

Bible Study Series
Serving God with Excellence
#3 STANDING FIRM

INTRODUCTION: Praise the Lord. God has brought us by His grace to a new year. The thought that God has given me for our third lesson is Stand Firm.

Ephesians 6:10-13 (NIV) “**Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. 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. 13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.**”

In 29 days into the New Year unexpected challenges have already raised its head.

A child of God faces challenges from the world outside, the circumstances around us, and also the spiritual war the enemy, the devil wages against us.

The only way a Believer can go forward in life is by standing firm in the Lord. Paul gives three commands for us in verses 10-13:

- **Stand Firm**
- **Be Strong**
- **Put On the Whole Armor Of God**

As Paul closes the letter to the Ephesians in Ephesians 6, he speaks of a great struggle that lies before every believer. The world is a battleground. There is a war between God and Satan. We see it in many places in Scripture, perhaps no more clearly than in the book of Job, where Satan and God are in conflict verbally. The whole thing, since the fall of man, since the curse entered into the earth is warfare.

Our opponent is not a fellow human but rather a host of demonic forces of evil belonging to the realm of the spirit. Schemes of the devil are death and destruction through temptation and accusation of sin.

Christian life is a struggle, a battle, a wrestling match, as Paul calls it in Ephesians 6:12, and so we literally exist as believers in a life-and-death struggle.

We get so wrapped up in our little things that we forget what warfare is going on.

Paul had battles:

I Corinthians 16:8-9 (NIV) “*But I will stay on at Ephesus until Pentecost, because a great door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many who oppose me.*”

In the midst of warfare, how do we have victory?

1. We Have Strength In The Lord to Stand Firm

Ephesians 6:10 (NIV) “*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.*”

Strength means physical power and toughness. We have God’s strength. His strength is the issue. God is our strength. No matter how strong our enemy is, God’s strength is superior.

The church in Philadelphia in **Revelation 3** is a good church. In fact, it’s only the church at Smyrna and the church at Philadelphia to which no condemnation was given. This was a righteous community of faith, and our Lord says to them **Revelation 3:8 (NIV)** “*See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut.*”

This was a church that was reaching out, a church that was blessed by God and the angel says in **Revelation 3:8 (NIV)** “*I know that you have little strength.*”

You know what’s beautiful about that is the fact that even a little strength preserves the church. God is so much more powerful than Satan that a little of his strength is enough to overcome all of the enemy’s schemes against us in 2025.

Philippians 4:13 (NKJV) “*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*”

Again, the resource is ours. I believe at the cross Jesus Christ gave a death blow to Satan as recorded in **Hebrews 2:14-15 (NIV)** “*Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—15and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.*”

He destroyed him who had the power of death, and I believe all we need to do is enter into that victory. Listen, if Christ defeated Satan at the cross and if I am in Christ, then I have the power to defeat Satan. Satan is going to be forever defeated under our feet. **Romans 16:20 (NIV)** “*The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.*”

The point is this. We are in a war but there is no reason to lose and there’s no reason to be afraid. Divine resources belong to us.

How to have the victory? First, we have to have our strength in the Lord. Stand firm!

2. We Have Power In The Lord to Stand Firm

Ephesians 1:19 (NIV) “***and his incomparably great power for us who believe...***”

We have power in the Lord. Power means the ability or capacity to do something. We have the Lord’s power to overcome the enemy, to win.

a. What kind of power?

Jeremiah 10:12 (NIV) “***God made the earth by his power...***”

Ephesians 1:19-20 (NIV) “***and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength 20 he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms,***”

b. What Kind Of Power Do We Have?

- The Power That Conquered Death On The Cross and That Conquered Death In The Grave.
- The Power That Exalted Christ To The Right Hand And Set Every Angel And Demon In The Universe Under His Feet. That is the power we have.

Colossians 1:10-11 (NIV) “***so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, 11being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience,***”

We have all might according to his glorious power. Christ who has delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of his dear son has given us this power. There is no believer who cannot deal with Satan in terms of resurrection, power available in Christ. Stand Firm.

3. Stand Firm Putting on The Warfare Armor

Ephesians 6:11 (NIV) “***Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes.***”

One cannot win unless one puts on the armor. Never lay your armor down. So Paul, probably chained to a Roman soldier as he wrote this letter sees the whole Roman soldier’s uniform and all the armor that went with it as a perfect illustration of how the believer is to be prepared to fight the enemy.

Ephesians 6:14-17 (NIV) “***Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, 15and with your feet fitted with the readiness that***

comes from the gospel of peace. 16 In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

The Spiritual Armor

1. Belt Of Truth Buckled Around Your Waist.

What is God’s truth that the believer is to put on?

- Christ is the truth. The believer is to put on Christ (John 1:14 KJV)
- 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 KJV)
- Speaking and living a life of truthfulness is the truth (Zechariah 8:16 KJV)

2. Breastplate Of Righteousness.

The breastplate covered the vital organs of the chest, especially the heart. The righteousness Paul has in mind comes to us by virtue of our right standing with God. Since God declares us righteous in Christ Romans 5:1 (NCV), we now pursue righteousness in the choices we make (I Timothy 6:11(NIV)).

The Christian soldier is:

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

3. The Gospel Of Peace.

A soldier must have good shoes so he can fight without slipping. Roman soldiers wore sandals with spikes driven through the soles that gave them traction on any surface. You can’t fight very well if your feet are slipping out from under you.

1. When Paul speaks of the “gospel of peace,” he means the gospel itself is the only true source of peace. Because of Jesus Christ, we now have peace with God (Romans 5:1 NIV), and we have the peace of God (Philippians 4:7 NIV).

2. The sign of the Christian soldier is readiness, a readiness to march and to bear witness to the gospel.

4. Shield Of Faith.

Faith, which is like a shield

- A strong conviction in God can protect us from every “fiery dart” that Satan can throw at us (false doctrine, lusts of the flesh, persecution)
- This faith comes only from the Word of God - Romans 10:17 (NIV)

5. Helmet Of Salvation.

Salvation comes the moment we place our trust in Jesus' death and resurrection as the payment for our sin. But salvation is also worked out through a lengthy process of sanctification.

The helmet of salvation (like the breastplate of righteousness) rests on the work of Christ to save us but also involves us as we journey with the Lord and allow Him to work that salvation into every part of our thoughts. The battlefield of our mind is the primary place spiritual battle is fought.

- Surrender thoughts that don't line up with Scripture. As **Colossians 3:2** says, "Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things."
- Wash your mind with the renewing of God's Word. As **Romans 12:2** says, "Do not conform 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."

The Lord works His freeing truth into our perspectives while the enemy fights for strongholds to bind us (John 10:10 NIV).

6. Sword Of The Spirit.

The explanation of this piece of armor is right there in the verse, it is The Word of God. And it is the only piece of armor that is both defensive and offensive. "When we are tempted, the most effective weapon that God has given to us as believers is the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. "Jesus modeled this so beautifully during His temptation in the wilderness. When the devil tried temptation after temptation against Him, Jesus used the sword of the Spirit Look at **Luke 4:1-13 (NIV)**. When the devil tempted him three times, Jesus responded with the truth of God's word – every time.

If you want to win in the Christian life put on the whole armor, and get your life right because it's going to be a battle till the day you die.

4. Stand Firm Against the Enemy

a. Take your stand against the enemy.

Ephesians 4:11 (NIV) "*Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.*"

In other words, we know we have the power of the Lord and his strength. We put on the whole armor. We're ready, obedient with our armor, depending on divine power and can stand against the devil's wiles. Always the believer is to stand because Satan will attack him. You don't need to go

find the devil. You deal with the power of God and the armor that you have and God through that will take care of the enemy. Stand firm.

Now we're never told in the Bible to attack the devil either. We're just told to resist him.

James 4:7 (NIV) "Resist the devil and he will flee from you."

Resist means to stand one's ground, or stand firm. Hold our ground.

Who is the enemy?

The Bible tells us the devil.

I Peter (NIV) 5:8 "Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour."

Jesus knew there was an enemy. He talked with him in Matthew 4 when he was tempted in the wilderness.

The apostles talked about the enemy.

The devil tempted Eve in Genesis 3.

He tempted Christ in Matthew 4.

He perverted God's word in Matthew 4

The devil opposed God's work in Zachariah 3:1-2.

He hindered God's servant in I Thessalonians 2:18

He hinders the gospel in II Corinthians 4.

The devil traps believers I Timothy 3:7.

He desires the nations in Revelations 16.

He's an angel of light in II Corinthians 11.

He fights with Michael in Jude.

The devil brought sin into the world in Genesis 3.

He now has the whole world lying in his lap in I John 5.

In John 16 the prince of this world.

Ephesians 2 the prince of the power of the air.

II Corinthians 4 he's called the God of this age.

In Luke 11:15 the prince of demons.

52 times he's called Satan which means adversary. That is his most common title.

35 times he's called devil, diabolos which means slanderer.

He is called the old serpent, the great dragon, the roaring lion, the evil one, Abaddōn, Apolluōn, tempter, accuser, the spirit now working in the sons of disobedience.

Ephesians 6:11 The devil has schemes. KJV Wiles. Meaning cunning, devious, manipulative

Ephesians 4:14 The emphasis is that the wiles of the devil are lies, false doctrine, false religion, false teaching.

He is a liar and the father of it. He is a deceiver. His whole system deceives subtly, supernaturally, cleverly, and powerfully. He has deceived mankind the world over with false religious systems.

Can you believe that in the old testaments Satan deceived Israel into worshipping idols and turning their back on the true God? Can you remember that in the New Testament Satan deceived Israel into murdering their own Messiah?

To Christians, he comes and creates doubt in their minds as he did to Eve and did throughout the history of God's people.

He is a formidable/powerful enemy.

Ephesians 6:12 (NIV) ***“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.”***

Keep this in mind the real enemy is not flesh and blood. The real weapons of our warfare are not carnal but principalities, powers, and rulers of the darkness of this world. Those are all terms to describe demons. It is a demon empire that is the real enemy, and we wrestle.

And the word wrestle is not talking about a simple athletic game. In Roman times when the wrestlers went into the ring to wrestle the idea was to get two hands around the neck of the man in a stranglehold and press not only his shoulders but his head to the ground and if his head was on the ground for a certain time he died. If only his shoulders touched, and you didn't get his head down he lived to fight again and Satan wrestles with us through his demons and we are with him and it is a life and death matter.

Ephesians 6:13 (NIV) ***“Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.”***

What I love you may be able to stand, you can stand. There is victory if the armor is on, and the confidence is in the Lord. Don't get caught with your armor off.

1. How Can We Win The Battle?

a. **We Have Strength In The Lord.**

- b. **We Have Power In The Lord.**
- c. **Put On The Warfare Armor.**
- d. **Stand Firm Against The Enemy.**

Remember, now the Lord will fight for you. As David said to the Philistines “the battle is the Lord’s.” The battle is the Lord’s. Let him fight it. God said to Jehoshaphat one time “The battle is not yours. It’s God’s.” You must be strong in the Lord and put on His full armor, so that you may stand against the enemy. Stand firm!