

## 10 – STANDING FIRM IN A STATE OF READINESS

*“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.”*

Ephesians 6:13 (ESV)

**(Context: READ Ephesians 6:10-20)**

### **UNDERSTANDING THE BATTLE ...**

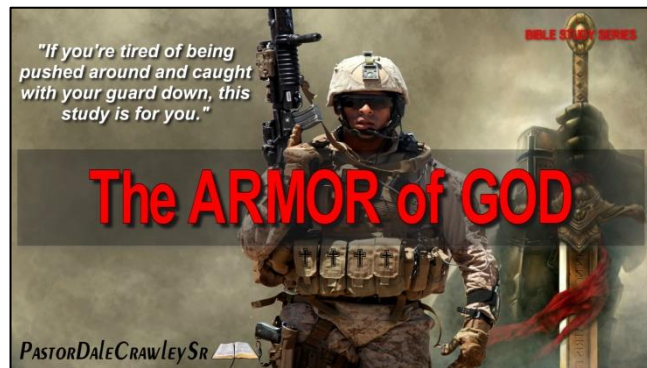
To understand the battle of spiritual warfare, we need to begin with acknowledging that we are in a war. Battles make up smaller components of the bigger picture. By definition, battles involve combat between two persons, between factions, between armies and they consist of any type of *“extended contest, struggle, or controversy”* (Webster-Merriam).

**As Christians, we are in a spiritual battle of some sort on a daily basis.**

In warfare, battles are fought on different fronts, for different reasons, and with varying degrees of intensity. The same is true in spiritual warfare.

***Our spiritual battles and warfare are real, even though we cannot physically see the attacker.***

This bible study on the Armor of God and the battle of spiritual warfare has given us a foundation on where, how and what the battles look like in our lives. It begins with learning the truth of God's Word and dispelling the lies of the enemy. Then carefully and conscientiously examining the three main areas of where the battles are fought: the Spiritual Battle, the Worldly Battle, and the Battle Within Us.



### **Believers Stand Firm By Being Prepared**

In order to stand firm, believers must prepare for battle. This is true for any warfare—a soldier cannot be successful without preparation. Governments invest billions of dollars into training their soldiers both mentally and physically, and such commitment should be similar for Christians—no corners should be cut in becoming spiritually prepared. Many lose this battle simply because of failure to prepare.



Paul says to ***“be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God.”*** Essentially, Paul wants believers to understand that this battle cannot be won through human strength, but in God's strength alone. The reality is ... there are actually seven pieces of armor described there, not six, as is commonly thought. **When Paul talks about spiritual warfare in Ephesians 6, prayer is the seventh piece of armor.** It activates all of the rest of the spiritual armor. (Eph. 6:18)

When we refuse to pray, it's like having a refrigerator without plugging it in. Prayer is the divinely authorized mechanism God has given us to tap into His power. Without prayer, we'll be ineffective in spiritual warfare. But with it, we will be victorious!

## **The Truth About Spiritual Warfare**

We tend to see our problems and struggles in non-spiritual terms. And because of that, we tend to seek non-spiritual solutions. Everything that occurs in the visible, physical world is directly connected to the wrestling match being waged in the invisible, spiritual world. The effects of the war going on in the unseen world reveal themselves in our strained and damaged relationships, emotional instability, mental fatigue, physical exhaustion and many other areas of life. Many of us feel pinned down by anger, unforgiveness, pride, comparisons, insecurity, discord, fear ... and the list goes on. ***But the overarching, primary nemesis behind all these outcomes is the Devil himself.***

We're in a spiritual war that can only be won with spiritual resources, but we've got to know we have these spiritual resources at our disposal, and we've got to use them. Prayer is crucial for both!

***"Prayer is simply an outpouring of your heart to God and then making room in your life to hear back from Him in His Word and as He orchestrates your circumstances. God wants to have a conversation with you. He longs to hear what is really on your heart. He wants openness and honesty."***

## **Believers Stand Firm By Knowing The Enemy**

A crucial part of every army is the intelligence branch. Those who work in intel gather information about the enemy so the army can be equipped and prepared. In Ephesians 6:11-12, Paul gives intel about our enemy so we can be equipped to stand firm in this war.

Paul mentions the devil's schemes (v.11). The word "schemes" in the Greek is *methodia*, from which we get the English word "method." It carries the idea of craftiness, cunning, and deception. It was used of a "wild animal who cunningly stalked and then unexpectedly pounced on its prey." Satan's evil schemes are built around stealth and deception. **In order for believers to not be outwitted and to stand firm, they must know their enemy and his schemes.**

## **Believers Stand Firm by Fighting**

Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. (Ephesians 6:13)

Paul writes of the need to stand firm four times in Ephesians 6; **However, it must be remembered that this standing is not a passive, defensive stance. It is, in fact, active and offensive.** Ephesians 6:17 and 19 tell us so.

## How Can Believers Fight This Spiritual Battle?

### 1. *We must know what we are fighting for.*

In a war, a soldier fights to protect his home, his family, his country, and his freedom. These things motivate him, and it must be the same for believers. If we don't know what we're fighting for, our spiritual lives often become dreary and lifeless.

### What do believers fight for?

- Believers fight for the souls of the lost.
- Believers fight to please God and be rewarded by Him.
- Believers fight to glorify God with their lives.

First Corinthians 10:31 says, *“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”* **Even our fighting in this war is for the glory of God!** When Christ went into the temple and turned over tables, he was consumed with zeal for God's house (John 2:17), and with the glory of God. Similarly, we fight because we are consumed with the glory of God. A person not consumed with God's glory—God being exalted throughout the world—will not fight.

**We must know that the war has already been won, and we must fight with Christ's authority!**

**Another important reality that every believer must understand when fighting this battle is that the war is already won. Therefore, we are not fighting to win, but because we've won!**

## In Conclusion ... How can believers stand firm in this spiritual war?

- Believers Stand Firm by Being Prepared (with God's Power and Character)!
- Believers Stand Firm by Knowing the Enemy!
- Believers Stand Firm by Fighting!

***“Now, Let's Get Ready To Rumble !!”***

