

RICH *in* GRACE

Sermon Series in Ephesians

Preparing for Small Group: Read the passage below, and answer the following questions.

- (1) What do these verses tell me about God?
- (2) What do these verses tell me about sinful humanity?
- (3) What do these verses tell me about Jesus?
- (4) What does God want me to know?
- (5) What does God want me to do?

“Be Strong and Stand”

Ephesians 6:10-24

Main Point: Be strong against evil by putting on God’s provided armor.

- **We are commanded to be strong, not in our own, but in the Lord’s might (10).**
- **This strength is achieved by putting on the whole armor of God (11-12).**
 - *We need God’s armor to stand (11).*
 - *We need God’s armor because this is spiritual battle (12).*

In previous passages, especially beginning in chapter 4, Paul talked about living our lives as Christians. Particularly, he discussed how we should treat fellow Christians in our personal lives, in our homes, among the church, and even in our economic lives. He began this passage with the word “finally,” connecting this passage to all that came before. This finally is connected to some important information about living in Christ. If you are in Christ, living for Him, you will find yourself (your faith, your purpose, your direction, your love for God, etc...) under assault from various directions. We must understand that these battles have their roots in the spiritual world. We are commanded to “be strong” on these occasions. The strength that is required is not our own strength, it is the “strength of the Lord.”

1. What does this connecting word mean to reader/hearer?
2. To whom is he directing the passage that follows? Individuals, the church body, both? Why
3. What do we need in order to be strong in the Lord?
4. Why do we need this? What/who are we fighting?
5. Do you find yourself trying to fight these battles in your own strength? If so, what has been the result?

In order to stand we need (13-18):

- *To buckle-up with God’s truth (Belt).*
 - *To put on and live in God’s righteousness (Breastplate).*
 - *To prepare ourselves to understand and share the Gospel of Peace (Shoes).*
 - *To avail ourselves of our active Faith (Shield).*
 - *To receive God’s deliverance (Helmet).*
 - *To parry and thrust with God’s word (Sword).*
1. The Belt of Truth — Read John 14:6 and discuss the question of “what is “truth?”

2. The Breastplate of Righteousness — Read 2 Cor. 5:21. Who is righteousness? What does this mean? How does this apply to righteousness in your life?
3. The preparation of the Gospel for shoes — Shoes give us traction to hold our ground or even move forward against our enemies. How does the preparation of the Gospel do this?
4. The Shield of Faith — The passage says we are to “take-up the shield of faith” (16). The word translated “take-up” means to continue doing or to do continually. Because with it, “you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one” (16). Share a flaming dart that your faith has extinguished recently.
5. The Helmet of Salvation — In this context, how do we receive salvation or deliverance?
6. The “Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God” — How did Jesus use the Word of God when tempted in the desert? Read Matt. 4:1-11 and discuss.
7. In verse 18, Paul said that all the while we should be in prayer. Reflect on your prayer life. Is prayer your first response? If not, why not? How can we cultivate that in our lives?

The commands and instructions in these verses were given to the church. Obviously each individual must put on the Armor of God. But when attacking, the enemy should not be confronted by a lone Christian, rather a Phalanx of fully-armored Christian soldiers: The church!

All the while praying continually for your brothers and sisters in Christ (18-20)!

1. What have you learned about Spiritual Warfare from these verses?
2. What misconceptions did you have before this lesson?
3. How has God’s Word changed the way that you respond to spiritual attack?