. ■

THE EXAMPLES OF FAITHFUL CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS EPHESIANS 06:21–24

Introduction

This passage presents two Christian soldiers who were faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ. They are a dynamic example for every person who has enlisted in the great army of the Lord.

- I. There was the Christian soldier Tychicus (vv.21-22).
- II. There was the Christian soldier Paul (vv.23-24).

I. *Ephesians 06:21–22 Tychicus, the Believers*

There was the Christian soldier Tychicus (see *Tychicus*, Eph. 6:21-22). Paul says three significant things about this great soldier of Christ.

1. He was a beloved brother: he was a man who had believed in Jesus Christ and demonstrated it by loving others ever so deeply. He treated others as brothers, loving and helping them as he could. Therefore, others counted him as dear to their heart — as a dear brother.

Acts 20:35 “In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

Rom 12:13 Share with God’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

Gal 6:10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

1 Tim 6:17-18 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.

Heb 13:16 And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

1 John 3:16 This is how you know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.

2. He was a faithful minister: a man called and gifted by Christ to preach the gospel and to minister to the needs of God’s dear people. He was a man who had a worldwide vision: he gave his life to reach the people of the world with the glorious news that living forever was now possible. And note: he was faithful. There was no slack or
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slumber, no routineness or slothfulness, no complacency or neglect, no questioning or weakening; he did not fail in his ministry. He was a faithful servant — faithful *in the Lord*. He knew where his strength came from, and he drew his strength from the Lord day by day.

John 9:4 “As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work.”

Acts 4:20 “For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.”

1 Cor 4:2 Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.

1 Cor 6:20 You were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body.

1 Cor 9:16 Yet when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, for I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!

1 Cor 15:58 Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain.

3. He was a friend of believers, a messenger of encouragement. Paul was in prison. The believers of Ephesus were concerned about Paul’s welfare, and Paul was concerned that they know that he was doing well through the strength of the Lord. But how was Paul going to communicate with the church which was so far away? The answer lay in a dear, dear friend and fellow minister, Tychicus. Note this: Tychicus had his own ministry. He could have been out preaching, witnessing and ministering on his own. Remember he was a world-wide minister, having given his life to world evangelism and missions. Yet, here he was giving his time and energy to helping Paul and serving in Paul’s ministry. He is seen giving up a separate ministry in order to serve as a dear friend and fellow minister with Paul. Apparently he was the ideal minister and messenger of encouragement.

James 1:17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

1 Cor 4:7 For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?

Phil 2:3-4 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Luke 14:10 “But when you are invited, take the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he will say to you, ‘Friend, move up to a better place.’ Then you will be honoured in the presence of all your fellow guests.”

Luke 22:26 “But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves.”

James 4:10 *Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.*

1 Pet 5:5 *Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”*

EPHESIANS 06:21–22 TYCHICUS

Tychicus was a native of Asia. He was a companion of Paul who often traveled with him (Acts 20:4).

=> He was commissioned by Paul as a messenger to various churches (Eph. 6:21f; Col. 4:7; 2 Tim. 4:12; Tit. 3:12).

=> He was entrusted to deliver the letters of Paul to the Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon (Eph. 6:21-22; Col. 4:7-8).

=> He was sent on a special mission to Ephesus (2 Tim. 4:12).

=> He was to be sent to Crete for the purpose of relieving Titus (Tit. 3:12).

=> He was called not only Paul’s dear brother and faithful servant, but also his fellow-slave (Col. 4:7). □

II. *Ephesians 06:23–24 Paul, the Believers*

There was the Christian soldier Paul. A glimpse into Paul’s heart can be gleaned from these two verses.

1. Paul was a spiritual brother to other believers. Note that his concern was for the spiritual welfare of others.
 - a. He invoked *peace* upon them (see *Peace*, Eph. 2:14-15; Gal. 1:3; 5:22-23).
 - b. He invoked *love* upon them (see *Love*, Eph. 2:4-5; Gal. 5:13-15; 5:14; 5:22-23).
 - c. He invoked *faith* upon them (see *Faith* or *Faithful*, Eph. 1:1-2; 2:8-10; Gal. 5:22-23; see Gal. 2:15-16; 2:16; 2:19-21; 3:6-14).
2. Paul was a prayer warrior for other believers. He prayed that God’s *grace* would rest upon them. (See *Grace*, Eph. 2:8-9; 2:8-10.) ■