

Know the Enemy - Introduction

The Armour of God Series

When World War One broke out, the War Ministry in London, England, sent a coded message to one of the British outposts in the inaccessible areas of British controlled Africa, saying, "War declared, arrest all enemy aliens in your district." The prompt reply came back, "Have arrested ten Germans, six Belgians, four Frenchmen, two Italians, three Austrians, and an American. Please advise immediately who we are at war with."

Read Eph 6:10-20

- ✚ **God's enemy is our enemy** - he is formidable, aged, well resourced, tireless, and well experienced in the craft of making war against God's children in a way that many will not even recognise the battle they're caught up in.
- ✚ **Our Champion is Jesus Christ**, and we give as little acknowledgement, as little attention, and no glory to the enemy of our Champion.
Our Primary objective in the battle of life is to focus ... *our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith...* (Heb 12:2).

As our Champion, Jesus never identified individual demons by name, nor did demons give their individual names, ranking or function to Jesus.

Therefore, putting on the armour of God is:

NOT an enemy focused activity.

NOT a “me” centred teaching.

NOT an ego enhancing mind-set.

NOT a ritual or enactment we go through in order to stay safe in Jesus.

NOT a last resort when all else fails to remove the struggles of life.

NOT a magic formula for victory or success.

NOT a prescription that forces God to do what we want, for our benefit or pleasure.

NOT a spiritual medication that releases all God’s niceties upon us.

Rather, the “Armour of God” is a humble confession that God alone is our spiritual strength. Therefore, we can *be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power* (Eph 6:10).

We understand that ...the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world (1Jn 4:4).

- ✚ **The purpose of God's Armour is:**
NOT to take us out of the battle.
NOT to remove all discomfort.
NOT to give our emotions a sense of supremacy.
Rather, God's Armour is to make us **STAND UNMOVABLE** in the battle, in those days of evil.

- ✚ **Eph 6:11-18** are verses that often get taken out of the context in which Paul wrote them. We need to be careful not to isolate these verses and build a belief on them without the required framework of the Ephesian letter which correctly fits them into context.

The Context of being an Armoured Believer

- ✓ The starting point, and permanent foundation of the Christian life is dependency upon God and preparation for living an ever-increasing Christlike life (2Co 3:18).
- ✓ Paul's theological premise: believers are not self-sufficient, and they are not self-dependant.
- ✓ A prepared Christian gets themselves familiar with their resources in Christ. Our understanding is the start line, as Paul explains in Ephesians 1-6:9 – who we are in Christ and how Christ wants to live through us.
- ✓ The amount of strength we possess is NOT as important as the source of our strength.

Paul's prayer: (Ephesians 3:14-21)

For this reason (What reason? Eph 3:10-12) I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, ¹⁶ that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith - that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

²⁰ Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Eph 6:10 *Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.*

- *“Finally,”* highlights an accumulation of all previous truth taught in this letter to the Ephesians, and now this is going to top it off. A bit like a final sign off statement.
- We are to *be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power* by putting Eph 6:11 into practice; *Put on the full*

armour of God so that you can take your stand against *the devil's schemes*.

- I. **Satan's schemes** are worked out, through and by, his underlings.
*For we (CHristians) 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**.*
In Ephesians 6:12, we see 1 spiritual enemy, yet presented in 4 groupings, or rankings.
 - II. They are not flesh and blood (not human, and don't have our limitations) - yet they strive to influence and effect humans.
 - III. All 4 facets of the spiritual enemy is preceded by "against" – They are only ever against us!
 - IV. Putting on armour signifies preparedness and readiness for battle (:13a).
 - V. Putting on armour is acknowledgement of our vulnerability and inability to naturally be able to withstand the attacks of the devil's schemes (:11).

- VI. Partial armour is ineffective and useless (:13),
Partial armour is planned failure.
- VII. The armour is NOT some type of ritual the
believer is to perform daily as if this will
protect you in some mystical way.

Peter identifies these spiritual forces:

Peter tells us in 1Pe 3:19-20, that in-between Christ's crucifixion and His resurrection, Jesus *...went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison,* ²⁰ *because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared...* (Gen 6)

Question: What did Jesus proclaim?

Answer: 1 Peter 3:18 *For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit...*

1 Peter 3:22, Jesus, *who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.*

Col 2:15 *These are the ...disarmed ...powers and authorities, (that) He (Christ) made a public spectacle of... triumphing over them by the cross.*

They are included in the ones Paul speaks of in Php 2:10, *at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth.*

So, these rulers, authorities, powers, and spiritual forces, are the remaining free agents under Satan's leadership who were not locked away for their rebellion during Noah's time. They are permitted by God to battle against Him and His children within His predetermined boundaries while they wait for the final day of judgement and eternal incarceration in hell (Rev 20:10, 12-15).