

**EPHESIANS 6**

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Ephesians chapter 6 as we continue our study through the Word of God, and we finish up this rich and practical letter that Paul wrote.

We are currently in a section we call, *walk in harmony* that began back in Ephesians 5:19 and will continue through Ephesians 6:9.

As I have said, harmony is achieved in our relationships if we are willing to submit to one another or rank ourselves under others in the fear of God or out of respect of all that God has bestowed upon us.

Thus, there can be harmony in the family life as a wife submits to her own husband as unto the Lord or it is her service rendered to the Lord.

The husband is to love his wife sacrificially, unconditionally just as the Lord has done for us, and this is done as the husband submits to the Lord.

Now this evening we will finish up looking at the harmony within the family as we look at children and their relationship with their parents, how parents are to treat their children.

And then we will finish up this section on walking in harmony by looking at relationships outside of the family life.

As we conclude this letter we will look at what is driving the madness we see today that affects our relationships and how we battle these things.

And the last section of this letter that is called – ***WALK IN VICTORY***, and it covers Ephesians 6:10-24.

But let me focus on the family because there has been such an attack on the family unit that God has established, and we see the results of not listening to God!

And let me say this. The family is disintegrating before our eyes and not many are even concerned. They don't see the importance of the family unit in raising children and thus, we are suffering the consequences.

A few years back, a pastor gave a message that he called, "***The Cleavers Don't Live Here Anymore.***" This is what he said,

There used to be a little thing we learned when we were growing up. A little couplet that went like this: "First comes love, then comes marriage, then comes Mary with the baby carriage." Remember that? Well now there's a sequel. "John and Mary break up. John moves in with Sally and her two boys. Mary takes the baby, Paul and a year later Mary meets Jack who is divorced with three children and they get married. And Paul barely two years old now has a mother, a father, a stepmother, a stepfather, five stepbrothers and stepsisters as well as four sets of grandparents - biological and step, and countless aunts and uncles. And now guess what? Mary is pregnant again and there will be another child in this blended family.

- David Jeremiah

Now, for many, they see no problem with this, but there is a problem, a big one. Children are not learning how to respect people; they are not learning right from wrong. In fact, and this was some years ago, the Minnesota Crime Commission, in the face of a growing juvenile delinquency epidemic, made this assessment. And listen to what they had to say.

The report said,

Every baby starts life as a little savage. He is completely selfish and self-centered. He wants what he wants when he wants it: his bottle, his mother's attention, his play-mates' toys, his uncle's watch. Deny him these once and he seethes with rage and aggressiveness which would be murderous were he not so helpless. He's dirty; he has no morals, no knowledge, and no developed skills. This means that all children, not just certain children, all children are born delinquent. If permitted to continue in their self-impulsive actions to satisfy each want, every child would grow up a criminal, a killer, and a rapist.

- Minnesota Crime Commission

Again, these are important. We want to walk in harmony with our family, with our friends, with our boss, with our co-workers, with people. But are we willing to submit to one another in the fear of God?

So with that said, let's begin reading in Ephesians chapter 6, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us this evening as we finish up looking at ***WALKING IN HARMONY***.

## **EPHESIANS 6**

### VERSES 1-3

As Paul continues to speak on the family life he now moves to children and how they are to obey and honor their parents because it is the right thing to do.

The Greek word that Paul uses for "**children**" is TEKNON and he is not only referring to small children but to all children who are living under their parent's roof!

Paul lists four reasons why children are to obey and honor their parents in this section. He tells us because,

***IT IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO*** – This is what God desires of us, and I don't think it matters if you are 3 or 70, you are still to honor your parents. It does not mean you agree with everything that they are doing or saying, but you respect them.

***IT IS SCRIPTURAL*** – If God has taken the time to place this in the Scriptures, then we need to obey what He is telling us. Now some may say, ***“They don't deserve my respect!”*** That may be true, but that is not the issue. You are to respect them for the position that God has given them in the family, parents!

***IT IS THE BEST THING FOR THEIR LIFE*** – This should just make sense because there is wisdom that they have learned over the years that we might not have, especially when we are young. They are trying to help us to grow, mature so we can then train up our children!

***IT WILL BRING FORTH A FULL LIFE FOR THEM*** – And the idea here is that as you obey your parents you won't get into things that will harm you and it will bring forth life.

In Deuteronomy 21:18-21 we are told, **“If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and who, when they have chastened him, will not heed them, then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city, to the gate of his city. And they shall say to the elders of his city, ‘This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard.’ Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death with stones; so you shall put away the evil from among you, and all Israel shall hear and fear.”**

First of all, please understand that this is not speaking of a toddler or a child who is in the terrible two's! This is a child who is grown up and should know better, but his actions are proving otherwise.

But why capital punishment for something that seems so small?

Because God knew that a rebellious, a disobedient child would grow up to be a rebellious, disobedient adult and they will have devastating consequences upon a family and a society!

It is as one person said, "When the bonds of family life break up, when respect for parents fails, the community becomes decadent and will not live long." (Foulkes).

And please notice that Paul doesn't say, "***Parents, obey your children, it will make them happy and bring peace to the home.***"

That is out of order in regard to how God established the family life and there will not be peace, there will not be harmony, but the family will be a mess!

#### VERSE 4

Paul is probably speaking to parents, not just fathers here, and he gives to us what not to do and what to do in regard to raising our children.

But keep in mind that the father was the disciplinarian in the family.

And this should just make sense. We are not to provoke our children to anger or allow our treatment of them to bring about anger, resentment and hostility in the child.

Now don't get me wrong, when you discipline your child, they may not be happy with you and that is an issue they need to deal with – they need to obey and honor their parents for it is right!

Paul is speaking of favoring one child over another, comparing children, setting unrealistic goals or expectations for them, making them feel that they are in the way, and any kind of physical or verbal abuse is wrong and that is not what we are to do.

One of the problems during Paul's day was that children had no rights at all.

The Roman Law, the *PATRIA POTESTAS*, stated that a father had absolute power over his family. He could sell his children as slaves, make them work in the fields even in chains, can issue any kind of punishment towards them, they could even put the child to death.

If you think that is bad, it is even worse. Many of the Roman children were unwanted and so were commonly left in the Roman Forum.

They would then become property of anyone who would pick them up.

And don't think upright citizens of Rome picked them up.

People would sell them as slaves or to stock the brothels of Rome, these are the people that picked them up.

Today we have the opposite problem where children have all the rights and the parents have none!

It is still wrong; children need to obey and honor their parents and parents need to care for their children as they honor the Lord.

And here is the key. Paul tells us what we are to do as parents. We are to train them up in the Lord.

Paul uses the Greek word PAIDEIA, (pahee-di'-ah) and it speaks of the systematic training of children, which includes corrective discipline.

Also, we are to admonish them in the Lord or NOUTHESIA, (noo-thes-ee'-ah) in the Greek, which deals with teaching.

As parents we are to train and admonish them as the Lord would, with gentleness and firmness.

We are to encourage our children as Paul says in Colossians 3:21, “**Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.**”

A few years ago, the Houston Police Department came up with “Twelve rules for raising delinquent children.” This is what they wrote,

1. Begin with infancy to give the child everything he wants. In this way he will grow up to believe the world owes him a living.

2. When he picks up bad words - laugh at him. This will make him think he’s cute.

3. Never give him any spiritual training - wait until he is 21 and then let him “decide for himself.”

4. Avoid the use of the word “wrong” - it may develop a “guilt complex.’ This will condition him to believe later, when he is arrested for stealing a car, that society is against him and he is being persecuted.

5. Pick up everything he leaves lying around. Do everything for him so that he will be experienced in throwing all his responsibilities on others.

6. Let him read any printed materials he can get his hands on. Be careful that the silverware and drinking glasses are sterilized but let his mind feast on garbage.

7. Quarrel frequently in the presence of your children - in this way they won’t be so shocked when the home is broken up later.

8. Give a child all the spending money he wants - never let him earn his own.

9. Satisfy his every craving for food, drink and comfort - see that every sensual desire is gratified.

10. Take his part against neighbors, teachers and policemen - they are all prejudiced against your child.

11. When he gets into real trouble apologize for yourself by saying, “I never could do anything with him.”

12. Prepare for a life of grief - you are likely to have it.

Exactly and today, many are allowing their children to do things that will not benefit them in the long wrong. They are not bringing them up in the training and admonition of the Lord!

As we read on, we are going to move from family relations to relationships outside of the family. And keep in mind that Paul is still dealing with walking in harmony!

### VERSES 5-8

How are we as Christians to act in the workplace? That is a great question and there are many excuses why we don't reflect the grace and mercy of God in the workplace!

Maybe this is your response, ***“Yes, but I don't work in a spirit-filled workplace. Not at all! It's more like the slavery the children of Israel endured in Egypt and my boss is a 'cruel taskmaster' just like Pharaoh.”***

Here's the thing. Are we to let others dictate how we respond in situations? Absolutely not.

One author put it like this in response to our struggle in the workplace. He wrote,

In our day the struggle between employers and employees has reached monumental levels. Conflicts rage constantly between workers and management, with each side accusing the other of selfishness and unreasonableness. Employees want smaller workloads, fewer hours, more vacation, and more pay and benefits. Employers want more productivity, more profits, and greater control of management policies and practices. Both sides want lower taxes for themselves while expecting greater government protection and sometimes even subsidy.

It is not hard to see that the heart of the problem on both sides is greed. The sin of greed is the primary fuel that feeds the inflationary spiral that has become a common part of modern life in most parts of the world. When everyone wants more, prices must rise to pay for higher wages and profits. And as prices rise and money therefore buys less, people want still higher pay or profits to make up the difference. When the government becomes heavily involved in various subsidies and supports, then taxes, the national debt, or both must be raised. If the government prints more money without backing, the value of all its money is decreased, and again people want more income to make up the difference.

Added to all of that is the principle that, as possessions increase so does greed, because greed is by nature insatiable. It is likely that modern Western society is the greediest in history. Everyone wants more for less, and the ascending spirals of inflation, debt, and taxation are unabated.

How are such seemingly irreconcilable problems to be resolved? Many people advocate some form of socialism, in which the government has total control of the economy. As greed increases and self-interest becomes more hardened, more government control may be required to prevent anarchy. Revelation 18 suggests that the . . . Antichrist will come into power through a great worldwide economic system in which virtually all power is centered in the hands of a few elite leaders.

- Source Unknown

I don't care who is in power, because all that we do is unto the Lord and not our boss. Our boss should benefit, be blessed by the work we do! And maybe, by our actions he will be drawn to the Lord. Maybe not! Maybe he will be just as cruel and mean! We serve the Lord!

And keep in mind that when Paul wrote this letter, according to some commentators, the Roman Empire had some 60 million slaves or ½ of its population were slaves!

Notice Paul does not call for a revolt against slavery.

What he does say is that if you are a Christian and you are a slave then you need to do your best because the reality is, you are serving the Lord.

And please understand that most slaves were treated horribly, they were seen as tools and not even human!

Gaius, a Roman lawyer puts it this way as he says, “We may note that it is universally accepted that the master possesses the power of life and death over the slave.”

Vedius Pollio took a slave, who had dropped and broke a crystal goblet, and threw him into his fishpond that was filled with savage lampreys or eels that killed him.

In fact, a slave was killed for the reason of someone never witnessing anyone killed before.

It all boils down to what one Roman writer said, “Whatever a master does to a slave, undeservedly, in anger, willingly, unwillingly, in forgetfulness, after careful thought, knowingly, unknowingly, is judgment, justice and law.”

That is who Paul is speaking to here, slaves that were not treated well at all!

And even with all that, the way they were being treated, Paul says slaves were to “**be obedient**” to their masters and it is in the present tense in the Greek which indicates uninterrupted obedience.

They were to obey their masters no matter what, unless of course what they were told to do went totally against what God has said.

How does this relate to us today?

We are to be obedient in all we do as we work for others.

When our boss is around, when he is not around our work should not change because we are ultimately serving the Lord.

We don't put a show on for our boss and when he is gone goof off!

It is as Paul said in Colossians 3:23-24, "**And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.**"

The word "**heartily**" means to put your "life, mind, soul" into the work, give it your all no matter how unfair you are being treated, no matter how your boss talks to you, you serve the Lord and He will take care of you!

It is as one writer put it as he wrote,

Being a Christian should always make a person a better, more productive, and more agreeable worker. People will not be inclined to listen to the testimony of a Christian who does shoddy, careless work or who is constantly complaining. If a Christian finds an employment situation to be intolerable, he should quit and look for something else. But as long as he is employed, he should do the work to the best of his ability.

- Source Unknown

Absolutely. Do you really think the unsaved world is going to treat us fairly? They won't and we need to remember that and remember who we serve, ***THE LORD!***

VERSE 9

Now we move to the boss or the Christian employer!

And as a Christian employer you are to work hard for your employees, treat them fairly, not be abusive to them because in the end, God will judge your behavior and without partiality, without concern for the wealth you have or your position!

You see, a Christian employer is also serving the Lord.

The Bible gives to us a beautiful picture of working together in harmony and what it is all about between an employer and employee and that is found in Ruth 2:4 where we are told, **“Now behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said to the reapers, ‘The LORD be with you!’ And they answered him, ‘The LORD bless you!’”**

How often have you heard that at your workplace? Not at all probably and that is a shame!

As we close this section on walking in harmony please understand that only a person who is surrendered, submitted to the Holy Spirit will be able to manifest these characteristics. You can’t do it on your own; they are not natural for us!

And now we are going to move into the last section of this letter that deals with our walk,

***WALK IN VICTORY!***

And what a great way Paul concludes this letter.

So let’s see what the Lord has for us in regard to walking in victory!

VERSES 10-11

Make no mistake about it, sooner or later we all learn that the Christian life is a battleground not a playground.

Today the church is trying to change that truth and make the Christian life a playground and they are deceiving the people!

You see, when we gave our lives to Jesus we entered into a war. And this is a war that, although invisible, is still very much real.

We are at war with an extremely powerful, super intelligent, hyper-malevolent spirit-being known as the Devil who commands a very powerful army of demonic entities.

The Devil and his army are determined to destroy your walk with God, your witness for God and the work God wants to do through you so that God gets no glory from your life.

And here is the key. Our strength does not come from our power, our might, our ability but it is from the Lord, it is found in the Lord!

And as Paul speaks of the armor of God keep in mind that he was chained to Roman soldiers and as he saw these men day in and day out the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to make a comparison of the Roman soldier versus the soldier of the Lord who was going to battle against the enemies of God, and thus, he penned these words for us.

And notice what Paul tells us to do here. He tells us to “**put on the whole armor of God**” not just part of it, not just what you want to put on, but all of it because the enemy is going to use all the resources that are at his disposal to fight against us.

And I don't know about you, but I think the enemy has turned up the heat because he knows his time is short.

And, too often Christians are like the Iraqi man who was captured during Desert Storm and he was found wearing a Cub's tee shirt, jeans, and sandals on his feet.

He was an American that went to visit family in Iraq and then the war broke out and he was drafted but not given the equipment he needed to do battle.

If we are not prepared, when the Devil comes with his scheming's, we will not be able to stand against his onslaught!

We need to stand firm against his attacks and the idea is to hold a critical position while under attack!

Listen again to what Paul said here, **“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”** Ephesians 6:10-11.

Now Paul is going to tell us who we are doing battle with, and for some, this is surprising!

#### VERSES 12-13

You see, our battle is not against flesh and blood, but it is a spiritual battle.

Yes, it is played out through the flesh because Satan and his forces use man as he tools but it is truly a spiritual battle.

In fact, Paul lists the rankings of these demonic forces, Satan being in charge, followed by principalities, powers, rulers of darkness, spiritual hosts of wickedness.

The Scriptures don't elaborate much more on these and we really don't need to know more about them. What we need to know is our armor, how to protect ourselves, and that is what Paul is going to give to us next.

Also, please notice that Paul does not tell us to go and look for this spiritual warfare, he just tells us it is a fact and if you are serving the Lord the enemy will come looking for you, not maybe, he will!

We need to be ready!

And we need to remember that primarily, on a day by day basis, spiritual warfare is all about rescuing people who have been taken captive by the devil through his lies and we have the truth that alone can set them free. What is that truth? It is ***THE GOSPEL!***

And here is where the battle is. You see, the spiritual warfare intersects with our lives as believers because the devil wants people to go to hell, he hates the truth and anyone who tries to share it with those he has deceived.

And so, as the god of this world system, the prince of the power of the air, uses his power over the air waves to influence and control the minds of people so that he can manipulate them to do his will.

Thus, Paul tells us that as Christians we are to “**withstand**” or ANTHISTEMI, (anth-is’-tay-mee) in the Greek and it speaks of taking a stand against a great opposition.

How many battles have been lost because soldiers did not take the battle seriously?

Custer thought, “It’s only a few Indians, not a big deal!” and that was the last stand he took!

The “**evil day**” is not a specific day but a period of time when the enemies of God will grow stronger and eviler and the conflict will be intense, as we are seeing today!

Thus, Paul will give to us the armor we need to stand against any attacks of the enemy and, of course, our victory is in Christ!

VERSES 14-18

Many Christians don't realize that we are in a battle. I am not sure why they don't see this because as you look at this world it is getting darker and darker. Thus, as we have seen in what Paul said regarding this battle in the previous verses, now he tells us the armor that we are to put on.

And let me say this, those previous verses were a call to battle. Let me share this with you because this was another call to battle.

Upon his very first entrance into the House of Commons as Britain's new Prime Minister on May 13, 1940, Winston Churchill made this brief statement, which became one of the greatest calls-to-arms ever uttered.

It came at the beginning of World War II when the armies of Adolf Hitler were roaring across Europe, seemingly unstoppable, conquering country after country for Nazi Germany, and when the survival of Britain itself seemed quite uncertain. This is what he said,

I say to the House as I said to ministers who have joined this government, I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat. We have before us an ordeal of the most grievous kind. We have before us many, many months of struggle and suffering.

You ask, what is our policy? I say it is to wage war by land, sea, and air. War with all our might and with all the strength God has given us, and to wage war against a monstrous tyranny never surpassed in the dark and lamentable catalogue of human crime. That is our policy.

You ask, what is our aim? I can answer in one word. It is victory. Victory at all costs - Victory in spite of all terrors - Victory, however long and hard the road may be, for without victory there is no survival.

We shall not flag or fail. We shall go on to the end. We shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and the oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be. We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender.

- Winston Churchill

May we listen to the call that Paul has given us here in Ephesians chapter 6 so that we may be able to stand against the scheming's of the Devil!

Now the first three pieces of armor are permanent, they are never to be taken off. We are never to be without the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness or having our feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace.

Paul uses the word "**having**" which is in the Greek aorist tense, which speaks of never being without them!

### **THE BELT – WAIST GIRDED WITH TRUTH**

Back in Paul's day the men wore long garments and they were fine for walking in leisure, but if you went on a long journey, if you were engaged in conflict, it would be hard to move.

Thus, you would gird or draw up your garment and tuck it into your belt, that is how you girded your loins.

Thus, the belt of truth can be seen, of course, in God's Word, for God's Word is truth. Jesus said in John 17:17, "**Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.**" If you don't believe God's Word is truth you will be tripped up by the Devil and his lies because you have not girded yourself with the truth!

Also, because Paul is dealing with our walk, I see this speaking of integrity on our part, that we are to be truthful. The word “**gird**” was a common expression that was used to put one’s self in readiness, prepared for anything that might come their way, any service that might be required.

If we are living in truth the Devil can’t trip us up. And keep in mind that the belt helps hold the other pieces of armor in place, so truth is the integrating force in the life of a victorious Christian.

It is not something that you turn on and off, use when you want but truth should always flow from your life.

John tells us, “**Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers. For I rejoiced greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth that is in you, just as you walk in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.**” III John 2-4.

### ***THE BELT OF TRUTH!***

### **THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Again, this piece of armor, the breastplate of righteousness is to be put on and never to be taken off.

The breastplate covered the full torso of the soldier, from his neck to his waist. It protected the vital organs. This piece of armor was sleeveless and made of leather or heavy linen.

To reinforce it and to provide protection, pieces of animal hooves were cut into slices and sewn into place as they were overlapped. Sometimes they used horns or pieces of metal and some were made of all metal that was molded and hammered to conform to the individual’s body. Without this the soldier could receive a deadly blow.

Paul, in Philippians 3:9 tells us, **“and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith.”**

This is the righteousness that has been imputed to us or given to us by Christ. Thus, when the Father looks at us, He sees us as righteous, as perfect. It is as Paul said in II Corinthians 5:21, **“For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”**

But, again, keep in mind that Paul is dealing with our Christian walk, and thus, we must stand in righteousness, do the right thing. He is speaking of practical righteousness of daily living. By living lives that are filled with unrighteousness, by having your Christian character flawed by immoral behavior, you are leaving a gaping hole in your breastplate.

Paul put it this way in Romans 6:11-14, **“Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments [weapons] of righteousness to God. For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.”**

You see, the way we live can be a spiritual weapon against the enemy.

John said, **“And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him.”** I John 2:28-29.

***THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS!***

### **THE SANDALS OF PEACE**

As a soldier, the shoes or sandals you would wear could save your life.

Thus, the Roman soldier would have his shoes or sandals impregnated with nails or bits of metal to get a firm grip, so he would not lose his footing. They would be able to stand against the enemy.

For us as Christians, Paul is saying that we are to literally wrap our feet with the Gospel of peace.

The word that Paul uses for “**preparation**” is the Greek word HETOIMASIA, (het-oy-mas-ee’-ah) and it speaks of a “prepared foundation.”

You see, the Gospel message gives us stability; surefootedness because it is built upon the Rock, Jesus Christ and that fact can’t be shaken. No matter what the enemy throws at you, your footing is secure in Christ.

### ***THE SANDALS OF PEACE!***

We will now move on to the next four pieces of the soldier’s armor. In this section we see the shield, the helmet, the sword and prayer.

These pieces of armor are to be at our disposal at all times, ready to use and we should be comfortable using them.

### **THE SHIELD OF FAITH**

This shield that Paul is speaking of here is the THUREOS, and for the Roman soldier it was another vital piece of his armor.

This shield was about 4½ feet high and 2½ wide, with a slight curve to it. It was made of wood and covered with metal or heavy oiled leather.

As these soldiers moved toward the front lines, they would interlock their shields forming a long wall of shields that could extend for a mile or more. As the enemy would fire their spears and flaming arrows, their shields would protect the Roman soldiers and they would continue to advance towards their enemy.

To give you an example of how strong these shields were, these Roman soldiers would at times go into a tortoise formation, that is 27 men, in 4 ranks.

The first 6 would hold their shields vertically, side-by-side, interlocking them. The next 3 rows of 7 soldiers each covered the parameter and roof with their shields locked. Looking at it would give you the impression of a tortoise shell, and that is how strong it was.

The enemy could fire their flaming arrows all day, but they would not penetrate the shield. In fact, they would run chariots over them as a test of strength. It was a terrifying formation for any enemy because of its effectiveness against penetration.

These shields were used to protect the soldiers from the fiery darts or the flaming missiles that the enemy would fire.

These arrows would be wrapped in pieces of cloth and then soaked in pitch. Then, while in battle, just before the arrow was shot, the enemy would light the tip and launch it towards the enemy.

Upon impact the pieces of burning material would spatter for several feet, causing anything flammable it touched to become ignited.

Not only was the arrow dangerous but also these burning arrows could cause serious burns to the soldier. With these burns, besides being very painful, they could become infected and thus, remove the soldier from battle, even causing death.

With the shield made of metal or leather that had been soaked in water it would deflect these arrows away from the soldier or it would extinguish them, thus protecting the soldier from any harm and enabling him to continue on in the fight.

Now, for the Christian, his shield is that of faith.

John tells us in I John 5:4-5, **“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world - our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?”**

Our faith in Jesus will put out those fiery darts that Satan is launching at us. Without faith the enemy has us defenseless!

***THE SHIELD OF FAITH!***

**HELMET OF SALVATION**

The Roman soldier wore a helmet that was basically made of thick leather that was covered with metal plates.

Other types of helmets that were worn were made of heavy molded or beaten metal. Some also had cheek plates that helped to protect the face.

The obvious purpose of the helmet was to protect the head from being injured as the enemy swung the large double-edged, two handed broadswords called RHOMPHAIA in the Greek.

Paul is telling us that our spiritual helmet is that of salvation.

The helmet is used to protect the head or mind against the attacks of the enemy. Many times the Devil and his demons get us to doubt our salvation or the security we have in Christ. And we listen to him!

And yes, Scripture supports that fact of our security regarding our salvation as Jesus said in John 5:24, **“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.”**

And John tells us in I John 5:13, **“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.”**

Satan loves to swing that double-edged sword of doubt and discouragement, trying to get us to stumble and make us ineffective as Christians. He can't take us out of the Father's hand, out of the hand of Jesus, but he can make us weak and insecure in our actions and ineffective in our walk.

Put on the helmet of salvation so Satan will not be able to strike you with doubt and discouragement, stand strong in the Lord. I like the way one writer put it, as he said, “The helmet of salvation is that great hope of final salvation that gives us confidence and assurance that our present struggle with Satan will not last forever and we will be victorious in the end.” (John MacArthur)

### ***THE HELMET OF SALVATION!***

### **THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT**

Paul is not speaking of the broadsword here that was 3 to 4 feet long and double-edged. The sword that Paul is speaking of is the MACHAIRA, which had a length of 6 to 18 inches and was used in hand-to-hand combat.

The sword was carried in a sheath which was attached to the soldier's belt, and thus, always ready for use.

For us as Christians, Paul tells us that the Word of God is the sword of the Spirit and it is powerful as Hebrews 4:12 tells us, **“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”**

It cuts right to the heart of the matter if we would let it.

It will also accomplish what God has sent it to do in our lives as Isaiah 55:11 tells us, **“So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.”**

Now when Paul speaks of the sword of the Spirit being the Word of God, he is not using the Greek word LOGOS.

This word means general statements or messages. Paul is not talking about general knowledge of the Scripture.

Paul uses the Greek word RHEMA, which refers to individual words or statements.

It is not a general knowledge but having a precise understanding of the Scripture. To be able to expound on the specific truths within the Scriptures. Rightly dividing the Word of truth!

Are you comfortable using the Word of God? You should be, it is our first offensive weapon that we as Christians have. Dig into God’s Word, meditate upon it, get to know Him and His Word more!

***THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT!***

**PRAYING ALWAYS**

Now some don’t think that prayer is part of our spiritual armor, but I think it is. You see, prayer is so important and yet so many don’t pray! It is our second offensive weapon besides the sword of the Spirit or the Word of God!

Think of prayer like this. It is the heavy artillery that is launched against the enemy and then we go in to pick up the spoils of victory.

When Paul speaks of “**prayer**” or PROSEUCHE, (pros-yoo-khay’) in the Greek he is speaking of general requests.

Then he speaks of “**supplication**” or DEESIS, (deh’-ay-sis) in the Greek and it speaks of specific requests.

***PRAYING ALWAYS!***

VERSES 19-20

As Paul shares how prayer is important in our spiritual warfare that we are in and how we can pray for each other, he asks for prayer that he might speak clearly, (utterance) and boldly, probably before Caesar as he is going to defend himself and present the Gospel message. What a great prayer for all of us as we encounter all kinds of people in our lives.

VERSES 21-22

Paul wanted the Ephesians to be comforted regarding his condition in prison and thus, he sends Tychicus with this letter and to give the Ephesians an update on his condition.

Tychicus was an associate of Paul’s and he is mentioned not only here in Ephesians, but in Acts 20:4, Colossians 4:7, II Timothy 4:12, and Titus 3:12.

Also, in addition to informing the Ephesian believers, Tychicus, who was commended as a faithful minister in the Lord, he was also to encourage them, “**that he may comfort your hearts.**” Ephesians 6:22.

And so even though Paul was the one in prison unjustly, his heart was not to worry about himself but to make sure others were encouraged!

I know that goes against the flesh but that is how Jesus taught us how to have joy. We are told in John 13:12-17, **“So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, ‘Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.’”**

Maybe so many Christians are lacking that joy that the Lord has for them because they are not serving!

#### VERSES 23-24

Remember that Paul opened up this epistle or letter showing us the blessings we have in Christ in the heavenly places and now he closes with peace, love and grace that we have in Christ in our daily walk.

Maybe you heard of the story of the sailor who was in a shipwreck and he was thrown upon a rock.

The waves crashed as he clung onto that rock, danger all around him and then, as the tide went down, he was able to get to safety.

A friend asked him, “Jim, didn’t you shake with fear when you were clinging to that rock?”

“Yes,” Jim said, “but the rock didn’t!”

Jesus Christ is our Rock and we need to place our feet firmly upon Him and we will not be moved.

We need to cling to Him, and we will not be shaken off.

We must rest our whole weight upon Him, and we will not be moved.

Enjoy the blessings and prepare for the battle and rest in Him!

You see, we have all the blessings of Christ in our lives, thus, let us walk accordingly in

***UNITY, PURITY, HARMONY and VICTORY!***

And let me close with this.

Never give in to the enemy and never give up on family, your spouse (if unsaved), your marriage (if you’re both saved), your children, your family, friends, your country and especially don’t ever give up on yourself. That is just what the enemy wants us to do!

The spiritual forces of darkness are on the move and we need to stand fast in the power of God as good soldiers of Jesus Christ and fight and not quit!

Remember what Paul said, **“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. 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.”**

Ephesians 6:10-13.

May we do that!