THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD

A Cosby Church Bible Study

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Standing Strong in the Power of the Holy Ghost

Ephesians 6:10-18 | King James Version

Introduction

The Christian life is not a playground; it is a battlefield.

- The apostle Paul closes his letter to the Ephesians with one of the most practical and powerful passages in all of Scripture.
- He calls believers to be strong in the Lord and to put on the whole armour of God so that they may stand against the schemes of the devil.

From a Pentecostal perspective, this passage takes on even greater weight.

- The same Holy Spirit who filled the believers on the Day of Pentecost is the One who empowers us to wear this armour effectively.
- Especially significant is verse 18, where Paul commands us to pray always "with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit."
- The armour is incomplete without the power of the Spirit and the practice of Spirit-filled prayer.

This study will examine each piece of the armour, the nature of our spiritual warfare, and the indispensable role of praying in the Holy Ghost.

- Our goal is not merely to understand the armour but to put it on and stand firm in the evil day.
- The early church faced intense opposition and prevailed because they were clothed with both the armour of God and the power of the Holy Spirit.
- The same resources remain available to every believer today.

The Scripture Text

Ephesians 6:10-18 KJV

(10) Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

(11) Put on the whole armour 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 armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

(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;

Lesson 1: Be Strong in the Lord

Our Strength Comes from Him

Paul begins with a clear command: "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."

- The strength required for spiritual warfare does not originate in human determination, personality, or religious activity.
- It is the Lord's strength, the power of His might, made available to the believer who depends upon Him.

In Pentecostal experience, this strength is closely tied to the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

- On the Day of Pentecost the disciples received power from on high (Acts 1:8).
- That same power is what enables a believer to stand when the battle intensifies.
- Without the infilling of the Spirit, the armour becomes theoretical.

- With the Spirit, it becomes living and effective in daily conflict.

Notice that Paul says "be strong." This is both a command and an invitation.

- We are not left to our own resources. The risen Christ supplies the strength, and the Holy Spirit applies it in the life of the believer who yields to Him.
- The power of His might is the same power that raised Jesus from the dead (Ephesians 1:19-20).
- That resurrection power is available to every Spirit-filled believer.

The Call to Stand

Three times in this passage Paul uses the word "stand" or "withstand" (verses 11, 13, and 14).

- The goal is not always to advance or to conquer new territory; sometimes the victory is simply remaining on one's feet when the enemy is pressing hard.
- In the evil day—the season of intense spiritual attack—the believer who has put on the whole armour and is filled with the Spirit will be able to stand.

Standing requires more than initial enthusiasm. It requires perseverance, watchfulness, and continual reliance upon the Holy Ghost.

Many begin the Christian life well but fail to stand when prolonged pressure comes. The armour of God and the power of the Spirit are given so that, having done all, we will still be standing.

Lesson 2: The Nature of the Battle

Not Against Flesh and Blood

One of the most important truths in this passage is found in verse 12: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood."

Our real enemies are not people.

- They are principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickedness in high places.
- These are organized ranks of demonic forces that oppose the purposes of God and the people of God.
- This truth protects us from bitterness and fleshly retaliation.
- When we remember that the conflict is spiritual, we stop fighting people with carnal weapons and begin to engage the true enemy with spiritual weapons. Gossip, anger, political rage, and personal revenge all miss the real target and often play into the enemy's hands.

Pentecostal theology has always emphasized the reality of the spirit world.

- Demonic forces are not imaginary or merely symbolic. They are organized, intelligent, and hostile.
- The armour of God is therefore not optional equipment for the super-spiritual; it is standard issue for every believer who intends to remain faithful in a world under the influence of the evil one.

The Wiles of the Devil

Paul speaks of "the wiles of the devil." The word points to schemes, strategies, and cunning methods. The enemy rarely attacks in the same way twice.

- He studies our weaknesses, our patterns, our relationships, and our unguarded moments.
- He is a master of deception, accusation, temptation, and discouragement.

Because his methods are crafty, we need more than good intentions or human wisdom. We need the whole armour of God and the discernment that comes from walking in the Spirit.

- The Holy Ghost is the One who exposes the schemes of the enemy, convicts us of areas of vulnerability, and strengthens us to resist. Without the Spirit's help, even a well-intentioned believer can be outmaneuvered.

Lesson 3: The Pieces of the Armour

The Belt of Truth

"Having your loins girt about with truth."

- In the ancient world the belt held everything together and allowed the soldier to move freely.
- Truth is foundational. Without a commitment to the truth of God's Word and a life of honesty before God and man, the rest of the armour cannot function properly.
- In a culture that increasingly rejects absolute truth and redefines reality according to personal preference, the belt of truth is more necessary than ever.
- The Spirit of truth (John 16:13) guides the believer into all truth and keeps us from being swept away by the lies of the age.
- A life built on truth is a life that can stand when everything around it is shaking.

The Breastplate of Righteousness

The breastplate protected the vital organs, especially the heart. Righteousness here includes both the imputed righteousness of Christ (our standing before God by faith) and the practical righteousness of a holy, obedient life.

- A compromised life leaves the heart exposed to the enemy's attacks of condemnation, accusation, and temptation.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of holiness. As we yield to Him, He produces the fruit of righteousness and guards the heart.

- Walking in known sin while claiming to wear the breastplate of righteousness is a contradiction. The Spirit calls us to clean living so that the armour may fully protect us.

Feet Shod with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace

Roman soldiers wore footwear that gave them firm footing and readiness for long marches and sudden movement.

- The gospel of peace gives the believer stability and readiness to carry the good news wherever the Lord sends.
- A soldier whose feet are not properly shod is easily thrown off balance or slowed down.

The same Spirit who empowers us for battle also empowers us for witness.

- The baptism in the Holy Spirit was given so that we might be witnesses (Acts 1:8).
- Peace with God through the gospel becomes the firm ground on which we stand and the message we carry into a hostile world.
- Readiness comes from knowing the gospel well and being prepared to share it under the Spirit's direction.

The Shield of Faith

"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."

- Faith is the large shield that protects the entire body. The enemy launches fiery darts—sudden temptations, accusations, doubts, fears, and lies.
- Faith in the character and promises of God extinguishes them before they can do lasting damage.

Faith is not merely mental agreement with doctrine; it is active trust in a living God.

- The Holy Spirit strengthens our faith as we pray in the Spirit and feed on the Word. Jude 1:20 connects building ourselves up in the most holy faith with praying in the Holy Ghost.
- A shield that is not raised does no good. Faith must be actively exercised.

The Helmet of Salvation

The helmet protects the head—the mind and the thoughts.

- Salvation is not only a past event of being born again; it is also a present hope and a future certainty.
- The assurance of salvation guards the mind against despair, condemnation, confusion, and the lies of the enemy about our standing with God.

- The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God (Romans 8:16). That inner witness is a powerful defense against the mental assaults of the adversary.
- When the mind is protected by the helmet of salvation, the believer can think clearly, hope steadfastly, and refuse the enemy's accusations.

The Sword of the Spirit

"And the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." This is the only offensive weapon listed in the armour. The Word of God, made alive and applied by the Spirit, is sharp and effective against every lie and every stronghold of the enemy.

- Jesus Himself used the written Word against Satan in the wilderness, answering each temptation with "It is written."
- The Spirit-filled believer does the same. The Word is not a dead letter; it is the sword that the Spirit wields through the mouth and life of the believer who knows it, believes it, and speaks it.
- Regular reading, memorization, and meditation on Scripture keep the sword sharp and ready.

Lesson 4: Praying Always in the Spirit

The Capstone of the Armour

After listing every piece of the armour, Paul adds the essential practice that makes the armour effective: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

- Prayer in the Spirit is not an optional extra for especially spiritual people. It is the atmosphere in which the armour is worn and the battle is fought.
- Without it, the soldier may be well-equipped on paper yet still powerless in the actual conflict.
- The armour and the Spirit-filled prayer life belong together.

What It Means to Pray in the Spirit

From a Pentecostal understanding, praying in the Spirit includes both praying with the understanding under the leadership of the Holy Spirit and praying in tongues—the private prayer language given when a believer is baptized in the Holy Spirit.

- Romans 8:26 teaches that the Spirit helps our weaknesses and intercedes for us with groanings that cannot be uttered.
- First Corinthians 14:14-15 shows Paul praying both with the spirit and with the understanding. Jude 1:20 commands us to build ourselves up on our most holy faith by praying in the Holy Ghost.

When we pray in tongues, our spirit prays even when our understanding is unfruitful.

- We are speaking mysteries to God. We are being edified and strengthened.
- We are allowing the Spirit to pray through us according to the perfect will of God. This is a vital part of standing in the evil day.
- Many battles are won or lost in the place of Spirit-led prayer before they ever appear in the visible realm.

Watching with Perseverance

Paul couples prayer with watching and perseverance. Spiritual alertness is required.

- The enemy does not always announce his attacks in advance. The believer who prays in the Spirit and remains watchful is far less likely to be caught off guard or to drift into spiritual carelessness.
- This watching is not only for ourselves but "for all saints." Spirit-filled prayer is necessary and intercessory.
- We stand in the gap for the body of Christ, for the weak, for the wounded, for leaders under pressure, and for those under special attack.

- Perseverance means we do not quit praying when answers are delayed or when the pressure continues.

Lesson 5: Putting It All On

The Whole Armour

Paul insists on the whole armour of God. We cannot choose the pieces we like and leave the others behind.

- Truth without righteousness leaves the heart exposed.
- Faith without the Word leaves us without an offensive weapon.
- The armour without praying in the Spirit leaves us without the power to use it effectively.
- Every piece is necessary.

Every morning the believer has a decision to make: Will I put on the armour, or will I face the day unprotected?

- The Holy Spirit is ready to help us put it on.
- He is the One who makes each piece real and powerful in daily experience.
- Putting on the armour is both a decisive act and a continual dependence upon the Spirit.

Standing in the Evil Day

There are ordinary days and there are evil days—seasons of heightened spiritual pressure, temptation, accusation, opposition, and weariness.

- The armour is given so that when those days come, we may be able to withstand, and having done all, to stand.

The early church stood in the face of persecution, false doctrine, and demonic opposition because they were filled with the Spirit and clothed with the armour of God.

- They prayed, they preached, they suffered, and they continued steadfastly.
- The same resources are available to the church today. The Spirit has not changed. The armour has not lost its effectiveness.
- The call to stand remains.

Application and Discussion

Personal Reflection

Take time before the Lord with these questions:

1. Am I consciously putting on the whole armour of God each day, or am I relying on my own strength and personality?

2. Which piece of the armour do I most often neglect? What has been the result?

3. Do I regularly pray in the Spirit as part of my spiritual warfare and daily walk?

4. Have I been fighting people instead of recognizing the true spiritual enemies behind the conflict?

5. In what area of my life do I most need the strength that comes from the power of His might?

6. Am I watching and persevering in prayer for other believers, or is my prayer life mainly focused on my own needs?

Group Discussion

- How does understanding that our battle is not against flesh and blood change the way we respond to difficult people and situations?
- Why is praying in the Spirit essential to the effective use of the armour of God?
- Which piece of the armour seems most under attack or most neglected in the lives of believers today?
- How does the baptism in the Holy Spirit relate to the command to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might?
- What practical daily habits can help a believer keep the armour on and remain alert throughout the day?

- How can a local church cultivate a culture of Spirit-filled prayer and mutual intercession?

Closing Challenge

The armour of God is not a museum piece to be admired from a distance. It is battle gear to be worn every day. The Holy Spirit is not merely a doctrine to be debated or a experience to be claimed once. He is the power by which we stand, pray, resist, and overcome.

Paul's final word in this passage is a call to Spirit-filled, persevering prayer. The same Spirit who rushed into the upper room on the Day of Pentecost is the Spirit who helps us pray, who strengthens our faith, who brings the Word to our remembrance, who produces righteousness in our lives, and who enables us to stand when the evil day arrives.

Put on the whole armour of God. Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Pray always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit. Watch with perseverance. Stand for yourself and for all the saints.

The battle is real. The armour is sufficient. The Spirit is willing and able. The only question that remains is whether we will put on the armour, walk in the power He has provided, and keep praying until the victory is complete.

Having done all, to stand.