

KERNSTOWN UMC
November 15, 2020
Sermon Manuscript
Text: Ephesians 6:11-13
Title: “Spiritual Warfare”
ONLINE WORSHIP

Introduction

[RAMP]

[RELEVANCE] With Stephanie not feeling well I have watched what it is like to deal with persistent physical ailments that, at times, leaves a person discouraged and without hope. What do we do when we are discouraged and without hope? We need to fight! We need to fight a spiritual battle. How does one get hope? It comes from faith and that is a gift from the Lord and so we must go to the Lord. This is a spiritual battle.

[OUTCOME] How do we fight spiritual battles? We are going to find out today and next week.

Body

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

[P.O.D. #1] **BE STRONG** in v. 10... How may we, “be strong in the Lord?” Being strong in the Lord is a decision we are to make moment by moment. A decision of the will is needed to practice the Spiritual Disciplines, or as we United Methodists refer to them, the Means of Grace & Works of Piety. We make this decision to, “abide,” in Christ, so that we may enjoy God. Our desire is to be more fully open to the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. To have a healthy and growing relationship with God, like all relationships, takes commitment and nurture.

“**be strong...**” from the present passive imperative of **endunamao**, a reference to inner strength or moral courage. Success in battle is always based on moral courage. The present tense used here indicates that moral courage must be used continuously. The passive voice shows that this courage is received by the believer from the Lord as a product of Grace. The imperative is the mood of command; “You are ordered to receive great moral courage!” This courage comes through Christian growth in maturity, the faith/grace process for Biblical perception and application.

When we demonstrate Moral Courage= Bible truth applied to life will include orientation to Grace, a relaxed mental attitude, a capacity for personal and impersonal love, great inner peace and happiness, and a divine frame of reference. These are all ingredients of moral courage.

“**in the Lord...**” the Lord is the source of our strength and training.

“in the power...,” the instrumental case of **kratos**, meaning “inner power” or self-discipline.

“of his might...,” **ischus**, “endowed power”. The source for everything is the Lord Himself. See Acts 1:8, **“8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”** This takes us back to Eph. 5:18 and **reminds us of the necessity of the Holy Spirit’s control.”**ⁱ

[P.O.D. #2] PUT ON...v.11

“Put on...,” refers to the soldier picking up his equipment and weapons. This a verb in the middle voice, indicating that the believer receives benefit from putting on the armor. Edify means to, “to teach (someone) in a way that improves the mind or character.”ⁱⁱ

“that ye may be able...,” **dunamai**, the ordinary Greek word for “ability”. This is the ability which is the result of edification; and it is the main source of strength in the angelic conflict. We are given more and more understanding of God’s character and God’s purpose in our lives. We praise & worship God as a result of this Divine instruction.

“to stand...,” **histomi**; this is the readiness of the combat soldier, the Christian “centurion”, armed, tough, unyielding, with pride and motivation. We go into each day knowing that it will be tough, and we take nothing for granted. We know we will face temptation, persecution, and all sorts of attacks from the world and, **“the powers and principalities,”** in the world.

“Standing,” is the first thing taught in unarmed combat or martial arts. One of the first things taught in Judo, for instance, is how to “break the stance” of the opponent. The Gauls, against whom the Romans fought many campaigns, under Julius Caesar and others, were human “tanks” in the sense that their ability to take a very strong combat stance made them difficult to defeat in individual combat.

Every believer is a member of the combat team and is required to take his own part, to stand on his own. We are armed with spiritual gifts and equipment, provided by Grace, to fight against the forces of Satan.

against the wiles of the devil... methodeia, “face to face with the strategies” of Satan.”ⁱⁱⁱ Notice we are to prepare for the spiritual battle, and then we are to, “stand.” We don’t move forward. We don’t move backward. We are to proclaim our faith by, “standing,” against the powers, rulers, and plans of this world. Why does God call us to stand? Because God is the One Who fights our battles. We are to rely on the Lord, and not ourselves. Therefore, God tells us to, “stand.” Just doing this is all we can handle by the power of the Holy Spirit.

[GOOD NEWS] We do not have to be afraid to do spiritual battle. We do not have to be afraid of Satan, demons, evil, sin, or death. God has given us everything we need to be victorious. In 2 Peter 1:3 Peter says, **“His divine power has given us everything needed for life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.”** This is Good News in deed. Thanks be to our risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

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[P.O.D. #3] WRESTLE V.12A... [For our struggle](#)

Our translation says struggle, but some translations say wrestle. Wrestle provides a better picture of what we are called to do so let's consider what it means to wrestle. “To us, when we think of wrestling, we think of two boys or two men spending a lot of time trying to pin one another on a mat, doing a lot of grappling and rolling on the ground. But whatever is going on, they don't do a whole lot of standing, do they?

We have Greco-Roman wrestling today, but it has evolved a bit over the centuries, and so to understand what Paul was talking about here, we need to learn the rules for wrestling as they were in his day. In Paul's day, there was only one rule to winning in Greco-Roman wrestling. The only way to win in ancient wrestling was to stay on your feet. There weren't all the elaborate rules of points and pins. The goal was to stay on your feet and throw your opponent to the ground three times. If you end up getting thrown on the ground once or twice, that's okay. Get back up on your feet, and stay on your feet. Stay standing. Don't get knocked over again. Learn from your mistakes and attempt to throw your opponent to the ground.

When we understand this, what Paul is talking about makes a whole lot more sense, doesn't it? We are to stand our ground in this battle, because we are wrestling, and in ancient wrestling, the only way to win was to stay on your feet.

Another thing I discovered was that most of the time, the contestants would wrestle completely naked and often, they would oil themselves down. The reason for both was to make it more difficult for their foe to get a good handle or a good grasp on them. Just as they stripped down, so we too, are told in Scripture to not give the devil a foothold, or a handle in our lives [Ephesians 4:25-27](#) says, "25 So then, putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbors, for we are members of one another. 26 Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and do not make room for the devil." Also, we are told in [Hebrews 12:1](#), "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us." And regarding the oil, Paul says in [1 Corinthians 1:21-22](#), "21 But it is God who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us, 22 by putting his seal on us and giving us his Spirit in our hearts as a first installment." If you love God and seek to serve Him only, this will be a great help to you in staying on your feet."^{iv}

[P.O.D. #4] TAKE UP...v.13

"take up...," "ake... imperative of **analambano**,"to take; to seize" with a prefix which adds the idea of repetition to the verb. We must "seize or take again and again" the armor of God. As an example, one piece of the armor is "truth" (verse 14). This piece of armor must be "put on" every day. In any group of Christians there are two types, those who are "ready" and those who are "not ready". A uniform of armor must be taken up and put on whenever combat is anticipated. For the Christian, combat is continuous. **The emphasis of this verb is "Don't get caught without your armor on!"**"^v

Conclusion

[GOOD NEWS] We do not have to be afraid of spiritual battle. We do not have to be afraid of Satan, demons, evil, sin, or death. God has given us everything we need to be victorious. In [2 Peter 1:3](#) Peter says, "His divine power has given us everything needed for life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness." This is Good News indeed. Thanks be to our risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

ⁱ <https://dandelionsalad.wordpress.com/2007/09/02/the-armor-of-god-an-exposition-of-ephesians-610-17-by-warren-doud/>

ⁱⁱ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/edify>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://dandelionsalad.wordpress.com/2007/09/02/the-armor-of-god-an-exposition-of-ephesians-610-17-by-warren-doud/>

^{iv} http://www.tillhecomes.org/sermons/ephesians/ephesians_6_12/

^v <https://dandelionsalad.wordpress.com/2007/09/02/the-armor-of-god-an-exposition-of-ephesians-610-17-by-warren-doud/>