

Ready for Spiritual War

Ephesians 6:10-20

Building the Church Series

There is something fascinating about building projects. The final phase is always the most critical. You can have the best foundation, perfect framing, and beautiful design. But if you do not protect what you have built—if you leave it exposed—it can all fall apart.

Throughout this series, we have been asking one question: What does it take to build a church that honors God? Ephesians has been clear. The Gospel shapes us (chapters 1–3). Unity holds us together (chapter 4). Holiness marks our walk (chapter 5). Order strengthens our homes (chapters 5–6).

But now Paul brings it home. He ends with a warning: Everything we have been building is under attack. Your identity in Christ. Your unity. Your purity. Your marriage. Your peace. Your perseverance.

Here is the wake-up call: You can build everything right and still lose ground if you do not know how to defend it.

So Paul does not close with fluff. He closes with a battle plan. Because you are not building in a safe zone—you are building in a war zone. And if you do not suit up, you will not stand up.

Ephesians 6:10–20 gives us this truth: Spiritual warfare is won when we are strengthened in the Lord, suited with God's armor, standing our ground, wielding God's Word, and praying for gospel boldness.

1. Open Your Eyes—You Are in a Spiritual Battle (v. 12)

Paul says "our struggle"—not "their struggle," not "some people's struggle." This is shared, ongoing, and close-range. The word carries the idea of a wrestling match. You feel it. It is close and personal.

That is why the next phrase matters: "Not against flesh and blood." Paul is not saying people cannot hurt you. He is not saying your flesh cannot tempt you. He is saying people are not the final enemy. If you make humans the enemy, you will fight the wrong fight with the wrong weapons, and you will fall for the real schemes.

Paul says our struggle is against rulers, authorities, cosmic powers of this darkness, evil, and spiritual forces in the heavens. When you hear that list, five things should hit you.

- **This enemy is powerful.** Paul is not trying to scare you—he is trying to wake you up. This is real opposition.
- **This enemy is many.** He stacks terms because it is not one demon, one tactic, one attack. It is a host.
- **This enemy is organized.** Rulers. Authorities. Powers. That language signals structure—strategy—not random chaos.
- **This enemy works in darkness.** Darkness means blindness to truth, confusion, deception—a fog that keeps people from seeing reality the way God sees it.
- **This enemy is wicked.** It does not want to inconvenience you. Satan wants what belongs to God alone—your devotion, your worship, your loyalty, your soul.

Behind it all is none other than Satan himself—the chief deceiver. Like it or not, we are at war, and Satan is relentless. Because the battle is spiritual, you cannot fight it with human strength. That would be like trying to put out a grease fire with water—it does not fix it; it makes it explode in your face.

2. Be Strengthened by the Lord's Vast Power (v. 10)

"Be strengthened by the Lord and by his vast strength." Paul is not saying "Get stronger." He is saying "Be strengthened." That is passive on purpose. Strength has to come from outside of you. You do not manufacture it—you receive it.

What does that strength do? It fortifies you. It steadies you. It resolves your faith. It locks in your confidence.

Notice what Paul says next: "Be strengthened... by His vast strength." Vast means you do not need God plus something else. You do not need God's strength and your backup plan. You do not need God's strength and your hustle. You do not need God's strength and your little self-salvation project.

His strength is vast. Whatever you are facing—the size of it, the length of it, the intensity of it, the darkness of it—God is not short on strength. God is not running out of power. God has more than enough. And He will supply what you need to keep standing.

But let me clarify something so you do not get discouraged. God's definition of victory is not always our definition of victory. Victory is not always God ending the attack. Victory is not

always God removing the trial. Victory is not always you "winning" the way you pictured it.

Sometimes victory looks like this: You did not fold. You did not run. You did not compromise. You stayed faithful. You remained standing. You stayed with Jesus.

Yes—we have victory in Jesus. But hear this: Victory does not always look like God pulling you out of the fire. Sometimes victory is God keeping you faithful in the fire—all the way to your last breath. I wish more churches said that out loud. I wish more worship songs celebrated that kind of victory. Because if we do not teach people what victory really is, they will hit spiritual warfare and think they are losing—when they are actually winning.

3. Put on the Full Armor of God (v. 11)

"Put on the full armor of God so that you can stand against the schemes of the devil."

Think about a soldier suiting up for battle. Piece by piece. Snap by snap. Lock by lock. When that armor seals up, it is not for style. It means he is ready for war. That is exactly the command Paul is giving us here. Armor up, because the enemy is real, and his mission is to seek and destroy you.

You cannot afford to start your day uncovered. You cannot afford to step into your world uncovered—home, work, and everything in between. You cannot afford to do relationships uncovered—marriage, parenting, church. And you definitely cannot afford to lay your head down uncovered.

This is war. So suit up—every day. Because the devil does not clock out. And temptation does not schedule an appointment.

All of us can think of moments when we got lax. When we dropped our guard. When we were not spiritually alert. And it did not take long before evil tried to fill the void. That is what Satan does. He lights the fuse on that argument. He fans that irritation into rage. He plants that dark thought and tells you it is "just you." He stirs suspicion. He instigates conflict. He pulls at the thread until the whole thing starts unraveling.

Not because he is all-powerful—but because you left yourself exposed. So Paul says, "Put on the full armor of God."

4. Take Up the Armor and Stand Your Ground Today (vv. 13–16)

Verse 11 was our draft card—our call to arms. But verse 13 gives us our marching orders: "So that you may be able to resist in the evil day... and having prepared everything, to stand firm." In other words, the evil day is coming. And in many ways—it is already here. When that day comes, you need to stand firm in the faith, unmovable.

What is "the evil day"? Paul is not talking about one single 24-hour period only. He is talking about the reality of evil pressing in—sometimes constant, sometimes concentrated.

"The evil day" can mean a few things. First—right now. We live in evil days. A broken world under darkness. Each day you wake up in a battlefield. Second—it can be that concentrated day of attack, when temptation intensifies, when trials stack up, when the pressure feels personal, when the evil feels unrelenting. Third—it points forward to the final day, when Christ returns, when He ends the war, when He proves in public what heaven already knows: Jesus reigns supreme—and Satan is a defeated foe.

So whether it is the daily war, or the heavy day, or the final day—Paul's command is the same: Take up the full armor of God. Because you cannot stand without it.

Paul tells us exactly how to stand firm.

Fasten the Belt of Truth.

In that world, the belt was not decoration. It was function. It pulled everything in. It kept you from getting tangled up. It held the rest of the armor in place. Spiritually—truth does the same thing. Truth holds you together. So you do not live off what you heard. You do not live off what you feel. You do not live off what sounds good online. Because Satan's first weapon is not a punch—it is a lie. And if you do not know truth—you will call lies "truth." You will swallow the scheme. You will take the bait. So Paul says: lock in truth.

Put on the Breastplate of Righteousness.

That breastplate covered the front, protecting vital organs. Heart. Lungs. Liver. The stuff you cannot afford to lose. Spiritually, here is the picture: when your heart is set on Christ—and your life is aligned with His righteousness—it guards what is most vulnerable in you. Because one of the biggest differences between the church and the world is not our opinions—it is our holiness. Our obedience. Our integrity when no one is watching. Our refusal to play games with sin. And when you compromise righteousness, you do not just "mess up." You expose your heart. You make yourself an easy target. So if you are going to stand in the evil day: truth has to hold you together, and righteousness has to guard your heart.

Fit Your Feet with the Readiness That Comes from the Gospel of Peace.

When the war gets loud, the first temptation is to run. So what keeps you from folding? What keeps you from panicking? What keeps you from drifting back into sin? It is not willpower. It is not adrenaline. It is not a "strong personality." It is readiness. And that readiness comes from the gospel of peace. You have traction. You have footing. You are not slipping all over the place spiritually. Because the gospel settles you: I am at peace with God. I am not fighting for approval—Christ secured it. I am not living for the world—Christ purchased me out of it. I am not searching for meaning—Christ gave it to me. So you develop a calm, steady confidence.

Take Up the Shield of Faith.

Picture it: not a little shield. A full-body shield. Big enough to cover you. Because the enemy does not only attack up close—he attacks from a distance. Arrows being shot at you from a distance that rain down on you.

That is Satan. He is always shooting arrows at you. Arrows of doubt: "God is not with you." Arrows of fear: "Panic—you are not safe." Arrows of accusation: "You are a fraud." Arrows of shame: "You are done." Arrows of depression: "It will never change." Arrows of pride: "You do not need God." Arrows of defeat: "Quit."

And if they land in your heart—they do not just wound you. They infect you. Bitterness. Lust. Division. Despair. Compromise. So God gives you a defense: the shield of faith. It blocks the arrows. The goal is not to never get shot. But when you do—you will live to fight another day, because your heart was not penetrated.

Everything listed so far is for defense. In verse 17, Paul gives the command to go on the offense.

5. Wage War Against the Enemy Using Your Mind and Words (v. 17)

"Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit—which is the Word of God."

Two weapons. Two essential pieces.

First—the Helmet.

The mind is the command center. If your thinking collapses, everything falls apart. That is why the enemy attacks your mind first: with lies, with sexual temptation, with fear, with confusion, with hopelessness. So Paul says: protect it. The helmet keeps your head from getting crushed when the enemy swings.

And that helmet is salvation. Not "I hope I am saved." Not "I am trying to be saved." But: I know I belong to Christ. I know He has forgiven me. I know He has sealed me. I know I am

secure in His hands. That kind of assurance keeps your head in the fight.

Second—the Sword.

Defense is not enough. You also need a weapon. The only offensive weapon in the list. And it is not your opinions. Not your anger. Not your comebacks. It is the Word of God. Because you do not defeat lies with louder lies. You defeat lies with truth.

Jesus modeled it for us in the wilderness. When tempted by Satan, He responded "It is written." Again. And again. And again.

So when the enemy speaks—you answer with Scripture. Anxious? "I will not be anxious about anything." Ashamed? "There is now no condemnation for me in Christ Jesus." Defeated? "God is for me—who can stand against me?"

We take the helmet—steady mind, secure identity. We take the sword—truth on our lips, Scripture in our mouths. And we fight to ward off the enemy and to advance the Lord's kingdom.

However, just because you have been strengthened, suited, and armed does not mean you are ready to charge into battle—at least not alone. Because you are not an army of one.

6. Call for Reinforcements, Requesting Exactly What You Need (vv. 18–20)

Paul says, "Pray at all times..." That is the call for reinforcements.

Is it not interesting—Paul starts this whole section with strength: "Be strengthened by the Lord." And he ends it with prayer: "Pray at all times." Because Paul knows our nature.

You can be suited up, confident in your salvation, and know the Word—yet fail to remain vigilant. When that happens, you can fall into one of two pits.

The pit of self-reliance: "I got this, God. You handle that over there—I will handle this part of the war." Or the pit of complacency: Armor on, but prayer off. Covered, but careless. Equipped, but distracted.

That is why this directive is so important: there will never be a moment you do not need help. You never graduate from dependence. And the enemy will not relent—not until God says it is over.

This war is spiritual. So yes—you will get weary. You will get weak. You will take hits. And the answer is not "try harder." The answer is pray harder.

Paul says pray at all times—constant dependence. Pray in the Spirit—not in the flesh, not on autopilot. Pray with every kind of prayer and request. And stay alert—because this is a war.

So you pray for what you need. Strength: "Holy Spirit, strengthen me." Discernment: "Expose the scheme." Protection: "Cover my mind. Cover my home. Cover my steps." Perseverance: "Lord, keep me from growing weary."

And you pray for the Gospel mission to advance. That is what Paul is getting at in verse 19: "Pray for me... that I would have the right words... and boldness... to make the gospel known." So you pray: "Lord, make me bold to speak Your gospel like I should."

And you do not just pray like this for yourself. Paul says pray this way for all the saints. Because in war, you do not fight alone. We are not mercenaries. We are an army under one Commander. One family under God, indivisible by Satan.

So call for reinforcements—and keep calling—until the battle is over.

What Now?

The question that remains on the table is: What do we do now?

You are going to walk out of this and back into your life. Back to your house. Back to your job. Back to your relationships. Back to your struggles. And the enemy will be waiting.

But here is the thing—we do not get to choose whether we are in a war. We only get to choose whether we fight prepared or unprepared.

Here is what unprepared looks like: You wake up—no prayer, no Word. You scroll—no guard, no discernment. You react—no patience, no Spirit. You engage—no truth, no righteousness. And by midday, you are bleeding out spiritually, wondering why you feel so defeated. It is because you walked into a firefight in your pajamas. What did you think was going to happen?

But that does not have to be you.

God has given you everything you need. The strength—His. The armor—His. The sword—His Word. The supply line—prayer.

So here is your assignment. Tomorrow morning—before you check your phone, before you do anything else:

- **Belt of Truth:** Open God's Word. Even 5 minutes. Let truth hold you together.
- **Breastplate of Righteousness:** Confess where you have been compromising. Guard your heart.
- **Feet Ready:** Remind yourself: I am at peace with God. I am ready to stand.
- **Shield of Faith:** Pray: "Lord, help me trust You more than I fear the enemy."
- **Helmet of Salvation:** Say it out loud: "I belong to Christ. I am sealed. I am secure."
- **Sword of the Spirit:** Pick one verse. Memorize it. Wield it when the lies come.
- **Pray at All Times:** Ask the Holy Spirit to strengthen you. Ask Him for boldness.

And then—suit up and step out.

Because the mission is not just survival. The mission is gospel advancement. Paul said it from a prison cell: "Pray that I might be bold enough to speak about it as I should." That is the goal. Not just to stand, but to stand and speak. Not just to survive, but to make disciples who make disciples. Not just to fight off the enemy, but to see captives set free.

So let me ask you: Are you suited up?

The battle is real. The armor is ready. The victory is already won in Christ. Now the question is: Will you fight like it?

Bridge Fellowship Church
3060 Hammond Business Place, Suite 121 | Raleigh, NC
"To make disciples who make disciples"