

Ephesians 6:10-24 Combat Ready

Recalling the context:

- Occultic and pagan culture
- Opposition to the Christian faith: gospel fiercely resisted (Acts 19:21ff)
- Recall the theme of Ephesians – all things subjected under Jesus Christ's Lordship
- Paul has spelt out the implications of the gospel from Ephesians 4:1 where he called the Christians to live lives worthy of the gospel.
 - Thereafter he laid out what it looks like practically in
 - Church unity (4:1 – 16)
 - Personal integrity and interpersonal relationships (4:17 – 32)
 - Moral bearing and conduct (5:1 – 21)
 - Family ethos (5:22 – 6:4)
 - Work ethos (6:5 – 9)
 - All of which are not easy as it is against our nature and environment affected by sin

Where's your source of ammo?

- Resources that God has given us to face the challenges
 - Eph 1 – In Christ: we have all that we need to love godly lives; our access to that is faith in Jesus Christ
 - It is thus heartening and encouraging that Paul ended off his last segment with the phrase: "Be strong IN THE LORD"
 - How are we made strong?
 - Ref Ephesians 4:24

Recognizing your enemy

- Idolatry: for the Ephesians it was the worship of Artemis and their occult practices
 - Battleground – our affections, our heart
- Paul went further in 6:11, 12 to tell us what our enemy is like
 - Schemes of the devil (*methodeia*) – crafty, deceiving, deliberate, systematic, clever
 - Not against flesh and blood – supernatural
 - Against rulers (*kosmokrator*), authorities - they can exert their forces somewhat because of their position and power
 - Against powers of this dark world – evil nature
 - Against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realm – wickedness/ all kinds of evil
- How does our enemy fight us today?
 - Open Battle – issues that society hits us with, war declared
 - Guerilla warfare – harassment
 - Terrorist attack – big time; hit us when we are least prepared
 - How the devil exerts his influence today are seen everywhere and many times subtle

The Christian Soldier Ready for Combat

- Why the soldier analogy?
 - The figure may not be the Roman soldier but it is the picture of the Messiah in Isaiah
 - Isaiah 11:5 – righteousness will be His belt...
 - Isaiah 52:7 – how beautiful on the mountain are the feet of him...
 - Isaiah 59:15 – 17 – He puts on righteousness as the breastplate...
- Isaiah envision God's coming Messiah as a warrior and redeemer to save His people
- Combat position: "Stand"
- What did God give us? 6 objective endowment God has given us:
 - **Truth (belt)**
 - *Isaiah 11:5* Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins.
 - **Righteousness (breastplate)**
 - *Isaiah 59:15 – 18*

*Truth is lacking, and he who departs from evil makes himself a prey.
The LORD saw it, and it displeased him that there was no justice.
He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no one to intercede;
then his own arm brought him salvation, and his righteousness upheld him.
**He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on his head;
he put on garments of vengeance for clothing, and wrapped himself in zeal as a cloak.**
According to their deeds, so will he repay, wrath to his adversaries, repayment to his enemies;
to the coastlands he will render repayment.*

○ **Peace through the gospel (feet fitted = footwear)**

- **Isaiah 52:7**
*How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of him who brings **good news**,
who publishes **peace**, who brings good news of happiness,
who publishes salvation,
who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."*

○ **Faith (Shield)**

○ **Salvation (helmet)**

- **Isaiah 59:17** *He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on his head; he put on garments of vengeance for clothing, and wrapped himself in zeal as a cloak.*
- Parallel with righteousness
- Righteousness contains within it is the idea of grace.
 - Ref Eph 2:8 – perfect tense: you have been saved → decisive action of that God's grace has brought about in our experience
 - We can be sure of the fact that God has given us salvation

○ **Word of God (sword)**

- **Isaiah 49:2** *He made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me a polished arrow; in his quiver he hid me away.*

Drawing your weapon/ammo: your supply line

- **Praying at all times in the Spirit (6:18)**
- **Keep alert**
- **Persevere**

Implications

Questions to think about...(personal and church front)

1. How have you and the church been attacked by the devil?
2. In what areas do we find the spiritual battle difficult to fight?
3. How have we responded when having to fight these battles?
4. What would be an area of weakness in which the devil may gain a foothold to make us fall?