

# Spiritual Armour (Eph 6:10-20)

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[ 0 : 00 ] Right, Ephesians chapter 6, verses 10 to 20. I'm reading from the English Standard Version. I'm not sure. I hope that's okay. Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.

Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

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. Stand, therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.

In all circumstances, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert, with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, and also for me, that words may be given to me, and opening my mouth boldly, to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

[ 1 : 37 ] All right. Yeah, stay in that passage, please. And we're going to hear what God has to say to us through it. So, would you pray with me? Let's pray. Father, we live in a world that is opposed to you.

We live in a world where, because of the fall, because of darkness, because of the devil, that there is much that would love to trip us, to tear us down, to defeat us.

Help us not to be outwitted by Satan, as 2 Corinthians says. Help us not to be ignorant of his schemes. Would you be with us now, as we hear from your word?

In Jesus' name. Amen. I'd love you to meet Hiro Onoda. Let's see if we can put his face up. Okay. This guy, Hiro, was an intelligence officer, in the Imperial Japanese Army, during the Second World War.

So, well before any of us were born. Okay. He was about our age though. At 18, he joined the Japanese Army. And in his orders, in 1944, he was sent to Lubang Island, in the Philippines.

[ 2 : 48 ] And he was ordered to defend that island. And his commanding officer said this. So, Lubang's just below that anchor, next to Manila. The word Manila. And his orders was this, from his superior.

No surrender, no suicide. Okay. And so actually, when the war ended, all right, a year later, Lieutenant Onoda refused to surrender. Okay. So he just stayed hidden in this island.

And it actually wasn't until 1974, 30 years later, that he finally surrendered. Okay. For 30 long years, this soldier kept on, in his mind, fighting a war.

I think in contrast to Hiro, right? Just an amazing story. But in contrast to Hiro, many of us do not realize that we are in a war ourselves, do we? I don't know about you.

Maybe you show up to church week after week, maybe just out of habit. Maybe you think that church is just about being entertained or intrigued until we see Jesus. But it's interesting that in this final section of the letter to the Ephesians, Paul describes a Christian life, and he starts using kind of war words, spiritual battle type words.

[ 3 : 59 ] Did you notice all the fighting words as Simeon read that, right? Finally, be strong in the Lord and his mighty power. It's almost like he's put on a switch and gone into like, you know, World War II mode or, you know, he's gone into battlefield, you know, whatever mode.

Okay. Because I think this is true of the Christian life. We are not just tourists on a cruise ship. Okay. In Christ, yes, we are family. We are God's dwelling place.

There are lots of metaphors we've already heard. But we are also in a war. And in this battle, right, we fight the enemy. This battle takes place at work, right?

It takes place at home. It takes place at school. Ultimately, we are in a spiritual battle, right, as we live in a country that does not value Jesus and a world that desperately needs him. And so, Paul wants us to know about spiritual warfare.

Okay. And so, Paul, in this section, gives the Ephesian church and us standing orders, right? Orders to fight. Orders for war. And from these words, this passage, I think we see three things that I want to share today, okay?

[ 5 : 03 ] Three truths about spiritual warfare. So, you can take this down if you're a note taker. Firstly, there's a spiritual battle. We're going to see that from verses 10 to 13. Secondly, there is spiritual armor, all right?

We'll see that from the next couple of verses. And then finally, there is a spiritual mission, 18 to 20. Yeah, it spells BAM, so if you want to try and remember that yourselves. Yeah, I worked all week on this one.

So, we want to think about who we're fighting. What gear we've got. And then, the mission we pray for and proclaim as God's holy people. All right?

We ready to go? Okay, let's listen to verse 12 again. Verse 12 says this, for our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms, right?

Did you notice that? rulers, authorities, powers, spiritual forces. Paul kind of paints a description of an organized spiritual army, okay? Looking for any opportunity to attack our assurance, destroy our delight, shipwreck our souls.

[ 6 : 14 ] I think when it comes to talking about the spiritual world, we can fall into one or two traps. Either we just don't believe it exists at all, right? We're children of the enlightenment, okay?

And so as a result, you're more likely to grow up not having thought of anything about the unseen world, okay? And so we pay no attention. So if someone says there's a spiritual battle, you'd be like, I don't see him, okay?

Can you prove it? So that's one side that we can fall into, right? So just pay too little attention to the spiritual world. Another trap, though, is to fall and pay too much attention to the spiritual world, right?

Like there's a devil under the chair, there's a devil in my coffee or whatever, you know? You just get too caught up about it. I think Paul strikes a balance, doesn't he? He says he doesn't want us to be unaware, right?

He doesn't want us to be unaware. He actually wants to warn them, right? He's been talking about very practical mundane stuff, marriage, family, work, but he says, behind all that, our struggle is not just against flesh and blood.

[ 7 : 17 ] There is a spiritual battle, okay? Many of us, we're going through life like tourists, okay, who don't even realize that we're in level four lockdown, okay? There is a battle, okay? There is a battle.

And I think one mistake we can make when we think spiritual warfare, we think, oh, okay, we think Satan must be working in miraculous only or supernatural only ways.

He certainly does, okay? I don't want to deny that, okay? Satan has a capability to do all kinds of things. But I think often, when we talk about what the devil is doing, okay, what the enemy is doing, he is often much sneakier.

He is often much sneakier. You see that word in verse 11, put on the full armor of God so you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. The word schemes in the original language, it's where we get the word method from.

So don't think of Satan as someone trying to like, you know, throw fire and lightning, you know, trying to do miracles. Try and think of him as like a master chess player, okay? A grandmaster at chess or Chinese chess.

[ 8 : 18 ] He's got a sense of strategy and planning, all right? He is already thinking five moves in advance when you're still getting out of bed, okay? Even before your first girlfriend or boyfriend, for example, Satan has already poisoned your mind, okay, with years and years, okay, of selfish ideas of sex and relationships, right?

Even from Monday morning, okay, all week, the devil has spent just wearing you out, trying to distract you from being right here today. Even this past week, you know, I was wondering, what was going on?

I felt more drained, more underprepared, more distracted. Maybe it's not an accident. Sometimes the devil, remember, he is three steps ahead of us and he works in subtle ways. And because there's a battle, God wants us, verse 14 says, to stand firm then.

Did you see that? Actually, right up to that verse 14, the Bible actually, you know, what Paul writes, he uses the word stand or stand firm, he uses it four times in quick succession, right?

And this word is used in a kind of military sense, okay? You'd use it to kind of call troops to battle, call troops to formation. It's used to describe defend a position, okay?

[ 9 : 28 ] So you want to imagine when you hear stand firm, you want to hear 300 men trying to defend this little crack, okay? And calling out, this is Sparta, that kind of stand firm. Or a row of men in black, okay?

Trying to defend a try line. Stand firm. Stand firm. In this day and age, that is our call too. We are called to stand firm in the spiritual battle.

And to do this, Paul knows we need the right gear. And so that's his next point, right? The next point we see from verse 14 to 17, he's going to go through what we have. We have spiritual armor, okay?

There is a spiritual battle, stand firm. But remember, there is spiritual armor. And he wants us to put it on. A few weeks ago, I was away with Eden.

We went down and had a lower North Island trip. And we passed by this little town called Bulls. Yeah, Bulls. On our way to a weekend camp. So, as you can see, they love their puns.

[ 10 : 27 ] You see the sign. It says, the sign said like, sociable, delectable, I don't know, they must have hung out with Pastor Albert or something when they put that sign together. Bulls is a very punny town.

And in that town, as we were just going through, we stopped for a coffee and a snack. And we actually came across an antique store, okay? A French antique store in Bulls, middle of nowhere, right?

And it was amazing, okay? Inside, there were just antiques, there were just collections. The husband and his wife, they would just order stuff from France and just ship it over, you know?

That was their kind of their goal in life, to get as much of France into this little town of Bulls. And so, there are street signs, like 500-year-old wine jars or things from the French Revolution and before.

Yeah, it was amazing. Antiques, right? So, a big mistake, I think, when we come to a list like this, right? About the spiritual armor, as we come to it and we think antiques, okay?

[ 11 : 27 ] We come in and go, ooh, spiritual armor, let's look at it, let's examine it, let's talk about it, let's, you know, let's imagine what it would be like, you know? So, that's treating the spiritual armor as an antique collector.

I think sometimes our Sunday school lessons, they don't help. I don't know if some of you, if you grew up in Sunday school, right? You spent like ages, right? A whole term drawing like every armor of God and, you know, coloring it in, that sort of thing.

I think that can draw us into this trap, even Bible commentaries, right? Like, five chapters or, you know, a whole chapter on like one piece, okay? And then, all the time, the devil is laughing because we are still not dressed for battle, okay?

We're going to know about the armor of God so that we can put it on. That is all we need to know, okay? So, please remember, we are not antique collectors, okay? We are soldiers in battle, okay?

Know your full armor so we can take it up. So, I will go through each piece but we're going to go through it so we can put it on. There's no point otherwise. And look, there's lots of speculation about the armor of God as well because it comes down to spiritual warfare.

[ 12 : 32 ] Look at that, you know, Google armor of God and you'll get lost. But, I want to summarize it in these ways, okay? Every piece of armor, okay, is firstly, it's promised in the Old Testament, okay?

So, a lot of the pictures and imagery come from the Old Testament, okay? It's not just made up stuff. Secondly, in particular, the prophet Isaiah, he speaks a lot about the armor of God.

Secondly, if you want to know what an armor is or how to have it, actually, read your Bibles, go back further in Ephesians, okay? This is the end of the letter and so, if you want to know what the armor's like, you're going to look earlier in Ephesians and find the answer, okay?

Because that's how the letter works. And then finally, the armor, and we're going to see this, every piece of armor has been worn by Jesus and that makes all the difference, okay? So, keep that in your head, okay?

We are soldiers training for war. I've heard that when you train to be in the army, you need to learn how to assemble your rifle in 60 seconds, okay? I don't know if you've seen that Forrest Gump movie where he had to practice all the time.

[ 13 : 35 ] Anyway, so we're going to go in, armor of God, so we can put it on, okay? Belt of Truth, verse 14. Stand firm then with the belt of truth buckled round your waist.

I just thought, I needed to find a more contemporary image of someone wearing armor, so this is the Mandalorian. Belt of Truth. These days, belts, we wear them, guys, as fashion statements, but for a Roman soldier, okay, the belt was critical.

Without the belt, okay, you'd be wearing long flowing robes and you basically wouldn't be able to hold it up. You wouldn't be ready for battle, okay? It'd just kind of, you know, tie you up and be more like a dress.

For first century Christians, all right, who wore mostly long flowing gowns, you needed a belt, okay? It was such a basic thing in people's minds, and actually in 1 Peter 1.13, the Apostle Peter, he could even write and he say, he could even say something like, you need to belt up the loins of your mind, which sounds really odd to us, but it's basically saying, sharpen up, okay?

Sharpen up your thinking. So, belts was just such a basic thing that, you know, you'd even use it in other kinds of conversations. And Paul says to, fasten the belt of truth, okay?

[ 14 : 51 ] Truth, from God's Word, guards us, it protects us, it helps us to move in battle. I think Paul puts truth first, because he knows that's where the devil loves to attack us, loves to attack Christians most fiercely.

Can any of you remember, okay, in the book of Genesis, how did the first temptation, how did the first battle start? It started with an attack on truth, right?

What was the question? Did God really say, you shall not eat of any tree in the garden? Right? It's an attack on truth. The serpent attacked by suggesting a lie.

Our battle today is no different, okay? All right? The accuser, he loves to cloud our minds with every wind of fake news, all right? False ideas, lies to confuse us.

Author Tim Chester, he puts it this way, right? Every sinful act we have always has their origin in some form of unbelief, okay? And behind every sin is a lie. The root of all our behavior and emotions is the heart, right?

[ 15 : 54 ] What it trusts and treasures. So, people are given over to their sinful desires because they exchange the truth about God for a lie. There's always a gap between what we believe in theory and what we believe in practice, right?

So, if you feel your life isn't complete until you have a husband or a wife, maybe you've believed a lie. Maybe you're saying something like this, all right? God hasn't given me every spiritual blessing in Christ.

If you feel like you just love to gossip about people behind their back, maybe you're saying Ephesians 2 is a lie, right? Ephesians 2.16 says, Jesus' death on the cross reconciles us with one another.

Maybe that's a lie though, right? Maybe. Or maybe, if you can't focus on God's Word but you can binge on your favorite TV show, maybe you're saying, all right, that what's on your screen is more precious than Ephesians 3.8, the unsearchable riches of Christ.

You see, there's a truth war going on. I think every sin we commit or every good thing we don't do, every act of rebellion against God is fueled by some kind of unbelief that sits behind it, okay?

[ 17 : 01 ] So ask yourself, okay, when you do make a mistake, what is the lie I'm believing here, okay? And what is the truth I need? That will help me stand against the devil's lies.

Belt of truth, okay? Belt of truth. And in Ephesians, right, truth, the first and foremost truth we always want to go back to and remember time and time again, right, is the truth of the gospel because Ephesians 1.13 says this, right?

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, right, which is the gospel of your salvation. You remember that?

Okay? So belt of truth, God's promised one dying for sinners like you and me, that is a truth that is worth tying around your waist. Truth to speak in love, truth to hold on to, right, that will hold up the rest of your armor.

Okay? Belt of truth. Put it on. Armor number two, verse 15, right? And with, sorry, stand firm then with the belt of truth, buckle around your waist, sorry, verse 14b, with the breastplate of righteousness in place.

[ 18 : 08 ] Breastplate of righteousness in place. The word, so, you know, he's wearing a very modern form. The word there literally referred to a piece of armor that a Greek or Roman soldier would cover the front and the back of your chest.

and in the same way, okay, righteousness covers our hearts. We were once dead and now we are alive in Christ. And so, remember Ephesians 4, right, verse 24, it called us to put off our old self and to put on the new self created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Again, draw back to Ephesians to find out what on earth putting on righteousness means. What Paul has in mind here then is ongoing obedience to God, okay? Putting that on.

That is armor. Satan loves to trick Christians into thinking it does not matter how I live, right? I can just pray a prayer, I can just have a cry at a youth camp and maybe that's it, I don't have to do anything else in my life anymore.

No, he's tricked you. Your moment by moment obedience matters, okay? Your holiness matters. Ephesians 5 reminds us, right, we're to be imitators of God as beloved children, right?

[ 19 : 21 ] So as his children, every time we say no to sin and yes to Jesus, we have our breastplate of righteousness on. That's what it looks like. That's what it is. That's what it means, right? So put on the breastplate of righteousness.

No to sin, yes to Jesus. That will defend you, protect you from Satan's schemes. Verse 15, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.

Now this is an interesting piece of armor, right? I don't know if I've ever worn readiness before, have you? But that's actually what the text says, right? Paul says here, our feet are to be clothed or shewed with readiness from the gospel of peace.

Because when Satan attacks, we want our feet to stand firm on the gospel of peace. Friends, the gospel, okay, we talked about this earlier in Ephesians, is not just something you believe and then you let go, right?

And you just walk past and never see again. They're not just jandals you wear onto a cruise ship and then you just put them behind and enjoy the holiday. You need the gospel all the time. The gospel is more like boots you lace up and go to war.

[ 20 : 29 ] You never take them off until you're killed. All right? Paul says it this way in 1 Corinthians 15, the gospel I preached to you which you received and which you stand.

Right? So church, stand firm. Stand firm. Let us be a church that has gospel readiness on our feet. When the next wave of temptation comes your way, preach the gospel to yourself.

When your friend or co-worker asks a deep question, have the gospel ready in your hearts to be able to share with them. Right? Isaiah 52 verse 7 which is where I think this language comes from, puts it this way.

And it says this, how beautiful. The feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation. Maybe you're here and you just hear this gospel word all the time.

You're not sure what it means. The gospel is this. We were once dead in our sins, far from God. But because of what Jesus did on the cross, He paid for all our sins.

[ 21 : 31 ] He did what we could not do. And if you turn from your sins and cling to Him by faith, you can be in His family. You can be His child.

You can be part of His army. Okay? And that's the gospel. And this is a gospel that brings peace between different groups of people. And we can sit here from different ethnicities and backgrounds and praise God together that we can have peace that flows through us and spreads into our workplaces.

Okay? We can be people who are ready to share God's message of peace. That is the gospel. And Satan would love to attack us on this front. Right? Wouldn't he love us to be a church that just becomes a cultural hangout for people who feel Asian or Kiwi.

Okay? Or both. Right? And never talk about the gospel. He'd love that. He wants us to, maybe he wants us to fight each other. Okay? With our petty differences until we just look inwards and we're always arguing and then we forget that there's a world that does not know Jesus.

Don't let him. Be ready. Shoes on. Alright. Armor number four. Shield of faith. Let's read verse 16. In addition to all of this, take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one.

[ 22 : 50 ] Paul has a very specific shield in mind. So, poor guy doesn't have a shield so I have to show you a picture of a shield. So, it kind of looked like this. So, kind of almost body length shield. It's called a thoreo.

And if you played Total War, you've probably seen this before. And, yeah, it needed to be big enough because people with archers, when they shot you, okay, you needed to cover a lot.

Okay? You needed to cover a lot. They could hit you anywhere. So, that's the kind of shield that Paul has in mind in the kind of pictures. Alright. And this kind of shield is what would stop kind of flaming darts as well.

And Paul is saying in verse 16, that's what faith is like. Okay? Faith is like holding up a shield that will protect us anytime Satan tries to shoot temptations our way or doubts or questions.

And even Paul, who wrote this letter, he actually needed this shield from time to time. Okay? He's written other letters to other churches. And one of them, Romans 7, 24, he says this. He openly wrestles with his doubt.

[ 23 : 49 ] He says this. This is Paul speaking. Wretched man that I am. Who will deliver me from this body of death? And then he raises his shield of faith and says, Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

I think two things you want to know about the shield of faith, right? About faith itself. Faith in Christ is not how strong your faith is. Okay? It's actually how strong the object of your faith is.

That matters. That makes all the difference. Okay? Imagine yourself falling off a cliff. Okay? It doesn't matter how tightly you grip to a branch. Okay? All right? It matters most how strong the branch is where they will save you.

That's what Jesus is like. Okay? And faith in him is just clinging on and trusting that solid branch or a really important and big shield. Okay? And it's either it will protect you or it's not.

In the same way, our faith is not in ourselves. Right? But in Christ, the faithful one. He will hold us fast. Another thing to remember, our faith, our faith comes up and down. It can waver.

[ 24 : 52 ] You know, I've been through seasons of doubt. And so, we need each other. Okay? We need the faith, not just of our own faith, but the faith of my brother or sister. Okay?

My church family. Okay? This picture is great because this is how Roman soldiers would actually advance. Okay? If they needed to fight a really difficult target. They would not just have one shield by themselves.

They would actually form, it's called the tortoise formation. You know? So, imagine them being like a turtle. This is how they would use their shields. And that is how we should use our shield of faith as well.

Okay? Just like these Roman troops. Far easier to stand firm when we are exercising our faith with brothers and sisters. Not alone. Okay? All right. So, take up the shield of faith.

Shields up. We'll do it together. And when Satan throws arrows our way, right? Lust, pride, fear, doubt, loneliness. We just hold up our faith in Christ together and we keep standing.

[ 25 : 52 ] Let's read verse 17. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. Okay? Let's talk about the helmet of salvation first.

We've already heard salvation lots in Ephesians. Okay? And I think the one that comes to mind for me is Ephesians 2.8. It is by grace that we have been saved through faith.

I think Paul mentions salvation specifically. You know, put on that helmet of salvation because so often we feel under attack on this point, right? The devil would love to try and make you doubt your salvation.

To question whether you really are a child of God. Maybe it goes something like this. Oh, man, I keep sinning. I keep sinning over and over again.

This sin I hate, I keep doing it. Maybe I'm not really a child of God. Or, man, my life sucks. I feel sick all the time. I'm poor.

[ 26 : 50 ] Everyone else is eating bougie food and I'm just sitting here feeling miserable. Maybe God doesn't love me. Okay? But Paul would say, no, stand firm and take the helmet of salvation.

Okay? If God has saved you in Christ, you have hope. You have peace. You have more than anything else this world can offer. Paul is saying, look, don't just treat your salvation as something in the past.

Cling to it right now. If God has saved you, whatever you're struggling with right now, it will not last forever. And your future is far better and far brighter. In Christ, we have been saved from sin's penalty.

We're saved from sin's power and one day we'll be saved from sin's presence. So, don't let the devil get a headshot on you. Just put on that helmet of salvation. Keep trusting him. Keep relying on him.

But in the same verse, did you notice, Paul also says, right, not just the helmet of salvation, he also says, take the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. This kind of sword, it was a short sword that Roman soldiers would use in hand-to-hand combat.

[ 27 : 57 ] Okay? And so, Paul says, God's Word. Okay? The sword of the Spirit. You need to use it in hand-to-hand daily combat. Once upon a time, when I was much younger, a friend, we were just sitting at school, a friend of mine who was really enthusiastic about all things Japanese, okay, and all things samurai, once brought a full-size samurai sword to school.

You know, they'd left that out of the rule book. Obviously, you know, it's like, no walking in the grass, check, but no one said no bringing katanas. Okay? I remember holding it, okay, because he brought it and then he showed it around and we got to hold it.

I remember holding it. This is heavy. This is heavy. Have you ever held a sword before? I don't know if any of you have. They're really heavy. Okay, a real one, right? Not a fake one. Really heavy. And I was thinking, if I needed to use a sword in a fight, I would have no chance.

I better, you know, if I was really needed to use a sword in a fight, the only way I'd use it effectively is I would need to train and repeat and repeat and repeat and learn how to use it properly. It's the same with God's Word, okay?

How many of you held this and gone, it's so heavy? I don't know where to start, right? But we need to train, okay? This is our sword of the Spirit. This is our only offensive weapon that God has given us, okay, in the armor of God.

[ 29 : 11 ] Remember that. And let's be honest, okay? And I can admit it too. Some days, I'm pretty rusty with my sword, okay? Maybe you've fallen into the trap of just relying on, you know, like a few key verses for your life and that's enough.

No. Maybe you've put learning and studying God's Word. That's for smart people, okay? They'll do it and then I'll just absorb it when I can. No, don't do that. Maybe it's Google, right?

Google loves it, okay? When you just type in that verse about the armor of God, okay? And then you can just find it. Don't do that, okay? Paul says, take up the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

Pick up these God-breathed words, okay? Imagine, this is Holy Spirit talking to us. Can you imagine that? What are you going to do about it? You're going to delight in it. You're going to read it.

You're going to study it. Memorize it. Remember, this is no ordinary book. This is no ordinary book, okay? Sometimes we think of like the Bible as just, you know, as one of many religious texts, okay?

[ 30 : 11 ] Take it or leave it. This is no ordinary book. If we really believe it's God's Word, then we will believe what it says about itself. It is living and active, Hebrews 4, 12 says. It's sharper than any two-edged sword.

It pierces to the division of the soul and spirit, right down to the bone and marrow. It can discern the thoughts and hearts, the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

This is the armor of God, all right? So many different pieces. We've all seen it before, but you know what I think the best motivation to put on this armor is? It's that every piece has been tried and tested in battle by Jesus Christ, okay?

Here's the one, okay, Isaiah 11 writes about. He says, and he calls him the root of Jesse, right? And in this prophecy Isaiah has, all right, predicting a coming Savior, he describes someone wearing God's armor and he says, righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness, the sash around his waist.

Get that. Jesus, as well, is the Lord himself. Isaiah 59, 17, says, he puts on righteousness as a breastplate. And the helmet of salvation on his head, right?

[ 31 : 20 ] Jesus is our ultimate hero. He is the one who has put on God's armor, right? All of them, all of them. And fought back against Satan, right?

He did it in the wilderness when he was tempted. He quoted God's word time and time again. He did all this and more. He lived a perfect life. He died on the cross. And then, because he rose again, he defeated Satan.

That was the ultimate defeat. He could overpower sin and death. That's the gospel. That's good news. I want you to imagine like this, okay? Don't look at the armor of God as just an antique. Look at it like this.

You've just, you've just been sitting on the basketball court, right? And LeBron James, all right, has just been playing the game of his life. All right? And then, it's subbing time, okay? And just before he subs off, he takes off his singlet and gives it to you to wear and says, you go.

You go play the game of your life. That is what Jesus is like and that is what God's armor is like, okay? Not just some fairy tale stuff. All these pieces of armor, Jesus gives to us through the gospel and he has worn them before himself.

[ 32 : 24 ] So they work. So stand firm. There is a battle, right? There is a battle to fight. But stand tall because there is armor that has been worn by Jesus. Finally, a couple of words about the last few verses, all right?

We have battle, there is armor, and finally, there is a spiritual mission. And so, Paul says, pray for boldness. Pray for boldness. Because look at how he prays, okay?

And this from verse 18 through to 20, he says, pray a lot of times. You can count it up yourself. Why prayer? Why does he bring that up right at the very end? Aren't we meant to fight?

Can't we just go do stuff? In World War II, I'll tell you another story. I love war stories and now this is my last chance to give one. There was a battle called the Battle of Britain.

Who knows the Battle of Britain? Okay? 1941, okay? Germany is, you know, basically conquered France and most of Europe and they're just looking at, looking at England and saying, we're going to start sending out our German airplanes and try to basically bomb you to submission.

[ 33 : 28 ] Okay? And so, this was a very important battle. Okay? If Germany won, they'd probably be able to invade. Okay? And our life would be very different. Okay? So, historians say there were two main reasons why Germany did not win.

Okay? In the Battle of Britain. One reason was actually a Kiwi who was the commander of the RAF called Sir Keith Park. The other is this thing called radar.

Okay? And radar, we laugh because we have Wi-Fi now, but radar was actually a revolution. Okay? They could see the planes coming before, you know, they appeared in the sky through radar.

And only the British had it, you see. And so, every time the German planes came, the British were ready. Okay? They sent out their sorties and their pilots knew where to attack them. Okay? That was how they won.

That was how they won. So, look, we fight on the ground day to day with God's word, but we can only keep fighting when we have good, constant radar, good communication with our Heavenly Father.

[ 34 : 25 ] That is what it's like. And Paul knows this. That is why he does not leave us without saying, pray. Okay? Pray. Pray in all seasons.

Pray in the Spirit. Did you notice how often he says all? Okay? Or various things. The word all, I think, is repeated four times to make this point. Prayer should cover everything, every part of our life.

It should happen at all times, right? It should keep going. Literally, the word there says, stay awake with perseverance. Stay awake with prayer. I think sometimes when we think about prayer, right, we get discouraged because we feel like we don't have energy to pray enough.

Or beautiful enough or long enough. God says the trick to prayer, the talking of God, is just to do it for everything. Yeah. Yeah. Don't set yourself such a high standard. Just do it for everything.

So pray in all seasons, okay, in all circumstances. There's also the interesting phrase, pray in the Spirit, okay? I don't want to open up a big can of worms, but I want to say this.

[ 35 : 27 ] Don't misunderstand praying in the Spirit as only some kind of special, super holy way to talk to God because, remember, how Ephesians works is we look back in the book of Ephesians to work out what it means, right?

What has Ephesians already said about the Spirit? Okay? The Spirit has, chapter one, guaranteed our place in God's family through Jesus. The Spirit has given us access to God no matter whether we're Jew or Gentile, chapter two.

The Spirit dwells in His people and is building a new temple, a dwelling place for God. And we're to be filled with the Spirit, not wine, right? Through praise, through thanksgiving, and we praise Him in the Spirit, okay?

And so I think praying in the Spirit, first and foremost, means praying with full confidence of everything that the Spirit can do in our lives through Jesus, everything He can do.

You see? And I think, you know, I find it interesting that of all the obvious things Paul could have requested prayer for, maybe he could have prayed, please release me from prison, you know, God.

[ 36 : 40 ] In these last two verses, he specifically asked for boldness to share the gospel, which he's been in prison for. Can you see that? Pray also for me whenever I open my mouth, words may be given to me that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel.

That's why church for me, okay, on Sunday, starts at 2.30pm. You guys all made it here at 4.30, but 2.30 is when a group of us pray for revival, okay, in this church and our community for the world.

That's when we pray for each other's needs and I love that every week we are praying for the gospel to be shared boldly with someone, for someone. Not just for our colds and costs, there are important things to pray for, but pray for gospel growth.

How about you? What's your prayer life like? Do you pray in the Spirit like this? Or do your prayers go no further than your own problems? Okay, to be truly praying in the Spirit is to pray about things God cares about.

It's going to be far bigger, far bolder than our own four walls. It means we're going to pray for God's church to stand united, right, not just in our congregation but with the other congregations of this church.

[ 37 : 55 ] We're going to pray for Saturday service and Sunday service. It means praying for the gospel to be preached when it's in other places like CACC Church, Holy Word, other Chinese churches.

It's praying for events that come up like youth camp, praying for rice rally. It means praying for our local MP, right, our mayor, our prime minister, people in power trying to live out the gospel.

And it means praying for God's global church, for our brothers and sisters to stand firm wherever they live. They could live in North Korea, they could live in China, they could live in Iraq and Iran.

It means praying for people like your time that we prayed for earlier this week to bring the gospel back to Europe again. And it means praying for us, for us even, to share how God has a plan to bless our neighbors, our siblings, our colleagues, our family in Christ.

Friends, we have a mission to complete, a message to proclaim, a Messiah to honor. So as we pray and as we put on God's armor, God is on the move.

[ 39 : 01 ] Satan must retreat and Jesus is lifted high. And so in Christ, we put on God's armor, we pray, and we fight. Let's do that now. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Lord Jesus, once you taught us how to pray, when we felt very lost, and you said this, our Father in heaven, hallowed, holy be your name.

Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Father, we ask that you would give us our daily bread and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

And Father, would you lead us not into temptation. Deliver us from evil. Because we pray this with assurance in Christ that yours is the kingdom, the power, the glory, forever and ever.

In Jesus Christ's name. Amen.