

The Christian's War

The Spiritual Warfare that Every Believer is Engaged In **Ephesians 6**

Key verse: Ephesians 6:10

I. Introduction

- A. No matter where one looks in today's society, there is an antagonism, division and rebellion in homes and jobs. Divorce tears husbands and wives apart. Children are rebelling against their parents. Employees and employers are often at odds against each other. Despite education, legislation and many other approaches, nothing seems to work. Believers know that the solution begins with a saving relationship with God, but that it doesn't end there. He knows that before real harmony can take place, there must be first, a submission to the lordship of Christ.
- B. The Christian life is an ongoing battle with the flesh, the world and with Satan. To win the battle will take strategy, help from others, special equipment, and the energy and will to win the spiritual battles that are waged against us. Somebody said, "Christianity is not for wimps!" The Battle is too important to allow a defeat. Remember, "In all things, we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." (Rom 8:37). It's time Christians started fighting and winning the RIGHT BATTLES!

II. Background – We are in a Four-Fold War

- A. The Christian's War with Self (5:3-20)
- B. The Christian's War at Home (5:21-6:4)
- C. The Christian's War at Work (6:5-9)
- D. The Christian's War with the Devil (6:10-20)
- E. The Book of Ephesians ends with Paul's Final Words of Comfort (6:21-24)

III. Message

A. The Christian's War with Self (5:3-20)

1. God starts with YOU and ME – not with other people in our lives.
2. Put away – divorce, mortify, reject, burn-out these tenants in your life!
 - a. Fornication – any sex that is not with your wife or husband (Porn, TV sex, romance novels, dirty talk, magazines, etc)!
 - b. Uncleaness – filthy thoughts that are ungodly, demonic
 - c. Covetousness – having to have things, thinking things make a person's life worth living
 - d. Filthiness – where you go, what you do, what words you say
 - e. Foolish Talking – talking like an unsaved person
 - f. Jestng – making fun of people to show yourself better
 - g. These are all the promotion of self, and the gratification of only self
 - h. Replace it with absolute Thankfulness! No complaining
3. Put on (Eph 5:15-20) – Get addicted to...
 - a. Spiritual awareness – walking circumspectly – using prayer and the Bible as glasses
 - b. Time redemption – work harder than ever but this time for God
 - c. God's will – know it, and set out to fulfil it
 - d. The filling of the Holy Spirit – so, so vital
4. It makes for a life full of singing, praising God, and ready to submit to whatever comes our way!!!

B. The Christian's War at Home (5:21-6:4)

1. *The Husband's and Wife's Victory over Self* – How?
 - a. Submission, not rebellion and revenge
 - 1) Works both ways, but first from the wife
 - 2) The man cannot just do as he pleases, and demand his wife follow
 - 3) They are now a permanent team
 - 4) He leads, but he had better have her consent!
 - b. Honour – so important
 - 1) Honouring the husband – as the man
 - 2) Honouring the wife – as the weaker vessel
 - c. Love
 - 1) Both need to stay in love – do whatever you have to, to stay in love
 - 2) Without love, the will to work at your marriage will die
 - 3) Love is NOT a feeling, it is a choice to show or withdraw your feelings. Everyone loves, we just too often choose to hurt one person and love another!

- d. Selfless giving
 - 1) The devil spurs us on to fight for self and rights
 - 2) God says Die!
 - e. Obedience to God's word
 - 1) People can do anything they want
 - 2) But Christians do only that which God says to do
 - 3) Not because it is easy, or convenient
 - 4) But because we have learned this Book is right, and best
 - f. Allow NO room for the devil to work
 - 1) Satan has a foothold only when there is... (see Eph 4:25-32)
 - a) Pride
 - b) Anger
 - c) Revenge
 - d) Laziness
 - e) Covetousness
 - f) Etc
 - 2) So humble yourself, especially at home! Constantly say, I'm sorry, and You're forgiven!
2. **Parent and Child Victory Over Self** – How?
- a. Submission, obedience
 - 1) God starts with the child first
 - 2) God writes the Bible not just to adults, but to children
 - 3) Children need to know that GOD says so, and they need to obey GOD
 - 4) Every one of these battles start with submission – Paul says, Obedience is RIGHT!
 - 5) The whole universe is regulated by the laws of obedience: the stars, seasons, etc., are all under this law. The citizen of the country, the employee at work, the member of the church, are all subject to the law of obedience. The first lessons of obedience are, therefore, learned in childhood.
 - 6) Refers to the Fifth Commandment
 - b. Honour
 - 1) Parents need to honour their children with their praise and presence
 - 2) But children MUST honour their parents as gifts from God
 - 3) To honour means to listen to them, and learn from them
 - 4) You will do that till they die – not only until you are 18
 - c. Love – nurture – disciple, discipline
 - 1) To nurture is to guide their growth – not let them grow and do as they please
 - 2) Left to themselves, children will become rebels. Parents have a duty to discipline their children while they are young. See Prov 13:24; Heb 12:5-11. Somebody said, "Everything in the modern home is controlled by switches--except the children!"
 - 3) Parents, but especially fathers must "bring them up". It is not enough to nurture them with food, clothing and shelter, he must also provide for their emotional and spiritual needs. Nowhere in the Bible is the training of children assigned to agencies outside the home, no matter how much they assist. It is always the parents that are held responsible for their children.
 - d. Training – admonition
 - 1) Admonitions are warnings, rebukes
 - 2) Parents have the authority to correct their children
 - 3) You had better use that authority before it is too late (Pr 19:18)
 - e. Benefits of yielding and obeying – long life
 - f. Dangers of rebelling – short life!
 - g. Dangers of abuse – “provoking them” – going too far and “discouraging them” (Col 3:21)
 - 1) Spanking is not abuse
 - 2) Physical harm is abuse
 - 3) Firmness is NOT wrong
 - 4) Anger and bitterness are much worse – yelling is wrong and wasted
 - 5) Emotional abuse is much worse than physical abuse. Love your children, and maintain their respect, **not their popularity**
 - 6) Mom, don't interfere! You both have God-given authority, and you both have to work together like in sports for the goal of a submissive, obedient, yet manly/feminine child!

C. The Christian's War at Work (6:5-9)

1. *Servants* – a high title!

- a. This is how to be the best employee – serve! Work the hardest!
- b. Obey your boss, employer – that is their company, and you have the privilege of working there. It was NOT created to give you work (socialistic philosophy)
 - 1) We obey with fear and trembling
 - a) Not just reverence. You respect your employer, and his/her property
 - b) The world says workers should riot and demand rights – cause your employer to fear!
 - c) YOU ought to fear – directed at Christians! This is what makes us PECULIAR
 - (i) Disappointing them – work harder than anybody (Lk 17:10)
 - (ii) Losing your job
 - (iii) Blowing your testimony
 - (iv) Grieving the Holy Spirit
 - (v) Getting setback on your spiritual growth
 - 2) Obey with singleness of heart – all your heart – fervent
 - 3) Obey not only when being watched
 - a) Note how many business have CCTV's
 - b) Work knowing the Lord is watching, AND your boss probably is watching too
 - 4) In Paul's day there were about 6 million slaves throughout the Roman Empire, a number of whom were believers and this applies all the way to them. But this can be applied to an employee in our day. Paul told them to be obedient for at least three reasons:
 - a) The way they serve their masters is really how they served God (vs 5,6). He is to avoid "eyeservice". They were not to work well when their master watched and loafed when he wasn't.
 - b) It is the will of God (vs 6,7). He should do his work "from the heart" or with a right attitude, since it reflects Christ's testimony in the believer's life.
 - c) They will be rewarded of the Lord someday (vs 8). Christ gives us a new motivation, not a new organization.
- c. Why put up with so much abuse?
 - 1) The way you serve your masters is really how you serve God (vs 5,6).
 - 2) It is the will of God (vs 6,7).
 - 3) You will be rewarded of the Lord someday (vs 8). Christ gives us a new motivation, not a new organization.
- d. Witness on the job at APPROPRIATE times – at breaks, when everyone else is just chatting, but not when you are being paid!

2. *Masters*

- a. Be an example of YOUR Master towards your employee
 - 1) He must be submitted to the Lord (vs 9). *"Your Master also is in heaven."* Just as the wife is to submit herself to her husband *"as unto the Lord"* (5:22), and the husband loves his wife *"as Christ also loved the church"* (5:25), and children were to obey their parents *"in the Lord"* (6:1), and parents were to raise their children *"in the nurture and admonition of the Lord"* (6:4), and servants are to be obedient *"as unto Christ"* (6:5), so the masters were to treat their servants as their *"Master in heaven"* would have them do. Each person submitting to the Lord, has no problems submitting to those over him. Note Matt 20:27. A Chief leads by serving all.
 - 2) You do have authority (Mt 20:1-3, 8-15) – just don't abuse it!
 - 3) He must not Threaten. He should boost morale not tear it down. Lev 25:43, *"Thou shalt not rule over him with rigor, but shalt fear thy God"*.
 - 4) He must not play favourites. *"God is no respecter of persons"*. He judges equally and prefers none above another (I Tim 5:21).
- b. He must seek their welfare, *"do the same things to them"*. The master must serve the Lord from his heart if he expects them to.
- c. Pay them fairly, treat them fairly. Lev 25:43, *"Thou shalt not rule over him with rigor, but shalt fear thy God"*
- d. A master is not different than a servant in God's eyes
- e. Treat your employees as you want the Lord Jesus to treat YOU!
- f. Masters will have to answer to God for how they treated their workers (James 5:1-7)

D. The Christian's War with the Devil (6:10-20)

1. Paul tells us that we must fight the enemy in military fashion. (2 Tim 2:1-4; 1 Tim 6:12; 2 Tim 4:7)
 - a. The Bible is a military book. It deals with more than just "love" and "peace" and "happiness." It deals with warfare, struggles, battlefields, and attack plans.
 - b. The best thing any enemy can do to its opposition is to lull them into thinking there is not going to be any war - and then POW! (ie, US planes dropping leaf-lets over Japan weeks before Hiroshima and Nagasaki).
 - c. This is just what Satan has accomplished for the most part - getting Christians to think that there is no more need for spiritual warfare - no more need to fight
 - d. But there is a need: to fight the good fight - endure hardness, be a good soldier in Lord's army! Not dealing with Bosnia, or Chechnia, Iraq or Vietnam, but with sin, and Satan!
2. **The Christian's Enemy** (vs 10-12).
 - a. The Leader - the devil. Unless we know who the enemy is, where he is, and what he can do, we will struggle to defeat him.
 - 1) He is known as the *Devil* which means "accuser" (Rev 12:7-11)
 - 2) *Satan* meaning "adversary" because he is the enemy of God
 - 3) the Tempter (Matt 4:3)
 - 4) Murderer and Liar (John 8:44)
 - 5) The "*god of this world*" (2Cor 4:4).
 - 6) Compared to a lion (1Pet 5:8)
 - 7) a Serpent (Gen 3:1; Rev 12:9)
 - 8) Most dangerous thing he is, is an angel of light (2Cor 11:13-15);
 - b. His Helpers (vs 12).
 - 1) He has an army of devils at his disposal to resist God and God's believers in what they do. (Rev 12:4).
 - 2) Fallen angels are in hell. Demons, little devils run a very efficient network attempting to cause havoc and confusion in God's kingdom
 - 3) Your enemy is not described as human (flesh and blood) but as:
 - a) Wiley - cunning, crafty, deceptive (2 Cor 11:13-15)
 - b) The devil - the adversary, the enemy, the opponent
 - c) A principality - the top dog
 - d) A power - a force that is second greatest to God Himself (1Pet 5:8)
 - e) The rulers of the darkness of this world (Eph 2:2,3) - evil dudes!
 - f) Spiritual wickedness in high places - he affected the entire universe
 - (i) Government places
 - (ii) Also outer space
 - c. His Abilities (vs 12).
 - 1) He is strong (vs 12)
 - 2) He is wise and subtle ("*wiles*" means "cunning, crafty")
 - 3) He is a thief (John 10:10)
 - 4) He is a chameleon – appears as an angel of light (2Cor 11:14).
 - 5) He is the one we "*wrestle*" with, indicating a hand to hand battle. We are not spectators in this game. We are constantly drawn into the fight!
3. **A Good Soldier has a Commission** (6:11,13) - "to stand, withstand"
 - a. He has a purpose, a position to take up (like in a soccer team)
 - b. That commission is to STAND - not retreat, not fall, not give in, give up
 - c. Note the use of the word (6:11,13,14) - HOLD YOUR POSITION!
 - d. You have something to defend, fight and die for – it's called the "good fight"
 - 1) Stand For eternal things - souls of men and women who are headed for hell
 - 2) Stand For right and true things that are constantly being attacked (evolution)
 - 3) Stand For real things - like your family, and your ability to serve the Lord
 - a) If you get sick, then don't collapse - remain standing
 - b) If you get discouraged about things - STAND
 - c) If you get defeated, get up again, and stand firmer still (Pro 24:16)
 - 4) That's why we stand for the King James Bible, for the Family, for Purity, for simple worship, for

innocence in our children, for the love of the brethren, for honouring our leaders, for a hard work ethic, ...

- 5) We stand against Rock Music, and against drink of any kind, against abortion, against drugs, against pornography, against fornication, against sex on TV, against self-help philosophies, against the Pope, against the liberal God-denying theologians, against homosexuality, ...
 - e. Do you have a POST? A position in the body of Christ that He, as the Captain of our Salvation has put you? Are you faithfully standing at that post, defending against all that would attack, or undermine?
 - 1) As a Mom, as a Dad, as a Sunday School teacher, or a choir singer, or a soul-winner, or as a preacher, as a missionary, as a witness on your job, or in your school?
 - 2) What is your place that Christ has for you?
 - 3) Do not compare your place with another – get back to standing guard against the wiles of the devil
 - f. Each Christian soldier has a job to do for Christ - are you letting Christ down? Are you letting your family down? STAND man, against the attacks! STAND against the pressures! STAND - don't give up territory in your life that Christ purchased with His own blood! Don't exchange freedom for convenience! At all costs STAND!
4. **The Christian's Battle** (Eph 6:12)
- a. Not long distance shelling – not aerial bombing – not rifle-shooting
 - b. Hand to hand combat – wrestling
 - c. It is NOT EVER with people, but with demonic forces behind them. That makes it hard
 - 1) Arguments, Debates, Threatenings – by people are not where the battles are
 - 2) The battle is not in “being right” but in turning people to the right, and doing it as Jesus did (eph 4:15)
 - d. This wrestling CANNOT be won without armour
5. **The Christian's Armour** (vs 13-17). To fight Satan we must put on *"the whole armour of God"*. Not just a few bits and pieces, but the whole package, every day! Why? Because Satan looks for the weak spots in our life to hit at.
- a. First there is Special Training. No soldier goes out to battle without “boot-camp” (training, preparation for a war)
 - 1) Every soldier must be prepared for what might happen in combat – training
 - a) Everything happening in your life is more training than battle, I believe. God is constantly trying to prepare us for something up ahead
 - b) Every time you come to church, and hear preaching, and study your Bible, you are being prepared, trained, disciplined to be a good soldier
 - c) Don't skip the training sessions – spend your time in front of TV, with only friends, when God commands you to be in training in church, in Discipleship class, etc.
 - 2) Every soldier is issued weapons and defensive gear
 - a) They are tools to get the war won
 - b) Every fisherman has tools to catch fish, every carpenter has tools to build homes, and every Christian has tools to defeat the devil!
 - 3) But all the training in the world wont do any good in battle if the soldier doesn't PUT ON THE ARMOUR - doesn't carry his weapons into the fight
 - a) God is calling every Christian here to faithfully prepare for each day, and each battle by choosing to “put on” every piece of God's armour!
 - b) Don't be like the idiot soldier that went to the loo, and was taken prisoner simply because he forgot to carry his weapon!
 - c) Satan traps more Christians simply because:
 - (i) They never learn their weapon - how it works, how to use it
 - (ii) They let someone else destroy their faith in their weapons
 - (iii) They forget to use their weapons, and try fighting against bazookas, and tanks with sticks, rocks, and mud! You wont survive!
 - 4) Preparation is found in personal discipline - reading and studying your Bible, being in church, praying, exercising your faith - growing stronger!
 - 5) A Christian who is not ready, and prepared to live for God each day, is destined to wind up spiritually shot-up, and wounded and hurt! No glory in that!
 - b. There are Six Pieces of Armour to Put on EVERY DAY

- 1) Under-garment of Truth
 - 2) Breastplate of Righteousness
 - 3) Shoes of the Gospel
 - 4) Shield of Faith
 - 5) Helmet of Salvation
 - 6) Sword of the Spirit
- c. There is ONE thing that holds it all together... PRAYER
- d. Therefore, Put On *Six Things* Every Day:
- E. ***The Under-garment of Truth*** - the source of our confidence in winning each battle (Eph 6:14; Philp 4:8; John 8:32,36; John 14:6; 16:13)

1. God's Truth is the foundation of all we do.
 - a. Every soldier has to wear an undergarment upon which all the other armour rests. If they didn't have this garment on, the rest of the armour would pinch and cut into the flesh of the soldier when the moved and attempted to fight.
 - b. We have not followed "cunningly devised fables" (2Peter 1:16) but the very truth of God. We can confidently obey His instructions, fully trusting that the outcome is certain, and best!
 - c. Without this, all our weapons do is HURT US instead of our enemy! Once a lie gets into the life of the believer, everything begins to fall apart.
 - d. When Jesus was attacked by the devil in the wilderness in Matthew 4, he used the TRUTH of the word of God to hurt the devil, not just the promises of God!
2. Summary – to wear this armour piece:
 - a. Spend time in the Bible
 - b. Fill your mind with truths
 - c. Believe what you read
 - d. Constantly develop your understanding of the Lord
 - e. Listen to the Spirit of Truth
 - f. Discipleship



F. ***Spiritual Breastplate – Personal Righteousness*** (Eph 6:14; Isa 59:17; Psalm 15:1,2)

1. There are two kinds of righteousness:
 - a. Imputed Righteousness – Salvation – Christ's righteousness – saves me from the eternal punishment of my sin. This you put on once.
 - b. Personal Righteousness – Sanctification – my own righteousness, own goodness – saves me from the present cost of my sin. This you must put on and keep clean every day!
2. Our Spiritual Breastplate is strengthened as we obey the Lord, and do right!
3. It is weakened when we disobey and turn away from God's commands, and do our own ways
4. This is an area we MUST take seriously – a Christian's personal righteousness is always under attack
 - a. It is like a shield that can withstand darts
 - b. But, if Satan can punch holes in our shield, or actually take away our shield, or get us to give away our purity, He can march right over us!
 - c. YOU WOULDN'T ALLOW THAT IN A PHYSICAL BATTLE
 - d. Don't do it with secret sins then, or disobedience, or losing temper
5. Realise that you are given righteousness through forgiveness – use it to defeat the wickedness of our enemies (like an antibiotic kills germs)
6. Summary of How to Wear This Armour Piece:
 - a. Confess all sins to God (1John 1:7-9)
 - b. Confess your faults to everyone you have hurt – make things right
 - c. Empty your heart of regrets and remorse (Job 27:6)
 - d. Fill your heart with Christ's righteousness – purity from Him



G. **The Shoes of the Gospel of the Gospel** (Ephesians 6:15)

1. This evening we will put on some boots - *army boots*. They may be a bit uncomfortable to wear, but they are a very necessary part of our armour (Rom 10:15)!
 - a. Boots - feet shod (covered) - enables a soldier to stand
 - b. Preparation - ready to go, ready to fight
 - c. The Gospel of peace: the words that make peace with God (at war with the devil) - most have it the other way around!
 - d. Usually people put a lot of emphasis only on arm strength and upper body armour – but God knows we need armour on our feet even!
2. In simple terms, we are putting on what we stand upon
 - a. We do not stand just on the Bible – lots of subjects in it
 - b. We do not stand upon just truths in the Bible – there has to be ONE fundamental truth to stand upon
 - c. We stand upon the GOSPEL
 - d. And our Gospel has FEET!
3. Therefore, the most victorious Christian is a witnessing Christian. Note Isa 52:7; Rom 10:15.
4. The Gospel does THREE Things for the Christian besides saving them:
 - a. It Prepares them – for fighting
 - b. It Protects them – from slipping
 - c. It Propels them – to the farthest corner of the world



5. **The Gospel Prepares You for the Battle** (Eph 6:15)

- a. The need for preparation - the need for training
 - 1) Every army rigorously trains its soldiers, so that all work together, and so that the army can win. The only way to win is to *prepare* to win.
 - 2) There is far too much emphasis today on “chance” and “luck” in life. Don’t leave your family, your job, and your eternity to “luck.” Real Christianity prepares for the attacks that come our way. There is no reason for us to be surprised by attack unless we were not prepared!
 - 3) When God saves a sinner, He begins to develop that person into a soldier (2Tim 2:3,4) - and He uses the Gospel, *not revenge, not anger, not love*, but the GOSPEL from start to finish.
 - a) Part of your armour is actually the preparation to fight - you can have the best weapons at your disposal, and still lose because you do not know how to use them! EX: David in Saul's armour (1Sam 17:38,39)
 - b) The Christian fights using *the cure* for battles, not destructive weapons
 - 4) Know this! Satan meticulously trains, and programs *his* army (Dan 1:3,4)
- b. What is the Gospel? Get this clear in your minds!
 - 1) Some think it is *a book* on an altar. Some think it’s all about *the kingdom, miracles, signs and wonders!* These are **false** Gospels (Gal 1:6-9). Like Mormons, JW’s, “*prosperity*” gospel promoters, *social* gospel ministers (feed the poor, etc), the *liberation* gospel fighters (free the oppressed minorities of the world) - some may be good causes, but are NOT the Gospel! There are “*feel good*” gospels (never offends), and “do your own thing” gospels - they are the devil’s poison
 - 2) **THE** Gospel is the good news about *one* Man, the God-Man, Jesus Christ! *His* death, burial, and resurrection in our place (1 Cor 15:1-4)! It is **ONLY** about Jesus! And that you **can** have eternal life - it is available to all who repent and receive Christ’s gift by faith **ALONE!**
 - 3) Believe any other “gospel” and you will go to hell as fast as a bullet!
- c. What the Gospel prepares a person for:
 - 1) For Salvation. (the biggest battle) You cannot get saved without believing the Gospel (death, burial & resurrection of Christ in your place) - no church, no baptism, ten commandments, prayer, or any amount of good works will save you! Only Jesus saves!
 - a) Every person (no exceptions) must hear the Gospel in order to get saved from hell! No one is born a Christian, or gets it by accident!
 - b) Once you hear it, the Holy Spirit brings conviction that you are a wicked sinner deserving of hell! Remember, this is **good news!**
 - c) It is at that point that you can believe the promise that Jesus died in your place, giving you the free gift of complete forgiveness from ALL your sins!

- 2) Gospel prepares you For Service. The Gospel is free to all who will believe! But the life that follows is no easy task. The Christian is no longer at the helm of their life. What the Gospel did was, it freed you not to serve yourself, but to serve your Saviour (EX: of how a person feels "indebted" to someone who delivers them out of trouble - God put that feeling in everyone).
 - 3) For Soul-winning (1Pet 3:15). Be ready to give **the** answer (2Tim 4:1,2)
 - 4) For Standing - while serving, soul-winning, and under attack! It is like an army boot. How does the Gospel prepare a Christian to stand?
 - a) Gives the person a **reason** to stand in the first place – for people's souls!
 - b) Provides the **armour** to enable the Christian to withstand attacks - in muck, mire, on slopes, slippery places - it provides firm support
 - c) Expands our understanding of what is really at stake in this spiritual warfare we are caught up in - Gospel gives us a view of eternity - that the whole world is going to hell under a wicked, evil tyrant named Lucifer (no fairy tale) - and they must be freed!
 - 5) So... everything we do now, is for the sake of the Gospel (1Cor 9:20-23)
6. **The Gospel Protects You IN battle.**
- a. To stand against your enemy, you need firm footing
 - 1) God's paths – God's way of doing things – get over not doing things your old fashion ways
Psa 17:5 Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.
 - 2) God's places – the right places are the high ground!
Psa 18:33 He maketh my feet like hinds' feet, and setteth me upon my high places.
 - 3) God's strength
Psa 18:36 Thou hast enlarged my steps under me, that my feet did not slip.
Psa 116:8 For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.
 - 4) God's Son – resting your footing on HIM alone
Psa 40:2 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.
 - b. You have to pout on these shoes – the Gospel keeps you OUT of bad places!
 - 1) Psa 119:101 I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word.
 - 2) Psa 119:105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.
 - 3) The Gospel will keep you out of pubs, jails, discos, off-licenses
 - c. The Gospel will keep you from slipping
 - 1) Into Calvinism
 - 2) Into Apathy
 - 3) Into laziness – people are dying and going to hell right now at almost 2 per second!
 - 4) Into filthy sin – that would ruin your testimony and send more people to hell
 - d. It keeps us focused on the real battles! Paul worried most about how people messed with the Gospel. Once you mess with the Gospel, you damn people – period!
7. **The Gospel Propels You into the Battle - It affects Your Feet!**
- a. A verse to believe - Psa 47:3 He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations **under our feet**.
 - b. Ever heard, "Good news travels fast?" It travels because it motivates the hearer of it into action - that people need to hear such wonderful news!
 - c. Religion deadens people - Salvation makes them ALIVE (Eph 2:1) - like having ROCKETS attached to your feet!
 - d. The Gospel moves - constantly in motion (1 Thes 1:5-9)
 - 1) The Gospel came to these Thessalonians in Greece (1:5)
 - 2) The Gospel changed those people - into followers of Christ (1:6)
 - 3) The Gospel motivated those new Christians to sound it out across the region: into Macedonia and Achaia (1:7,8)!
 - e. That's why God calls the Christian's feet *beautiful* (Is 52:7; Ro 10:15)
8. If your salvation didn't affect your feet, and get you to taking the gospel to the lost, then something is wrong, and you need to get back right with God (too many are like the Dead Sea)
 9. Realize what you are getting into - spiritual warfare - over lost souls!
10. **Conclusion - The Gospel Does Three Things to You**

- a. **The Gospel Prepares you for the Battle** - Are you prepared? Have you submitted to Christ Jesus first as Saviour, and then as Lord? **Are you growing?**
- b. **The Gospel Protects you IN Battle** – keeps you from slipping off your course
- c. **The Gospel Propels you into the Battle** - It affects Your Feet! lifestyle! What does God think of your feet? Are they beautiful, or filthy? **Are you going?**
- d. **So, what are we supposed to do every morning:**
 - 1) Put on an emphasis on the Gospel
 - 2) Keep your testimony clear and true to the Gospel – live how a Christians should live
 - 3) Ask God for firm steps to take through the day – lead you to people searching

H. **Spiritual Shield - Faith** (Eph 6:16; 1John 5:4)

1. This evening, our challenge is to take up, and carry a shield - One that will deflect any missile (fiery darts) directed at you!
 - a. It is like carrying a DOOR around
 - b. The shield was held before the soldier and gave the soldier refuge in the midst of a battle.
 - c. For the Christian, Faith is what gives us refuge against Satan's "*fiery darts*" of doubt, sinful desires, etc.
 - d. A great truth – When joined together, these large shields formed a wall behind which a body of troops could hide themselves from the rain of the enemy's missiles.
2. What is faith?
 - a. Faith is your own personal confidence in God and the promises of His Word
 - b. Faith is trusting God enough to obey Him no matter the odds, knowing He will give the victory!
 - c. It acts as a shield against doubts (because you are trusting NOT your feelings anymore, nor even your experiences, but rather, you are fully trusting what God promises), and discouragement, and against EVERYTHING the devil throws against you!
 - d. A weak shield is because of weak faith. The only way to have strong faith is by studying, and learning the word of God (Romans 10:17).
3. **The Priority of Faith**
 - a. According to the Bible, *faith* alone is the only way to resist the attacks of our enemy, the devil (1 Pet 5:8,9)!
 - 1) Not by will-power, or through self-help meetings – not in self confidence or pumping ourselves up
 - 2) But by faith in an almighty God who gives us the victory based upon our reliance upon HIM (1 John 5:4,5)!
 - 3) Most people have a mis-placed type of faith: in Govt, religion, self, faith itself
 - 4) But the only faith that works is the one once delivered to us (Jude 3) found in the Bible! Not in some catechism, or some temple somewhere
 - b. Note the words, “above all”
 - 1) What did Paul think the most important piece of equipment was for the Spiritual warrior? Right, the shield! He tells us *above all* right at the start.
 - 2) Faith is a shield, which allows us to put an immediate end to many of Satan’s attacks.
 - 3) For the Romans the shield was not just a defensive weapon, it was also an offensive weapon. The metal bulge in the centre, was designed to hit the enemy at impact, and it allowed the soldier to follow up with his sword, to subdue the opponent.
 - 4) For the Christian, our faith also has two uses:
 - a) To hit the devil hard when we are attacking his territory
 - b) To deflect his advances
 - c. What is faith?
 - 1) Faith is often defined as a religious term; religious people are called “people of faith”.
 - 2) There are all kinds of ‘faiths’ (Buddhist, Muslim, Catholic, Protestant, Hindu, Evolutionist, Humanist, Atheist)!
 - 3) But true faith is complete *reliance* upon the God of the Bible!
 - 4) It is confidence that God knows what He is doing, and that you are willing to let Him do the fighting of the battles that you cannot fight: ie,



- a) The battle at Calvary for forgiveness (2Ti 1:12);
 - b) The battle at death for your eternity;
 - c) And the battle daily against your enemy the devil!
- 5) See 2 Cor 12:7-10 where Paul is under attack, and yet winning, simply because of his RELIANCE upon the promised grace of God!
 - 6) Not "blind" faith we are talking about - true confidence based upon a proven track-record as given in God's written words (Rom 10:17)!!!
 - 7) For many secularist, this means blind faith, which means faith without any basis. We however are told to take up or raise the shield. How can we raise our faith? Let's use the atheist for an example.
 - a) Even atheists have faith, for example if an atheist were to fly in an airplane, does he know for certain, the plane would arrive at its destination? No, he has faith that it will arrive there, he does not know for certain until the event occurs.
 - b) What is the basis of his faith in the plane? He uses reason and logic, based on experience and history of airplanes. If an atheist were afraid to fly, how might he raise his faith in ability of the plane to carry him? He might read about the engineering of planes, their history and their statistics. Joe Atheist has a reasoned faith in airplanes.
 - 8) There is no reason for a Christian to have blind faith; God has provided us with reasoned faith, faith based upon reason and logic.
 - a) The Bible is filled with prophetic evidence regarding the Bible, and Jesus Christ, for example Isaiah 52:13-53:12, describes Jesus and his ministry 700-years before his birth.
 - b) The Bible foretells the exact time of Jesus death 539-years before His birth in the 70 Weeks of Daniel, Daniel 9:24-27. Why did God provide prophetic evidence for the person of Jesus? Why did Jesus do the miracles? To provide evidence of his identity, that we might have faith in Him.
 - c) We can choose to increase our faith, by learning to have a reasoned defense of the gospel. We are told in Peter to be prepared to give a reason or logic, of the hope we have. In other words, we are to give the reason for our faith.
4. **The Protection of Faith** - Our Reliance upon God acts like a shield around us
- a. Christians need protection - defence
 - 1) Against the wrath of God (John 3:36; Mt 3:7; Heb 2:3) – protected ONLY by faith
 - 2) Against the wrath of Satan (Rev 12:12; 1 Pet 5:8) - still only by faith
 - b. Our faith provides that protection - How?
 - 1) It places either the Lord, or ourselves in the line of fire (Gen 15:1; 2Sam 22:2,3; Ps 119:114) – I would rather keep the Lord Jesus in between me and my enemy!
 - 2) It shoves aside anything that is in our way blocking us (Mk 11:23)
 - 3) It permits us to manoeuvre on the battlefield instead of hiding in the fortress. Satan wants to make a bunch of "chickens" out of Christians so that they don't do any damage to the devil's work on the battlefield: ie, few strong Christians taking a stand in the workplace; in govt; in education!
 - c. Our protection is based upon the size, and amount of our faith
 - 1) The Christian's shield is an unusual item. It is constantly changing shape based upon OUR level of confidence in Christ
 - a) Lost faith (Luke 8:23-26)
 - b) Little faith (Matt 8:26)
 - c) Great faith (Matt 15:28)
 - 2) Great faith is not what you think it is - it is something everyone in this room can have if they use and exercise what they currently have (Luke 17:6,7). Just use ALL of it!
5. **The Place of Faith**
- a. Our faith is meant to be used in battle!
 - 1) Faith is not something you "talk about" - It is something that you use, and rest in while in battle as a Christian!
 - 2) People who live in Ivory Towers know nothing of Biblical faith! People who work in secure jobs, and have need of nothing, know nothing of Biblical faith!
 - 3) But people who face struggles, and heartaches, and trials on a daily basis should know something about faith, and about whether God pulls through or not!
 - 4) Faith is not made for the mountaintop - it's for the climb! And descent

- 5) David fought Goliath, and won by FAITH (1Sam 17:45).
- b. Be careful not to leave your faith, your fresh confidence in your Saviour and Lord, back at home, or at church - it must be with you at all times!
- c. Most Christians neglect faith, and leave life up to FATE! That is what the world does!
 - 1) Fate accepts whatever happens, and struggles just to survive - "my lot," or "bad luck."
 - 2) Faith presses through current attacks and seeks to conquer higher ground by trusting in God's leadership
6. **The Performance of Faith** (Heb 11:32-37) Our shield of faith is the ONLY thing that is guaranteed to quench ALL the fiery darts hurled at us!
 - a. Fiery darts - arrows, missiles, fast, pointed projectiles that do much damage
 - 1) The Roman "fiery darts" were made from a hollow reed (something like bamboo). One end was stoppered, then the reed was filled with a flammable liquid like alcohol. A loosely fitting stopper holding a wick was slipped into the other end of the tube and lit. It was then shot like an arrow, not at a bundle of straw or at a fortress, but at the soldier himself. Since the missile had it's own fuel source and the wick was protected by the tube, the missile kept burning until it hit something. When it hit a soldier, the wick popped out, the liquid spilled over the soldier's armour and ignited, cooking him in his own armour.
 - 2) These darts are symbolic of fiery temptations; evil thoughts, demonic ideas. The devil knows very well that our most important stronghold is the mind. Once he can attack the mind, and short-circuit the mind, he's got us. Because then we are at the mercy of our emotions. It's our mind that keeps control of our emotions. So we have to guard our mind; the fiery darts.
 - 3) Most of our battle is in the thought life. Most of our conflict is not in our ordinary outward life; but in our thought life. That's where the devil attacks us, with all kinds of evil suggestions, doubts, blasphemous thoughts.
 - a) **Lust** (James 1:13-15) These darts are meant not to hurt you, but to destroy you - they have delayed action timers!
 - b) **Love of Money** (1 Tim 6:10) - possessions, success, the world
 - c) **The Law** - proving that you are not good enough - condemnation
 - d) **Lies** - people get into the habit of wanting to believe lies instead of the truth (about themselves; about God; about sin) - misunderstandings
 - e) **Loss** – discouragement
 - f) **Confusion** - doubt
 - g) **Suicide**
 - h) **Depression**
 - i) So many different kinds can come at you, and so many can all come at you at once! You need an effective shield that works
 - 4) These missiles were nothing special – nothing high tech.
 - a) They were fired during daylight hours, so you could hardly see them coming, but when they struck, the effects were devastating.
 - b) Just like Satan's tactics. He sends something our way - a thought, a doubt, an unholy idea, an event, a sound, a casual comment by a friend - which seems very innocent at first, but when it strikes, it spreads its destruction throughout our spiritual man engulfing us in flames.
 - 5) Christians who struggle with depression can only think thoughts which see negative images of the present or the future. Some of these thought patterns are from family influences, life experiences and other psychological factors. However, researchers admit that many of these thoughts seem to have no obvious origin.
 - 6) Well, I can tell you that origin, and it's a very hot place! Our enemy himself will try to plant thoughts in our minds that will cause us pain, and if possible, lead us to forsake God Himself.
 - 7) What is our defence? The scripture tells us that it is the shield of faith. The Roman shield was as large as a door. It was made of wood, the surface of which was charred with a torch and then covered with leather. A soldier could hide his whole body behind this shield. The missile would hit and the liquid spread out, but the charred wood of the shield wouldn't catch fire so the soldier was safe beneath his shield.
 - 8) How does this work in a practice?
 - a) For example lets take Mary Christian and her co-worker. Mary is at work, and her co-worker says, "Mary do you really believe the Bible?" "How can you believe such a thing?" The co-worker really might be asking a sincere in her question, or she could be shooting a fiery dart at Mary. If Mary Christian has never learned how to use her shield of faith, the dart might hit

- Mary, who might ask herself, yeah, “why do I believe the Bible?”, “how do I know the Bible is true”?
- b) Another example, would be Joe Christian walking past a pub and the thought pops in his head... “Man could I use a drink!” “No one would know.” “I only need ONE drink” If Joe did not have a shield against such darts, he will give in every time!
- 9) Now God allows us to experience warfare, because through it our faith can grow. The co-worker may be very sincere in her question, creating a door for Mary to advance the gospel. As Mary learns why the Bible is true, and why she believes Jesus is the Son of God, she can walk over to her co-worker, open the Bible (the sword of the Spirit) and show her. Now the fiery dart shot at Mary, becomes the cause of the Gospel is advanced, as Mary explains to her co-worker who Jesus is, and why he is the Son of God.
 - 10) Satan has literally hundreds of fiery darts he can fire at us, in each case; we should learn how to take his attacks and train to respond. Ask yourself, what fiery darts give you the most problems?
- b. To “quench” is to “put out the fire” - the sting - the desired effect
 - 1) Satan intends for his darts to penetrate deep into your heart, mind, life, and to explode doing major damage! Most hearts in this room are pock-marked with spiritual craters and holes that are burned-out! That is only because we neglected our armour! Shame on us!
 - 2) The shield of faith “absorbs” the attacking dart, and prevents the dart from doing what Satan intended it to do.
 - a) Like seeing porno material in front of you - faith resists the attack, and engages the enemy in prayer! You can't pray if your eyes are open, and exploring the temptation! You have to deflect the attack, and get strength to push forward!
 - b) Like hearing something said against you - faith resists the attack, and engages the real enemy in prayer, resting in Christ, and pressing forward - Satan senses you are headed at a vital target and seeks to divert your focus!
 - c) Like trying to operate your business right, and the attacks start coming at your efforts (bad health, financial loss, depression) - faith rests in the course taken as being right, and engages the enemy head-on in prayer!
 - c. When you hold up that shield, there is no missile of Satan that can harm your soul.
7. **The Price of Faith** - What does it take for faith to work?
- a. Complete confidence in Jesus Christ, according to the Bible – are you willing to stake EVERYTHING on doing things by faith – in obedience to God's word?
 - b. No wavering - no haphazard attempts to live for Jesus
 - c. No turning back - the Lord knows your heart
 - d. Lots of practice - doesn't just come “naturally” - must get the hang of it
8. **So, How Do You Put on the Shield of Faith and Carry it Throughout the Day?**
- a. Have faith – get some faith from reading and believing what you read in the Bible (Rom 10:17)
 - 1) Have faith in God (Mark 11:2)
 - 2) Know what you believe – not what your heart tells you, or what man tells you, but what this Bible says – clear and firm!
 - 3) It is something that we believe in spite of what we see
 - 4) We put on our confidences in Christ
 - b. Lift your faith – carry what you believe with you and HOLD IT HIGH!
 - 1) Going to heaven, and not hell anymore?
 - 2) Jesus is with you?
 - 3) The Holy Spirit enabling you?
 - 4) Is Satan a loser?
 - 5) Are you the ONLY one going through this battle?
 - 6) Hey! It will strengthen your faith when you use it and use it!
 - c. Link your faith – with others! Church, prayer meeting... let other people know that you are praying with them about things in their life, and let them know what they can pray about for YOU!
 - d. Look through your faith – don't get caught up in the here and now. See beyond the battle