

## THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS

### EPHESIANS 6:10-20, *THE DEMANDS OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE*

- A. Introductory comments on Ephesians 6:10-20
1. In chapters 1-3, Paul instructed Ephesian Christians on their position in Christ, in chapters 4-6:9, he emphasized the practice of Christians, in 6:10-20, Paul's focus is on the power available to Christians.
  2. Warren Wiersbe, *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.*
  3. John Stott, *The peace which God has made through Christ's cross is to be experienced only in the midst of a relentless struggle against evil. And for this the strength of the Lord and the armor of God are indispensable.*
- B. Paul encouraged Ephesian Christians to be strong by means of God's power (10), ***Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.***
1. *Finally*
    - a. It can mean *from now on, a final word.*
    - b. Galatians 6:17, *From now on let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus.*
    - c. This section gives concluding instruction concerning God's resources to help Christians stand against evil forces.
  2. Paul's conclusion begins with advice, be strong in the Lord based on His provision.
    - a. *be strong*
      - 1) It can mean *to allow the Lord to strengthen you.*
        - a) Ephesians 1:19, *and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might*
        - b) Philippians 4:13, *I can do all things through him who strengthens me.*
      - 2) Also, it can mean *to strengthen yourself in the Lord*, note Romans 4:20, *No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God,*
      - 3) At times, God strengthens us with the resurrection power of Christ. At other times, we are to access the power through prayer, Bible study, and praise.
    - b. *strength of his might*
      - 1) Probably, this is a figure of speech meaning *powerful strength.*
      - 2) The power of God is beyond compare and difficult to describe.
      - 3) Leon Morris, *...the combination puts emphasis on the importance of the divine power at work in believers.*
      - 4) Max Anders, *If we are going to have adequate strength for the spiritual battles of life, it must be the Lord's strength. Only he has the mighty power sufficient to win spiritual battles against the demonic enemy, Colossians 2:15, He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.*
- C. The spiritual power that can withstand Satan is the whole armor of God (11-12)
1. Christians are to put on the whole armor of God (11), ***Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.***
    - a. God supplies the provisions necessary for Christians to withstand Satanic attacks.
      - 1) *The whole armor of God*
        - a) It is God's provision for every believer, 2 Corinthians 10:4, *For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds.*
        - b) Christians are commanded to *put on* the armor.
        - c) William Barclay, *As he writes (Paul), the soldier's armor suggests a picture to him. Christians too have armor; and item by item Paul takes the armor of the Roman soldier and translates it into Christian terms.*
        - d) Max Anders, *Putting on the armor, of course, is a metaphor for following certain instructions from Scripture.*
      - 2) The necessity of God's provision for every Christian.
        - a) Romans 13:12, *The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.*
        - b) John Stott, *...if we underestimate our spiritual enemy, we shall see no need for God's armor, we shall go out to the battle unarmed, with no weapons but our own puny strength, and we shall be quickly and ignominiously defeated.*

- b. *the schemes of the devil*
    - 1) *schemes* is our word for *methods, strategies* with the intent to *deceive*.
    - 2) The word for *devil* means *accuser*.
    - 3) Some of his strategies
      - a) The world system, 1 John 2:15, *Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*
      - b) The Christian's sin nature (flesh), 2 Timothy 2:22, *So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.*
      - c) Direct attacks, 1 Peter 5:8-9, *Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.*
  - c. The Christian's position against Satan is defensive.
    - 1) We are *to stand*, to take our stand where God has placed us.
    - 2) Harold Hoehner, *Christians are not to attack Satan, or advance against him; they are only to "stand" or hold the territory Christ and His body, the church, have conquered.*
    - 3) Jude 9, *But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, "The Lord rebuke you."*
2. The whole armor of God is necessary because a Christian's struggle is against evil spiritual forces (12), ***For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.***
- a. Every Christian is in a spiritual battle.
    - 1) It is not a physical battle (*flesh and blood*) but a spiritual battle against Satan, his evil forces and his world system, a demonic not a human struggle.
    - 2) *Wrestle* is only used here in the New Testament and it carries the idea of *struggle, a personal battle*.
    - 3) Thomas Constable, *If we want to obey God and resist the devil, we are in for a struggle. It is not easy to become a mature Christian nor is it automatic. It takes diligent, sustained effort. This is part of our human responsibility in progressive sanctification.*
  - b. Paul lists evil spiritual forces which Christians must wrestle against.
    - 1) Notes on this list
      - a) Some commentators believe these are four different groupings of spiritual adversaries,.
      - b) Others believe these are four characteristics of all our spiritual adversaries. I will follow this concept since we have no direct identification of different groupings.
    - 2) Characteristics of our spiritual adversaries
      - a) They are powerful.
        - 1] *Rulers*
          - a] This stresses their authority.
          - b] It is thought that they had an organizational structure.
          - c] Colossians 2:15, *He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.*
        - 2] *Authorities*
          - a] This stresses their strength.
          - b] Ephesians 2:2b, ... *following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—*
      - b) They are wicked.
        - 1] *Cosmic powers over this present darkness*
          - a] These are supernatural powers ruling in the realm of spiritual evil.
          - b] Colossians 1:13, *He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,*
          - c] John Stott, *They hate the light, and shrink from it. Darkness is their natural habitat, the darkness of falsehood and sin.*
        - 2] *Spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places*
          - a] Ephesians 3:10, *so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.*
          - b] J. B. Phillips, *...spiritual agents from the very headquarters of evil.*

c] John Stott, *If we hope to overcome them, we shall need to bear in mind that they have no moral principles, no code of honor, no higher feelings. They recognize no Geneva Convention to restrict or partially civilize the weapons of their warfare. They are utterly unscrupulous, and ruthless in the pursuit of their malicious designs.*

c) They are cunning.

1] This is based on Paul's statement in verse 11 concerning *the schemes of the devil*.

2] John Stott, *We must not imagine, therefore, that open persecution and open temptation to sin are his only or even his commonest weapons; he prefers to seduce us into compromise and deceive us into error.*

3] Note 2 Corinthians 11:14, *And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.*

4] D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *I am certain that one of the main causes of the ill state of the Church today is the fact that the devil is being forgotten. All is attributed to us; we have all become so psychological in our attitude and thinking. We are ignorant of this great objective fact, the being, the existence of the devil, the adversary, the accuser, and his "fiery darts."*

D. Paul commanded Ephesian Christians to put on the whole armor of God in order to stand firm (13-18)

1. Christians are to stand firm in the evil day (13), ***Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.***

a. I believe Paul repeats this command from verse 11 to emphasize the formidable task we have as Christians.

1) It has been said that repetition is the key to learning.

2) In verse 12, Paul pictures our enemies who are much stronger than any of us.

3) In light of such danger, Paul reminds us to *take up the whole armor of God* which is the only way we can stand firm.

b. *withstand*

1) Some believe Paul is declaring our standing in victory.

2) Based on the context, Paul is referring to standing in defense.

3) The word *withstand* means to *stand against*.

a) Note James 4:7 which translates this word as *resist, Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

b) Paul is encouraging believers to clothe themselves in God's armor in order to withstand the onslaught of Satan which is not a one-time struggle but an on-going struggle.

c. *the evil day*

1) Paul may be looking to a future day when the struggle is more intense.

2) Probably, Paul is speaking of each day when the forces of evil come against a believer.

d. *having done all, to stand firm*

1) The emphasis again is the importance of putting on the whole armor of God.

2) The Christian's responsibility is not to become powerful but to access the power of God which is described as *the whole armor of God*.

3) Max Anders, *Scripture is utterly consistent. If we have our armor in place, if we are firm in our faith, we may resist the devil. If we do, he will flee from us.*

2. The whole armor of God is required to stand firm (14a), ***Stand therefore,***

a. *therefore*

1) The readers of Paul's letter are reminded of what he had declared in verses 11-14.

2) Christians will struggle against Satan and his demons.

3) Our provision for victory is not our strength but God's strength supplied by the whole armor of God.

b. *Stand*

1) The emphasis is *keep on standing*.

2) Don't take off your armor after a personal victory because the battle is ongoing.

3) Don't think one victory is sufficient to keep Satan away.

4) The whole armor of God is needed by new believers as well as mature Christians.

5) The following instructions concerning the whole armor of God is critically important because we are soldiers in constant battle against a formidable enemy.

3. Paul identifies the pieces of the armor of God (14b-17b)

a. Introductory notes

- 1) Paul may have had Isaiah in mind since God is described as a soldier by the prophet.
  - a) Isaiah 11:5, *Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins.*
  - b) 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.*
- 2) Paul was guarded while he wrote this epistle.
  - a) Acts 28:16, *And when we came into Rome, Paul was allowed to stay by himself, with the soldier who guarded him.*
  - b) Ephesians 6:20, *for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.*
- 3) Everyone in the Roman Empire knew what a Roman soldier's armor looked like.
- 4) The following pieces of armor would be placed over the soldier's short tunic.
- 5) Much has been written concerning Ephesians 6:10-28.
  - a) William Gurnall, a Puritan minister, published a work on these verses in 1655, in three volumes, 261 chapter and 1,472 pages.
  - b) D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, a 20<sup>th</sup> c. British theologian, published a work on these verses: 2 volumes/736 pages.

b. The listing of the armor of God

1) The belt of truth (14b), *having fastened on the belt of truth,*

- a) The soldier put a belt around his waist on which he would hang his armor, holding the breastplate and sword.
- b) *truth*
  - 1] Truth may refer to God's revealed truth, the revelation of God in Christ and in Scripture.
  - 2] It may also refer to the Christian's own truthfulness, a lifestyle reflecting truth.
    - a] Godly truth is emphasized by the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God (verse 7). Therefore, I believe the primary emphasis of the *belt of truth* is the Christian's integrity and faithfulness.
    - b] Harold Hoehner, *As a soldier's belt or sash gave ease and freedom of movement, so truth gives freedom with self, others, and God.*
    - c] Warren Wiersbe, *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.*
  - 3] It probably refers to both.
    - a] William Gurnall, *Some by truth mean a truth of doctrine; others will have it truth of heart, sincerity; they I think best that comprise both ... one will not do without the other.*
    - b] Max Anders, *To put on the belt of truth can be understood as accepting the truth of the Bible and choosing to follow it with integrity.*
- c) Importance of truth in the Bible
  - 1] Psalm 51:6, *Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.*
  - 2] Psalm 145:18, *The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.*
  - 3] Proverbs 12:19, *Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment.*
  - 4] Proverbs 30:5, *Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.*
  - 5] John 1:14, *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*
  - 6] John 3:33, *Whoever receives his testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true.*
  - 7] John 4:23, *But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.*
  - 8] John 17:17, *Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.*
  - 9] Philippians 4:8, *Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.*
- d) John Stott, *To be deceitful, to lapse into hypocrisy, to resort to intrigue and scheming, this is to play the devil's game, and we shall not be able to beat him at his own game. What he abominates is transparent truth. He loves darkness; light causes him to flee. For spiritual as for mental health honesty about oneself is indispensable.*

- 2) The breastplate of righteousness (14c), **and having put on the breastplate of righteousness**,
  - a) It covered the soldier's body from the neck to thighs, front and back, and either bronze or chain mail.
  - b) *righteousness*
    - 1] It means *doing what is right, what God requires*.
    - 2] Note Matthew 5:10, *Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven*.
  - c) This piece of armor probably has a dual meaning.
    - 1] A Christian has put on the righteousness of Christ when he placed faith in Him (justification).
      - a] Romans 3:24, *and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*,
      - b] 2 Corinthians 5:21, *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God*.
    - 2] Also, it includes righteous conduct (progressive sanctification).
      - a] Romans 6:13, *Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness*.
      - b] Ephesians 4:24, *and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness*.
      - c] Harold Hoehner, *As a soldier's breastplate protected his chest from an enemy's attacks, so sanctifying, righteous living guards a believer's heart against the assaults of the devil*.
    - 3] The importance of both justification and sanctification
      - a] G. G. Findlay, *The completeness of pardon for past offence and the integrity of character that belong to the justified life, are woven together into an impenetrable mail*.
      - b] Warren Wiersbe, *When Satan accuses the Christian, it is the righteousness of Christ that assures the believer of his salvation. But our positional righteousness in Christ, without practical righteousness in the daily life, only gives Satan opportunity to attack us*.
      - c] William Barclay, *Words are no defense against accusations, but a good life is*.
- 3) The gospel of peace (15), **and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace**.
  - a) Roman soldiers had heavy sandals studded with sharp thick nails on the bottom to increase traction.
  - b) *Readiness*
    - 1] It means *being ready for action*
    - 2] New English Bible translation, *Let the shoes on your feet be the gospel of peace, to give you a firm footing*.
  - c) The emphasis continues to be defensive not offensive.
    - 1] The Christian is prepared to defend himself as he trusts the Gospel on which he stands.
    - 2] Romans 5:1, *Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*.
    - 3] Thomas Constable, *The preparation of the gospel of peace probably refers to the gospel the Christian soldier has believed that enables him to stand his ground when attacked*.
    - 4] Max Anders, *To put on these shoes could be understood as believing the promises of God in the gospel and counting on them to be true for you. Faith in these promises yields peace in the Christian's life*.
  - d) Yet, we can't overlook the fact that we are called to proclaim the *gospel of peace*.
    - 1] Good News Bible, *readiness to announce the Good News of peace*.
    - 2] Note Romans 10:15, *... How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!*
    - 3] Warren Wiersbe, *We must be prepared each day to share the Gospel of peace with a lost world. The most victorious Christian is a witnessing Christian*.
    - 4] Johannes Blauw, *Missionary work is like a pair of sandals that have been given to the Church in order that it shall set out on the road and keep on going to make known the mystery of the gospel*.
    - 5] 2 Corinthians 5:20, *Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God*.
  - e) John Stott, *In either case the devil fears and hates the gospel, because it is God's power to rescue people from his tyranny, both us who have received it and those with whom we share it. So we need to keep our gospel boots strapped on*.

- 4) The shield of faith (16), ***in all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one;***
- a) *in all circumstances*
    - 1] The literal translation is *in all*.
    - 2] Every situation demands the *shield of faith*.
  - b) *shield*
    - 1] The Roman soldier's shield was wood covered with leather to make it flame retardant in order to extinguish arrows dipped in pitch which were lit and shot while aflame with fire.
    - 2] It was oval in shape and about 2.5 feet wide and 4 feet long.
    - 3] It protected the other pieces of armor as well as the soldier's body.
  - c) *shield of faith*
    - 1] The shield is composed of faith.
    - 2] Faith in God through the Lord Jesus Christ can stop any assault of Satan.
    - 3] Proverbs 30:5, *Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.*
    - 4] Thomas Constable, *The faith that provides such a defense for the Christian in his or her spiritual warfare is two-fold. It is trust in all that God has revealed and active application of that trust at the moment of spiritual attack.*
    - 5] Warren Wiersbe, *The "faith" mentioned here is not saving faith, but rather living faith, a trust in the promises and the power of God.*
  - d) *fiery darts of the evil one*
    - 1] Max Anders, *To take up this shield can be understood as rejecting temptations to doubt, sin or quit, telling yourself the truth and choosing on the basis of the truth to do the right thing.*
    - 2] Warren Wiersbe, *Satan shoots "fiery darts" at our hearts and minds: lies, blasphemous thoughts, hateful thoughts about others, doubts, and burning desires for sin. If we do not by faith quench these darts, they will light a fire within and we will disobey God.*
    - 3] John Stott, *For faith lays hold of the promises of God in times of doubt and depression, and faith lays hold of the power of God in times of temptation.*
- 5) The helmet of salvation (17a), ***and take the helmet of salvation,***
- a) *helmet*
    - 1] A Roman soldier's helmet was made of a tough metal, like bronze or iron.
    - 2] It was heavy and was lined with felt.
    - 3] Markus Barth, *Nothing short of an axe or hammer could pierce a heavy helmet, and in some cases a hinged vizor added frontal protection.*
  - b) *helmet of salvation*
    - 1] Paul commands believers to *take or to put on* the helmet of salvation.
    - 2] The helmet may be a reminder of our salvation from condemnation with a view toward deliverance from present or future attack by Satan. Standing firm against Satan is worth the effort.
    - 3] 1 Thessalonians 5:8, *But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.*
    - 4] Charles Hodge, *... that which adorns and protects the Christian, which enables him to hold up his head with confidence and joy, is the fact that he is saved.*
    - 5] Max Anders, *... taking the helmet of salvation could be understood as resting our hope in the future and living in this world according to the value system of the next.*
    - 6] William Barclay, *Salvation is not something which only looks back. The salvation which is in Christ gives us forgiveness for the sins of the past and strength to conquer sin in the days to come.*
- 6) The sword of the Spirit, the Word of God (17b), ***and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,***
- a) *the sword*
    - 1] The Roman soldier's sword was short and two-edged.
    - 2] It was used in hand-to-hand combat for defense and offense.
  - b) *the sword of the Spirit is the word of God*
    - 1] This weapon is given by the Holy Spirit.
    - 2] *Word* refers to the written instead of the living Word.

- 3] Hebrews 4:12, *For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.*
- 4] Thomas Constable, *It seems most likely to refer to the words of Scripture that we use to counteract the particular temptation we face. It is the appropriate Scripture spoken or put to use by the Christian in a given instance of temptation that is in view.*
- 5] John Allen, *As Jesus used the words of Scripture to repulse the tempter, so must the Christian the words the Spirit has inspired to drive away Satan.* Note Matthew 4:1-11.
- 6] Warren Wiersbe, *The better you know the Word of God, the easier it will be for you to detect Satan's lies and reject his offers.*

4. Paul explains how to use the armor of God (18)

a. Be prayerful (18a), ***praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication.***

1) Paul declares that Christians are to prayerfully take up the armor of God.

a) *at all times*

- 1] Prayer is to be constant, continual.
- 2] Christians are to be in constant prayer as they prepare for spiritual battle.
- 3] Warren Wiersbe, *A surprise attack has defeated more than one believer who forgot to pray without ceasing, 1 Thessalonians 5:17.*
- 4] William Barclay, *Our tendency is so often to pray only in the great crises of life; but it is from daily prayer that Christians will find daily strength.*

b) *with all prayer and supplication*

- 1] Prayer can take many forms.
- 2] *Prayer* is the normal word used for making requests to God and *supplication* is more urgent, specific requests.

2) The Holy Spirit prays for us and guides us in how we should pray.

- a) Romans 8:26, *Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.*
- b) Jude 20, *But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit,*
- c) Warren Wiersbe, *The Bible formula is that we pray to the Father, through the Son, and in the Spirit.*

b. Be persistently alert (18b), ***To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,***

1) *To that end*

- a) Paul is reminding believers of their responsibility to stand firm.
- b) It requires commitment to prayer.
- c) A. B. Simpson, *Prayer is an engine wieldable (available to) by every believer, mightier than all the ...artillery of hell.*

2) A commitment to prayer demands that one always *keep alert*.

- a) We are to be mindful of the probability of future threats.
- b) Spiritual warfare is normal for Christians not abnormal.
- c) Mark 13:33, *Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come.*

3) *with all perseverance*

- a) It means *to devote oneself, to do something with intense effort.*
- b) Again, Paul emphasizes the priority of prayer in spiritual warfare.
- c) Prayer is the glue that holds the armor together.

4) A Christian's focus on prayer.

- a) We are to not only pray for ourselves but pray for other believers, as well.
- b) John Stott, *Most Christians pray sometimes, with some prayers and some degree of perseverance, for some of God's people. But to replace 'some' by 'all' in each of these expressions would be to introduce us to a new dimension of prayer.*

c. A Christian puts on the whole armor of God when he puts on Christ (adapted from Warren Wiersbe).

1) The whole armor of God is a picture of Jesus Christ.

- a) He is the truth, John 14:6, *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*
- b) He is our righteousness, 2 Corinthians 5:21, *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

- c) He is our peace, Ephesians 2:14, *For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility*
- d) His faithfulness makes possible our faith, Galatians 2:20, *I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*
- e) He is our salvation, Luke 2:30, *for my eyes have seen your salvation*
- f) He is the Word of God, John 1:1, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

2) We put on Christ at salvation and we must keep Him on, Romans 13:14, *But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.*

d. How a Christian can constantly be protected by the whole armor of God.

- 1) The belt of truth: Read the Bible daily, believe it, apply it by living a life of integrity.
- 2) The breastplate of righteousness: Thank God daily for your righteousness received from Jesus Christ and ask Him to live through you each day.
- 3) The gospel of peace: Remind yourself daily of the Gospel which saved you and look for opportunities to share the Gospel with others.
- 4) The shield of faith: Remember that your spiritual victory comes through faith in Christ based on His faithfulness, past, present and future.
- 5) The helmet of salvation: Be confident by hoping for future salvation which God will complete.
- 6) The sword of the Spirit, the Word of God: Learn and memorize Scripture so you may use it in times of trouble.

e. The whole armor of God - make it simple.

- 1) Do what the Bible says to do.
- 2) Give Christ control of your life daily.
- 3) Understand and share the Gospel.
- 4) Glory in your faithful Savior.
- 5) Expect full victory through Christ.
- 6) Learn Scripture for daily wisdom.

E. Paul's personal request (19-20)

1. For prayer for Paul(19a), *and also for me,*

a. Paul asked for prayer for himself as well as *all the saints.*

- 1) 1 Thessalonians 5:25, *Brothers, pray for us.*
- 2) 2 Thessalonians 3:1, *Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored, as happened among you,*

b. No Christian is so mature that he doesn't need the prayers of other believers.

c. God has designed us to be interdependent. We need each other.

2. For clarity and courage in Gospel proclamation (19b-20), *that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.*

a. Paul wanted the right words to say when he proclaimed the Gospel, especially before Caesar.

- 1) Colossians 4:3, *At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison-*
- 2) Mark 13:11, *And when they bring you to trial and deliver you over, do not be anxious beforehand what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit.*
- 3) Paul wanted clarity in proclaiming the Gospel.

b. Paul wanted boldness in proclaiming the Gospel.

- 1) *boldly* means *confidence, frankness, openness*
  - a) Acts 14:3, *So they remained for a long time, speaking boldly for the Lord, who bore witness to the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands.*
  - b) Acts 19:8, *And he entered the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God.*
  - c) Leon Morris, *It signifies the attitude when one is completely at home and the words flow freely.*

- 2) *as I ought to speak*, Paul believed that the Gospel of Jesus Christ was worthy of a bold proclamation. There is no shame in the Gospel.
  - 3) Paul had been bold in the past but he still coveted their prayers for boldness in the future. Holy boldness is not one's ability but God's provision.
  - 4) Paul wanted courage in proclaiming the Gospel.
- c. *the mystery of the Gospel*
- 1) Paul proclaimed the uniqueness of the church in Ephesians 2:11-3:11, note Ephesians 3:6, *This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.*
  - 2) Romans viewed Christianity as just a sect of Judaism, note Acts 18:15, *But since it is a matter of questions about words and names and your own law, see to it yourselves. I refuse to be a judge of these things.*
  - 3) Jews considered it a heretical religion, note Acts 21:27-28, *...This is the man who is teaching everyone everywhere against the people and the law and this place. Moreover, he even brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place.*
- d. *ambassador in chains*
- 1) Paul did not ask for comfort or safety but that he would be effective in proclaiming the Gospel.
  - 2) John Stott, *Freedom is what he longs for—not freedom from confinement, but freedom to preach the gospel...He is anxious to obscure nothing by muddled speech and to hide nothing by cowardly compromise.*