



Stand Firm - Eph 6:10-24

Feb 2 - Darrel Schmidt

INTRO

Paul concludes his letter to the Ephesians with a rousing challenge to stand firm against the spiritual forces of evil that seek to keep believers from living the Christian life in power and victory. He gives four specific challenges or commands to help us in our defense against the enemy.

Open with prayer¹, then read Eph 6:10-24 together as a group. Consider dividing it by paragraph. It's helpful to all use the same Bible translation. SLC preaches from the NLT.

SERMON RECAP

1. Intro: Story about Jack, a student at Bible College plagued by the enemy.
2. Background
 - a. This passage reads like a closing argument in a court case.
 - b. Connects back to all Paul has written previously in this letter.
3. The Battle (v.12)
 - a. Takes place in the heavenly realms.
 - b. Is not fought **for** victory but **from** a position of victory.
4. Our Defense (v.10-11,13,14)
 - a. Be strong (in the Lord and in his mighty power).
 - b. Put on (all of God's armor).
 - c. Stand Firm.
 - d. Pray Hard.

¹ Some groups prefer to begin with a longer time of sharing and prayer. This is a good instinct and ensures that prayer time doesn't get shortened by time constraints.



5. Forces and Strategies.
 - a. Internal - disunity.
 - b. External - physical authorities.
6. Action Points
 - a. Remember our defense.
 - b. Understand the battle.
 - c. Recognize victory.

BONUS DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

If you're covering 2 sermons in 1 Life Group meeting, skip to the Core Discussion Questions to save time. Otherwise, start here.

1. Study the Armor of God. Begin by re-reading verses 14-17. Now read Isaiah 11:5; 52:7; 59:17. What do you notice? Whose armor it is?
2. The pieces of armor are connected to descriptive words (faith, salvation, etc.). These words have been used several times in the earlier chapters of Ephesians. Read through each series of scriptures and soak in the richness of what Paul was saying about the role and importance of each piece of armor.
 - Truth (1:13; 4:15,21,24-25; 5:9)
 - Righteousness (4:24; 5:9)
 - Peace (1:2; 2:14-18; 4:3)
 - Gospel or Word (1:13; 3:6; 5:26)
 - Salvation (1:13; 2:5, 8; 5:23)
 - Faith (1:1,15, 2:8; 3:12,17; 4:5,13)
3. Which one of these pieces do you need to work on this week? Are you willing to share that in your prayer time?

CORE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Describe a time when you were engaged in a spiritual battle and how you handled it.
2. Where do you see the work of evil forces in our world today? What are some of the schemes or strategies the enemy uses? Darrel gave examples of internal (disunity) and external (physical authorities) strategies.
3. Read verse 12 again. Where does Paul say the spiritual battle is taking place? This phrase, "Heavenly places" or "realms" is used 4 other times in Ephesians (1:3,20; 2:6; 3:10; compare with 2:2). Read these verses and discuss the significance of this term. How might it help us recognize and overcome in the battle we are facing?



4. The spiritual battle is real but we don't have to fear because we battle **from** victory not **for** victory. What does this statement mean to you? Will all our problems go away? How do the following verses help us understand what Christ has done? (Jn 16:33; Eph 1:19-21; 1 Cor 10:13; 15:55-57; 1 Jn 5:4).
5. Paul has in mind a specific order for us to follow in regards to our defense against the enemy and they are written as 4 commands. What is that order in this passage that Darrel used in his sermon?² Compare this with the following passages that also seem to suggest an order in overcoming the evil one (Jas 4:7; 1 Pet 5:8-9). What stands out to you?
6. Paul's description of prayer in verses 18-20 is instructive regarding the spiritual battle. Discuss the following:
 - a. How are we to pray?
 - b. Who are we to pray for?
 - c. What are we to pray about?
 - d. How might this shape our prayers for one another?

Note: if you have time, review Paul's two main prayers in 1:15-23 and 3:14-21). Additional note: if you have access to the NASB version look at the use of the little word "all." Why is this so significant?
7. You may want to use these prayers to help guide your group prayer time. Include anything that was shared in Bonus Discussion point 3.

ACT & PRAY

1. As a group, share areas of praise and need. Write them down so you can be praying for them during the week. Pray specifically this week for our church to stand firm against the spiritual forces of evil (specifically for unity and focus on the real battle).
2. Remind yourselves of your Adopt-a-Missionary, and any prayer requests you've seen from them.
3. Pray for Alpha. We had a great start last week with 38 participants!
4. Spend time praying, either all together, or in smaller groups. Feel free to experiment with silent prayer, written prayer, etc.

² Be strong; Put on; Stand firm; Pray hard.

