

Welcome to Promise Land Bible Church  
We're glad you're here!





An open Bible is shown from a low angle, looking up at the pages. The pages are filled with text, and the background is a bright blue sky with wispy white clouds. The text is overlaid in a large, bold, black font.

# **You're in the Army Now, Part 2**

**Scripture text: Ephesians 6:10-24**

# **YOU'RE IN THE ARMY NOW!**

*Ephesians 6:10–24*

Sooner or later **every believer discovers that the Christian life is a battleground**, not a playground, and that he faces an enemy who is much stronger than he is—**apart from the Lord**.

**That Paul should use the military to illustrate the believer's conflict with Satan is reasonable.** He himself was chained to a Roman soldier (Eph. 6:20), and his readers were certainly familiar with soldiers and the equipment they used.

In fact, **military illustrations were favorites with Paul**

**2 Corinthians 10:4** For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds.

**1 Timothy 6:12** Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

**2 Timothy 2:3** Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

**2 Timothy 4:7** I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

**As Christians, we face three enemies: the world, the flesh, and the devil (Eph. 2:1–3).**

**Ephesians 2:1-3** And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this **world**, following the **prince of the power of the air**, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience-- among whom we all once lived in the passions of our **flesh**, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were **by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.**

As believers, we do not fight *for victory*—***we fight from victory!***

*The Spirit of God enables us, by faith, to appropriate Christ's victory for ourselves.*

In these closing verses of the letter, Paul discussed four topics so that his readers, by **understanding and applying these truths, might walk in victory.**

## **The Enemy (Eph. 6:10–12)**

The intelligence corps plays a vital part in warfare because it enables the officers to know and understand the enemy. Unless we know who the enemy is, where he is, and what he can do, we have a difficult time defeating him.

Not only in Ephesians 6, but throughout the entire Bible, God instructs us about the enemy, so there is no reason for us to be caught off guard.

The leader—the devil. The enemy has many different names.

**This suggests a definite army of demonic creatures that assist Satan in his attacks against believers.**

The Apostle John hinted that one third of the angels fell with Satan when he rebelled against God (Rev. 12:4), and Daniel wrote that Satan's angels struggle against God's angels for control of the affairs of nations (Dan. 10:13–20).

A spiritual battle is going on in this world, and in the sphere of “the heaventies,” and you and I are a part of this battle. Knowing this makes “walking in victory” a vitally important thing to us—and to God.



The important point is that our battle is not against human beings. It is against spiritual powers.

We are wasting our time fighting people when we ought to be fighting the devil who seeks to control people and make them oppose the work of God.

During Paul's ministry in Ephesus, a riot took place that could have destroyed the church (Acts 19:21–41). It wasn't caused only by Demetrius and his associates, for behind them were Satan and his associates.

Certainly Paul and the church prayed, and the opposition was silenced.

The advice of the King of Syria to his soldiers **can be applied to our spiritual battle**: “Fight neither with small nor great, **save only with the king**” (1 Kings 22:31).

**Satan’s abilities.** The admonitions Paul gave indicate that Satan is a strong enemy (Eph. 6:10–12), and that **we need the power of God to be able to stand against him.** Never underestimate the power of the devil.

He is not compared to a lion and a dragon just for fun!

The Book of Job **tells what his power can do to a man's body, home, wealth, and friends.**

Jesus calls Satan a thief who comes “to steal, and to kill, and to destroy” (John 10:10).

Not only is Satan strong, but he is also wise and subtle, and we fight against **“the wiles of the devil.”**

Wiles means “cunning, crafty arts, strategems.”

The Christian cannot afford to be “ignorant of his devices” (2 Cor. 2:11).

## **The Equipment (Eph. 6:13–17)**

Since we are fighting against enemies in the spirit world, **we need special equipment both for offense and defense.** God has provided the “**whole armor**” for us, and **we dare not omit any part.** Satan looks for that unguarded area where he can get a beachhead (Eph. 4:27). Paul commanded his readers to put on the armor, **take the weapons, and withstand Satan, all of which we do by faith.** Knowing that Christ has already conquered Satan, and that the spiritual armor and weapons are available, **by faith we accept what God gives us and go out to meet the foe.**

The day is evil, and the enemy is evil, but **“if God be for us, who can be against us?”** (Rom. 8:31)

**The girdle of truth** (v. 14a). Satan is a liar (John 8:44), but **the believer whose life is controlled by truth will defeat him**. The girdle holds the other parts of the armor together, and truth is the integrating force in the life of the victorious Christian.

**A man of integrity, with a clear conscience, can face the enemy without fear**. The girdle also held the sword. **Unless we practice the truth, we cannot use the Word of truth**.

Once a lie gets into the life of a believer, everything begins to fall apart. **For over a year, King David lied about his sin with Bathsheba, and nothing went right.**

**Psalms 32 and 51 tell of the price he paid.**

**The breastplate of righteousness (v. 14b.)** This piece of armor, made of metal plates or chains, covered the body from the neck to the waist, both front and back. **It symbolizes the believer's righteousness in Christ (2 Cor. 5:21) as well as his righteous life in Christ (Eph. 4:24).**



**The shoes of the Gospel** (v. 15). If we are going to “stand” and “withstand,” **then we need the shoes of the Gospel**. Because we have the peace with God (Rom. 5:1) that comes from the Gospel, **we need not fear the attack of Satan or men**.

**The most victorious Christian is a witnessing Christian.**

**The shield of faith** (v. 16). The shield was large, usually about four feet by two feet, made of wood, and covered with tough leather.

**The helmet of salvation (v. 17). Satan wants to attack the mind, the way he defeated Eve (Gen. 3; 2 Cor. 11:1–3). The helmet refers to the mind controlled by God.**

**The sword of the Spirit (v. 17b). This sword is the offensive weapon God provides us.**

A physical sword wounds to hurt and kill, **while the sword of the Spirit wounds to heal and give life.** But when we use the sword against Satan, we are out to deal him a blow that will cripple him and **keep him from hindering God's work.**

## **The Energy (Eph. 6:18–20)**

**Prayer is the energy that enables the Christian soldier to wear the armor and wield the sword.** We cannot fight the battle in our own power, no matter how strong or talented we may think we are. When Amalek attacked Israel, Moses went to the mountaintop to pray, while Joshua used the sword down in the valley (Ex. 17:8–16). **It took both to defeat Amalek**—Moses' intercession on the mountain, and Joshua's use of the sword in the valley. **Prayer is the power for victory**, but not just any kind of prayer. **Paul tells how to pray if we would defeat Satan.**

**Pray always.** This obviously does not mean “always saying prayers.” We are not heard for our “much speaking” (Matt. 6:7). “Pray without ceasing” (1 Thes. 5:17) says to us, “**Always be in communion with the Lord.** Keep the receiver off the hook!” Never have to say when you pray, “Lord, we come into Thy presence,” because you never left His presence! A Christian must “**pray always**” because he is always **subject to temptations and attacks of the devil.**

A surprise attack has defeated more than one believer who forgot to “**pray without ceasing.**”

## **Pray with all prayer.**

There is more than one kind of praying: prayer, supplication, intercession, thanksgiving (Phil. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:1). **The believer who prays only to ask for things is missing out on blessings that come with intercessions and giving of thanks.** In fact, thanksgiving is a great prayer weapon for defeating Satan. **“Praise changes things”** as much as **“prayer changes things.”** Intercession for others can bring victory to our own lives. **“And the Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends”** (Job 42:10).

## **Pray in the Spirit.**

**The Bible formula is that we pray to the Father, through the Son, and in the Spirit.** Romans 8:26–27 tells us that only **in the Spirit's power can we pray in the will of God.** Otherwise, our praying could be selfish and out of the will of God.

In the Old Testament tabernacle, there was a small golden altar standing before the veil, and here the priest burned the incense (Ex. 30:1–10; Luke 1:1–11). **The incense is a picture of prayer.** It had to be mixed according to God's plan and **could not be counterfeited by man.**



The fire on the altar is a **picture of the Holy Spirit**, for **it is He who takes our prayers and “ignites” them in the will of God**. It is possible to pray fervently in the flesh and never get through to God. **It is also possible to pray quietly in the Spirit and see God’s hand do great things.**

**Pray with your eyes open.** Watching means “keeping on the alert.” The phrase “**watch and pray**” occurs often in the Bible. When Nehemiah was repairing the walls of Jerusalem, and the enemy was trying to stop the work, **Nehemiah defeated the enemy by watching and praying.**

**“Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch” (Neh. 4:9).**

**“Watch and pray”** is the secret of victory over the world (Mark 13:33), the flesh (Mark 14:38), and the devil (Eph. 6:18).

**Peter went to sleep when he should have been praying,** and the result was victory for Satan (Mark 14:29–31, 67–72).

**God expects us to use our God-given senses, led by the Spirit, so that we detect Satan when he is beginning to work.**

## **Keep on praying.**

The word perseverance simply means “**to stick to it and not quit.**” The early believers prayed this way (Acts 1:14; 2:42; 6:4); and **we also should pray this way** (Rom. 12:12).

Perseverance in prayer does not mean we are trying to twist God’s arm, but **rather that we are deeply concerned and burdened and cannot rest until we get God’s answer.** As Robert Law puts it, “Prayer is not getting man’s will done in heaven; it is getting God’s will done on earth” (Tests of Life, [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1968]).

**Most of us quit praying just before God is about to give the victory.** Not everybody is so constituted that he can sincerely spend a whole night in prayer, but **all of us can persevere in prayer far more than we do.**

The early church **prayed without ceasing** when Peter was in prison and, at the last moment, God gave them their answer (Acts 12:1–19).

Keep on **praying until the Spirit stops you or the Father answers you.** Just about the time you feel like quitting, **God will give the answer.**

**Act 12:1-6** About that time **Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church.** He killed James the brother of John with the sword, and when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. This was during the days of Unleavened Bread. And when he had seized him, he put him in prison, delivering him over to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him out to the people. So Peter was kept in prison, but **earnest prayer for him was made to God by the church.** Now when Herod was about to bring him out, on that very night, Peter **was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains,** and sentries before the door were guarding the prison.

**Act 12:7-10** And behold, an angel of the Lord stood next to him, and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him, saying, "Get up quickly." And the chains fell off his hands. And the angel said to him, "Dress yourself and put on your sandals." And he did so. And he said to him, "Wrap your cloak around you and **follow me.**" And he went out and followed him. He did not know that what was being done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. When they had passed the first and the second guard, they came to the iron gate leading into the city. It opened for them of its own accord, and they went out and went along one street, and immediately the angel left him.



**Act 12:11-15** When Peter came to himself, he said, **"Now I am sure that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting."** When he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose other name was Mark, **where many were gathered together and were praying.** And when he knocked at the door of the gateway, a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer. Recognizing Peter's voice, in her joy she did not open the gate but ran in and reported that Peter was standing at the gate. They said to her, "You are out of your mind." But she kept insisting that it was so, and they kept saying, "It is his angel!"

**Act 12:16-19** But Peter continued knocking, and when they opened, they saw him and were amazed. But motioning to them with his hand to be silent, he described to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, "**Tell these things to James and to the brothers.**" Then he departed and went to another place. Now when day came, there was no little disturbance among the soldiers over what had become of Peter. And after Herod searched for him and did not find him, **he examined the sentries and ordered that they should be put to death.** Then he went down from Judea to Caesarea and spent time there.

## **Pray for all the saints.**

The Lord's Prayer begins with "**Our Father**"—not "My Father." We pray as part of a **great family** that is also talking to God, and **we ought to pray for the other members of the family**. Even Paul asked for the prayer support of the Ephesians—and he had been to the third heaven and back.

If Paul needed the prayers of the saints, **how much more do you and I need them!** If my prayers help another believer defeat Satan, then **that victory will help me too**. Note that Paul did not ask them to pray for his comfort or safety, but **for the effectiveness of his witness and ministry**.

## **The Encouragement (Eph. 6:21–24)**

**We are not fighting the battle alone.** There are other believers who stand with us in the fight, and **we ought to be careful to encourage one another.**

Paul **encouraged** the Ephesians; Tychicus was an encouragement to Paul (Acts 20:4); and Paul was going to send Tychicus to Ephesus **to be an encouragement to them.** Paul was not the kind of missionary who kept his affairs to himself. **He wanted the people of God to know what God was doing, how their prayers were being answered, and what Satan was doing to oppose the work.**

**His motive was not selfish.** He was not trying to get something out of them.

**What an encouragement it is to be a part of the family of God!** Nowhere in the New Testament do we find an isolated believer. Christians are like sheep; **they flock together.** **The church is an army and the soldiers need to stand together and fight together.**

Note the words Paul uses as he closes this letter: peace—love—faith—grace! **He was a prisoner of Rome, yet he was richer than the emperor.** No matter what our circumstances may be, in Jesus Christ we are **“blessed with all spiritual blessings”!**