

Ephesians 6:10 Commentary

PREVIOUS

EPHESIANS - CHRIST AND THE CHURCH
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The Spiritual Warfare (c1623), a print by [Martin Droeshout](#) depicting the devil's army besieging a walled city held by a "Christian Soldier bold" guarded by figures representing the Christian virtues. It has been suggested that this print may have influenced Bunyan to write [The Holy War](#).

Greek: [Tou loipou endunamousthe \(2PPPM\) en kurio kai en to kratei tes ischuos autou.](#)

BGT Το λοιπο , νδυναμο σθε ν κυρ κα ν τ κρ τει τ ς σχ ος α το .

Amplified: In conclusion, be strong in the Lord [be empowered through your union with Him]; draw your strength from Him [that strength which His boundless might provides]. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

BBE Lastly, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his power.

CSB Finally, be strengthened by the Lord and by His vast strength.

ERV Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might.

ESV Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.

GWN Finally, receive your power from the Lord and from his mighty strength.

KJV Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

NKJ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

MIT Finally, be strengthened in the Lord by his mighty power.

NAB Finally, draw your strength from the Lord and from his mighty power.

NET Finally, be strengthened in the Lord and in the strength of his power.

NIV Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

NJB Finally, grow strong in the Lord, with the strength of his power.

NLT (revised) A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

NRS Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power.

NLT: A final word: Be strong with the Lord's mighty power. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: In conclusion be strong - not in yourselves but in the Lord, in the power of his boundless resource. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: Finally, be constantly strengthened in the Lord and in the active efficacy of the might that is inherent in Him. ([Eerdmans Publishing](#) - used [by permission](#))

Young's Literal: As to the rest, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might

FINALLY, BE STRONG IN THE LORD: Tou loipou endunamousthe (2PPPM) en kurio kai en to kratei tes ischuos autou:

- **Finally** - 2Cor 13:11; Php 3:1; 4:8; 1 Pe 3:8
- **Be Strong** - Ep 1:19; 3:16; Dt 20:3-4; Dt 31:23; Josh 1:6-7,9; 1Sa 23:16; 1Chr 28:10,20; 2Chr 15:7; Ps 138:3; Isa 35:3,4; 40:28,31; Hag 2:4; Zech 8:9,13; 1Cor 16:13; 2Cor 12:9,10; Php 4:13; Col 1:11; 2Ti 2:1; 4:17; 1Pe 5:10
- [Ephesians 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Ephesians 6:10: Spiritual Warfare - 1](#) - Wayne Barber
- [Ephesians 6:10-11 Standing Strong, Standing Firm](#) - Steven Cole
- [Ephesians 6:10 Satan's Attack on the Spirit-Filled Church](#) - John MacArthur
- [Ephesians 6:10-13 The Believer's Warfare, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur
- [Ephesians 6:10-13 The Believer's Warfare, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

Related Passages:

Ephesians 1:19-20+ and what is the surpassing greatness of His **power** ([dunamis](#)) toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the **working** ([energeia](#)) of the **strength** ([ischus](#)) of His **might** ([kratos](#)) 20 **which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places**, 21 far above all **rule** and **authority** ([exousia](#)) and **power** ([dunamis](#)) and **dominion**, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. 22 And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the

fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Ephesians 2:6 and raised us up with Him, and **seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus**,

Ephesians 3:16+ that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, **to be strengthened with power** ([dunamis](#)) through His Spirit in the inner man,

Deuteronomy 20:3-4+ "He shall say to them, 'Hear, O Israel, you are approaching the battle against your enemies today. Do not be fainthearted. Do not be afraid, or panic, or tremble before them, 4 for the LORD your God is the one who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.'

Finally ([3062](#)) (**loipoy** from **leipo** = to leave, to forsake, to lack, to fall short, to be wanting or be deficient) is an adjective that describes that which is remaining - the remnant, the residue, the rest. The specific phrase Paul uses here "to loipon" is used in classical Greek to mean "as for the rest" and with the temporal sense "henceforth". In the present context the idea is as far as the rest is concerned, beyond that, in addition. This teaching is vital to know and to obey that the believer might prevail in every encounter with the devil and his minions.

David Guzik ([Ephesians 6](#)) writes that...

William Gurnall, a pastor, published his book *The Christian in Complete Armour*, an exposition of Ephesians 6:10-20. He subtitled the work

The saint's war against the Devil, wherein a discovery is made of that grand enemy of God and his people, in his policies, power, seat of his empire, wickedness, and chief design he hath against the saints; a magazine opened, from whence the Christian is furnished with spiritual arms for the battle, helped on with his armour, and taught the use of his weapon; together with the happy issue of the whole war.

In his dedication, he describes his book as a "mite" and a "little present" but it comprises three volumes, 261 chapters, and 1,472 pages - all on these eleven verses!

Finally: This comes at the end of the letter - a letter that Paul has carefully established our place in Jesus, and then the basics of the Christian walk. This is his last section dealing with that walk.

- In light of all that God has done for you.
- In light of the glorious standing you have as a child of God.
- In light of His great plan of the ages that God has made you part of.
- In light of the plan for Christian maturity and growth He gives to you.
- In light of the conduct God calls every believer to live.
- In light of the filling of the Spirit and our walk in the Spirit.
- In light of all this, there is a battle to fight in the Christian life.

The **KJV** has "**my brethren**", but this phrase is not found in the more modern Greek texts that most scholars consider to be as more reliable. Nevertheless, the point is a good one -- Paul is not just calling on the pastors or elders of the church to be strong for the battle but for every believer. Spiritual warfare is the inevitable consequence of a life lived in Christ, filled with the Holy Spirit, and walking as a stranger and alien in a world is under the domination of the one whose very name is Evil. John explains that...

We know that we are of God, and the whole (complete in extent) world lies in *the power* of the **evil one**. (1John 5:19)

In this section Paul sets forth his analysis of life, especially as it relates to the Christian life. And in Paul's analysis, life is struggle, life is conflict, life is warfare. And so Paul blows the trumpet sounding a clarion call to arms to every Christian who whether they realize it or not has been called into "active duty" and is to respond courageously and armed with the truth. Remember the victory has already been won at Calvary. Our goal is to learn to live, walk and war in the light of that certain truth.

Ruth Paxson - God has no place for a spiritual pacifist. Every Christian is conscripted for both defensive and aggressive warfare. He calls every saint to arms. "Not into a religious playground or sports field, but into grim, terrible, bloody conflict are we called." (*The Wealth, Walk and Warfare of the Christian*).

John MacArthur reminds us that "The idea of the Christian's practice can be illustrated by a car. The first three chapters of Ephesians describe the car: its engine and its capabilities. The second three chapters are the road map the car is to follow. The first

three chapters define believers as high-powered individuals; the second three chapters show them where to go with their power. The ignition switch is represented by the strengthening of the Spirit in the inner man. As the Spirit fills and controls the believer, the power plant is turned on. He then can begin to move out in obedience to follow the road map that God has given. ([MacArthur, J.. The Believer's Armor. Chicago: Moody Press 1986](#))

Spurgeon comments on "finally" "as if this were a matter of the highest importance, to be considered first and last. — "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might." You know how strong Paul himself was; he was a veritable giant for Christ, and he here calls upon his brethren to be as he was, he did not want to be brother to dwarfs, so he appealed to his brethren to "be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."

Ray Stedman introduces this section writing...

God has issued to each of us a bugle call to intelligent combat. It is a call to us to be men and women of God, to fight the good fight, to stand fast in the faith, to be strong in the Lord in the midst of the battle, in the midst of this dark and evil world.

Those who ignore this call and the battle that rages around them are doomed to be casualties. We cannot remain neutral. We must choose sides. We must align ourselves with the forces of God, the forces of good. We must answer the bugle call, we must put on our armor and stand our ground or the battle will roll over us and in our defenseless, bewildered state, the forces of evil will trample us into the dust of the battlefield.

So we must learn to recognize how the dark systems of the devil work. But more than that, we must learn the processes of overcoming the systems of the devil not by flesh and blood, not by joining committees, not by political action, not by taking up clubs or assault weapons and attacking a human enemy. No, Paul says the weapons of our warfare are not flesh and blood weapons, not physical weapons, not political weapons. Rather, our weapons are mighty, through God, unto the pulling down of strongholds and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:3-5). That is the path to victory!

Gracious Father, thank You for a truth that startles me, prods me, and disturbs me. Thank You, Lord, for Your word of reality that speaks to me in the midst of my complacency and illusion. How easily I would drift on in futile ignorance, never raising a finger against the deterioration of life and the destruction of body and soul, were it not for this word of challenge that calls me back and makes me see life as it really is. Lord, teach me to bow in humility before Your Word and to say to the Holy Spirit, "O great Teacher of God, open these Scriptures and make them real to me today." In Christ's name. Amen. (Stedman, Ray. Spiritual Warfare - entire book online -- **highly recommended**. Here is a quote from a review by Cyril Barber who writes that Stedman's work represents "*A clear, definitive exposition of Ephesians 6:10–20, laying out precisely and accurately the resources God in Christ has made available to His own. These studies are free of all sectarianism (such as books on holiness frequently exhibit), and readers may safely and confidently rely on this pastor/author's wise exposition. A must for every earnest Christian.*")

Wayne Barber explains that...

The word "Finally" means that he is drawing everything to a close. In other words, everything that has been said he is now summing up as he closes the book of Ephesians...

Look back with me [3:16](#). There is no way to go to Ephesians 6:10 without first of all finding the context and the flow of everything that has been said. That word "[Finally](#)" is wrapping it all up. What is the "all" that we are talking about. What has been said in Ephesians? Well, his prayer in 3:16 tells us everything:

"that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man."

The word "power" (dunamis) (note) means ability, ability to do what you could not do before Jesus came into your life.

The Holy Spirit now is in our lives. He lives in the inner man in order to strengthen us, to cause us to be able to do what we could not do without Him. The degree of the strengthening, he says, is

"according to the riches of His glory".

Ephesians 1, 2 and 3 sum that up.

Ephesians 1 (click for messages) talks about the RICHES of His glory. Verse 3 sums it all up: We have been given

"every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ"

Then Ephesians 2 (click for messages) shows us the REASONS of our salvation. We

"were dead in your trespasses and sins".

We couldn't save ourselves. It was God who came to save us, to pay a debt on the cross that He did not owe.

In Ephesians 3 there is the REVELATION of our salvation (click for messages). Now according to all that we have in Jesus Christ, He has made us saints; He has chosen us; He has sealed us. All the things that He has done, according to all of that, we are to be strengthened in the inner man with power by the Spirit of God.

The greatest weapon we have in the spiritual war that we are cast into the moment we are saved is not what we say to the devil. It is how we live the Christ-life before him. My obedience, my surrender, my submission is my greatest weapon in defeating the one who is the prince of darkness that lives around me.

We have seen this strengthening in the inner man, this brand new garment, all of this. Now Paul says:

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might"

We live in a world that is hostile. I do not need to worry about what I have to say to the devil. But when I bow and I say "yes" to Jesus and commit to doing what His Word has to say, at that very moment, I become a fortress against him. That is my weapon in the warfare I am forced into when I become a Christian. My weapon is my submission to the Lord Jesus Christ...

We must daily understand the flow of Ephesians: Be filled with the Spirit, be strengthened in the inner man by the Spirit of God. That is our classic weapon against the evil one.

John Eadie writes that finally has the sense of "*henceforward*."...It is as if he said, What remains for me to tell you but this?...The apostle now represents the church as engaged in an active warfare with the powers and principles of evil. Olshausen suggests that his residence in the Praetorian at Rome, where the equipment and discipline of soldiers were a daily spectacle, may have originated the allegory. Similar allusions are found in Is 11:5, 59:17; Ps 18,144; 2Cor. 10:4; 1Thess. 5:8. The primary charge to the spiritual militia is (be strong) ([Ephesians 6 Commentary](#))

Wiersbe - It comes as a shock to the new believer that the Christian life is a battleground and not a playground. In my pastoral ministry, I could always tell when a new Christian was starting to mature, because he found himself fighting battles. This was a good sign because, as Spurgeon used to say, "Satan never kicks a dead horse!" ([The Strategy of Satan](#))

In the Lord - In the sphere (locative of sphere) of the Lord is strength and in union with Him. It speaks of the active efficacy of the might that is inherent in Christ. It is the same as abiding in the Vine, as being filled with His Spirit, as living in the reality of Christ Who is our life (Col 3:4+). Believers can only walk as more than conquerors (Ro 8:37) and can only fight as victorious ones in the glorious truths in Ephesians describing every spiritual blessing by doing so supernaturally, continually abiding (Jn 15:5, 1Jn 2:6), continually being strengthened by the Spirit (Eph 3:16) with God's surpassing resurrection power (Eph 1:18-19). This emphasizes the importance of studying, preaching and teaching on Ephesians 6:10-18 in the context of who the believer is in Christ, truths that are revealed in the first 3 chapters ("the wealth" that enables the "walk" and the "warfare"). To study Ephesians 6:10-18 in the absence of the truths in the preceding chapters is apt to leave the student frustrated and even somewhat confused, for Paul is giving a number of warfare commands but they are based upon the foundation he has established in the preceding passages. Remember that the "practical section" begins with a call to walk worthy (Eph 4:1), to walk in love (Eph 5:1), to walk in the light (Eph 5:8), to walk in the Spirit (Eph 5:16, 18, Gal 5:16), all intimately connected with our waging of spiritual warfare.

Self-sufficiency
in spiritual struggles
is spiritual suicide

MacDonald has a good word for all believers writing that "Every true child of God soon learns that the Christian life is a warfare. The hosts of Satan are committed to hinder and obstruct the work of Christ and to knock the individual soldier out of combat. **The more effective a believer is for the Lord, the more he will experience the savage attacks of the enemy: the devil does not waste his ammunition on nominal Christians.** (THOUGHT - IF YOU ARE NOT EXPERIENCING SPIRITUAL WARFARE THEN THERE ARE 2 POSSIBILITIES - EITHER YOU ARE NOT EFFECTIVE IN YOUR WALK OR YOU ARE NOT A TRUE BELIEVER). In our own strength we are no match for the devil (ED: ONLY THE ONE IN US IS HIS MATCH - 1Jn 4:4). So the first preparatory command is that we should be **continually strengthened in the Lord** and in the boundless resources of His might. God's best soldiers are those who are conscious of their own weakness (2Co 12:9-10) and ineffectiveness, and who rely solely on Him. "God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty" (1Cor. 1:27b). Our weakness commends itself to the

power of His might. ([Believer's Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson](#))

C H Spurgeon has some interesting words regarding the reality and necessity of spiritual warfare writing that...

There are no fair-weather soldiers in God's army. All must endure difficulty (2Ti 2:3-4). Our courage must be tried and proven. God's ships never go to sea without being tested (Jas 1:2-7), and only when their seaworthiness is proven do they go on longer voyages. Unless you have been through a great trial (Acts 14:22), you cannot help those who are in great difficulty.

If we were placed in a glass case, we would not grow. If we were never injured, there would be no forgiving grace. Without suffering, we would not have patience. We grow in grace only when the stormy winds of trials blow. It is through harsh experiences that believers grow "strong in the Lord and in the power of His might" (Eph 6:10). Christian, when Satan tests and tries you, hold the world loose but firmly grip the invisible things of God (2Co 4:18, 2Co 5:7).

It is possible that God might use you to scatter His seed with a hand that was never wounded, but He will not use you to minister to the brokenhearted until trials have made you tender and sensitive. Your present, painful experience is a necessary preparation for something that will give you tenfold joy. If we are not tested, we cannot be victorious. The rule of the kingdom is: no battle, no crowns; no conflict, no conquest. (from Spurgeon, [Beside Still Waters](#))

There's victory for you over sin and its shame:
Look only to Jesus, there's power in His name.
The devil can't harm you nor cause you to sin;
By trusting the Savior the victory you'll win.
--Anon.

Satan's ploys are no match for the Savior's power.

Ray Stedman has an interesting analogy that applies to believers who are ignorant or apathetic regarding their sure warfare and God's sufficient provisions...

I once heard of a mental hospital that had devised an unusual test to determine when patients were ready to go back into the world. They brought candidates for release into a room where a tap was turned on, sending water pouring out over the floor. Next they handed the patient a mop and told him to mop up the water. If the patient had a firm enough grasp of reality to turn off the tap before mopping up the water, he was ready to go out into society. But if he started mopping up the water without turning off the tap, they knew that more treatment was needed.

While you and I would never miss such an obvious step as shutting off the tap before mopping the floor, the fact is that many Christians live their lives in a way that is from a spiritual point of view equally absurd. Each of us as Christians have been given the mop of God's truth and we have been told to use it to help mop up the evil in the world around us. But we can only be useful in mopping up the evil around us if we first have enough sense to shut off the flow of evil that pours into our own hearts from the world rulers of this present darkness...

It is a battle in which we are all engaged every moment of our lives because "the world," the outer arena of battle, is always around us while "the flesh," the inner arena of battle, is always within us. We cannot escape "the world," nor can we run away from "the flesh." We must always begin our battle right at the point where we are.

John F. Kennedy, the 35th president of the United States, was a commissioned naval officer during World War II. In August 1943, the patrol torpedo boat he commanded, PT 109, was rammed and sunk by an enemy destroyer near the Japanese-held Solomon Islands. Kennedy and a fellow officer swam from one enemy-occupied island to the next until they found some friendly islanders who helped them get a message to U.S. forces. Years later, Kennedy was regarded as a war hero. His response: "It was involuntary. They sank my boat."

So it is with us. We don't have to volunteer to find ourselves in the middle of a war. It's involuntary. The war has already come to us. It is raging all around us, through the channel of "the world." And it is raging within us, through the channel of "the flesh."

You might be thinking, "That doesn't seem right at all! I thought that when you became a Christian, Jesus would set you free from the kingdom of Satan so that the devil could no longer touch you! I thought that

conversion would take you out of the battle, not thrust you deeper into the conflict!" If that is your concept of the Christian life, you couldn't be more wrong! When you become a Christian, that's when the battle really begins! ([Ray Stedman. Spiritual Warfare](#) - Chapter 4 - [The Tactics of Terror](#) highly recommended!)

Be strong (1743)(**endunamoo** from **en** = in + **dunamoo** = strengthen in turn from **dunamis** = to be able or to have power --click study of **dunamis**) is best explained if one first understands the root word **dunamis** which refers to inherent strength residing in a thing by virtue of its nature. The best spiritual example this inherent power is the "gospel" ("*the gospel...is the power [dunamis] of God for salvation to everyone who believes*" Ro 1:16+) which has the inherent, omnipotent power of God that brings about the salvation of a lost sinner who receives this truth. **Dunamis** therefore describes power that overcomes resistance or effects a change. **Dunamis** is used in the NT to speak of miracles or supernatural acts which have in them the inherent power of God or in which one sees His supernatural power exerted in their performance.

Endunamoo means "to put power in" (like a car needs gas for power) and so to make strong, vigorous, to strengthen (active voice), or to be strengthened (passive voice), be enabled or be empowered inwardly. This word is found only in biblical and ecclesiastical Greek. The idea is to cause one to be able to function or do something. It can refer to physical strengthening as in (Heb 11:34+) but is more often used with the figurative sense referring to spiritual or moral strengthening as in the case of Abraham who

"with respect to the (humanly speaking impossible) promise of God (of the birth of Isaac in his old age by Sarah), he did not waver (was not divided, did not vacillate between two opinions - belief and unbelief - implies a mental struggle) in unbelief, but grew strong (**endunamoo** - was endued with strength or empowered) in faith (Godly faith is not full understanding but full trust), giving glory to God (Ro 4:20+) (Comment: Isaac was the result of a biological miracle performed by God in answer to Abraham's faith.)

Paul like a commanding general who is overseeing his troops in the heat of battle, issues his first command **to be strong**, a **present imperative** which is to be carried out by the Christian soldier continually. To disobey a general's command in a crucial battle can be disastrous, and it is no less serious in the believer's continual warfare against his or her unseen foe.

Although clearly believers are to be continually strong, there is some difference of opinion as to how this occurs and this distinction hinges on how one interprets the voice of the verb, either **passive** or **middle**. In a sense it is not that significant which voice one favors, because all would agree that the source of the strength is the same, the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Thomas Constable emphasizes this point writing that "**Be strong** is a passive or middle imperative in the Greek text. It probably meant both "*allow the Lord to strengthen you*" (passive) and "*strengthen yourself in the Lord*" (middle) ([Ephesians Expository Notes](#)) (Bolding and italics added)

John MacArthur writes about the decisive choice "The Christian life is a question of availability and appropriation. Know three things: First, it's a war; second, the power to win is available; and third, you have to appropriate that power. You can choose to be impotent and fruitless, even though residing in you is the power to do beyond what you can even ask or think (Eph. 3:20). You could be lethargic, indifferent, and cold, drifting in and out of church, and still be in heaven for all eternity by the immeasurable grace of God. But if you choose to live that way, you will forfeit the blessing God has for you in this life. And you will fail to glorify God to the extent that you should. You can turn your back on all the available power, blunt the energy of the Spirit of God, and say no to the incomprehensible work that God wants to do through you if you so choose. ([MacArthur, J.. The Believer's Armor. Chicago: Moody Press 1986](#))

On the occasion of the **Amalekites** raiding and burning Ziklag and taking the woman captive we read an OT parallel of being strong in the Lord in order to fight the good fight...

Moreover David was greatly distressed because the people spoke of stoning him, for all the people were embittered, each one because of his sons and his daughters. But David strengthened [aorist passive in the LXX] himself in the LORD his God. (1Samuel 30:6) (Comment: The verb for strengthened in 1Samuel 30:6 is **krateo** - to become strong, but the principle is the same as the NT believer's need to be continually strong to fend off the "Amalekites" that seek to raid the camp of our heart and mind and soul and spirit! Related resource on fighting the Amalekites - Jehovah Nissi The LORD Our Banner and Jehovah Nissi: Exposition of Exodus 17:8-16 see also commentary on Exodus 17)

The idea of the **passive voice** brings to mind the picture of believers who as vessels (of honor - 2Ti 2:21+) make themselves available to and are strengthened by this outside force. In Ephesians we have learned that this Source is the Holy Spirit Who strengthens us in our inner man as we learn to yield our will to His, and allow Him to strengthen us. Are you resisting or hindering the Spirit (e.g., not necessarily overt willful sin which clearly "hinder" His working in unclean vessels but even in subtle ways like self-confidence, self-assurance, etc, all of which are simply manifestations of pride - to which God is opposed and which cuts off the flow of grace! - see 1 Peter 5:5+)? **You cannot empower yourself for this spiritual struggle. You must be willing to surrender to**

the Spirit and allow yourself to be strengthened. Be continuously empowered in union with the Spirit of Christ. He is the source of spiritual power. Spiritual battles are not natural and require supernatural spiritual strength. This dynamic process is synonymous with being continually filled with or controlled by the Spirit (cf Eph 5:18+) and continually walking in the Spirit (Gal 5:16+) so that we will not fulfill the desires of the flesh. The result is supernatural strength for a supernatural life. As Paul testified in Galatians

"is no longer I who live, but (Who) Christ lives in me and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, Who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me." (Gal 2:20+)

As someone has said, you plus God equals a majority. No giant can withstand you when you are led and empowered by God's Spirit.

The fact that we cast everything upon God does not give the soldier the right to sit back and to do nothing. Cromwell's advice to his troops was...

"Trust in God, and keep your powder dry."

In Philippians **Paul** explained how he had come to learn about his source of strength explaining...

Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. 12 I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.13 I can do all things through Him Who (continually = present tense) strengthens (endunamoo) me. (See notes Philippians 4:11; 4:12; 4:13)

David Guzik emphasizes that "The detailed teaching of spiritual warfare in this passage presents two essential components. First, you must be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Then, you must put on the whole armor of God. The two are essential, and much teaching on Christian combat neglects the first. If you take a weak man who can barely stand, and put the best armor on him he will still be an ineffective soldier. He will be easily beaten. So equipping for Christian combat must begin with be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Before a soldier is given a gun or shown how to fire a missile, he goes through basic training. One great purpose for basic training is the build up the recruit's physical strength. It is as if the army says, "Soldier, we are going to give you the best weapons and armor possible. But first we have to make sure that you are strong, and that you can use what we give you." (Comment: And what is "Basic Training" in Christianity? Is it not making disciples, equipping them and growing them up in Christ likeness - Mt 28:19+, cf notes Ephesians 4:11; 4:12; 4:13; 4:14; 4:15)

John Eadie writes that "This command (Ed: to continually allow yourself to be strengthened) is one of primary necessity. No matter what armour is provided, how finely tempered, how highly polished, or how closely fitted it may be, if there be no strength in the heart—if the man have merely the dress of a soldier, with the spirit of a poltroon. And the valour is spiritual, as is the armour; for physical courage and intellectual prowess are often, alas! allied to spiritual cowardice. Moreover, soldiers have an invincible courage when they have confidence in the skill and bravery of their leader; and the power of His might, in which they are strong, has proved its vigour in routing the same foes which they are summoned to encounter. As the Captain of salvation, "He spoiled principalities and powers, and triumphed over them." The order to the spiritual host is now given, as if with the stirring peal of a trumpet "Put on the panoply of God" (John Eadie, D., LL.D. The Epistle of St Paul to the Ephesians)

In Second Timothy, **Paul** like a military general who is turning over the command to his younger officer, he instructs Timothy...

You therefore, my son, **be strong** (present imperative) in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. (See note 2 Timothy 2:1)

See Related Resource - A Good Christian Soldier

So just as he commanded Timothy, Paul is commanding the Ephesians believers to let the Lord constantly fill them with His strength.

Endunamoo is used in the Septuagint (LXX) in Judges to describe Gideon...

Judges 6:34+ So the Spirit of the LORD came upon (Lxx has **endunamoo** here = more literally strengthened = aorist active) Gideon; and he blew a trumpet, and the Abiezrites were called together to follow him.

Comment: Here the strengthening was related to the Spirit's coming upon Gideon. Believers have the advantage of the continually indwelling of the Spirit.

Luke uses **endunamoo** in describing Paul's conversion writing that

"Saul kept **increasing in strength** (endunamoo - passive voice = was being empowered - progressive increase in strength as Jewish opposition grew) and confounding (this word in English implies temporary mental paralysis caused by astonishment or profound abasement) the Jews who lived at Damascus by proving

("knitting together" - continually putting together in his mind the OT clues and concluding Jesus was the Messiah) that this Jesus is the Christ." (Acts 9:22+)

In his first letter to Timothy **Paul** (probably alluding to his empowerment in Acts) thanked

"Christ Jesus our Lord, Who" had "strengthened (endunamoo)" him, because He considered (him) faithful, putting (him) into service." (1Ti 1:12)

In his last words to Timothy, **Paul** illustrated his personal example of being strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus writing that in the face of everyone deserting him (as might happen to Timothy or any disciple who retains the standard of sound words),

"the Lord stood with me (fulfilling His promise never to "leave or forsake" His children) and strengthened (endunamoo) me, in order that through me the proclamation might be fully accomplished, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was delivered out of the lion's mouth." (see note 2 Timothy 4:17)

John Eadie adds that...

the strength of the charge is—Do not enter into battle with such adversaries naked and defenceless, but take to you armour. Do not cover one portion and leave another exposed; do not assume the cuirass and neglect the helmet; but put on "the whole armour." Do not resort to any arsenal of your own, for its armour is weak and useless; but put on the whole armour of God. "*And furthermore, we must neuer leaue these armours as long as we be in thys worlde, for we shall always haue batayle.*" Taverner's Postils, p. 495; ed. Oxford, 1841. The genitive, Theou', is that of origination: God provides the armour...Each of its pieces—its girdle, breastplate, boots, shield, helmet, and sword—is furnished by Him. It is armour forged on no earthly anvil, and tempered by no human skill. ([Ephesians 6 Commentary](#))

Wiersbe - As we study the various parts of the Christian's spiritual armor, we should keep in mind that each part reveals two things:

(1) an area of need in our lives, and

(2) a strategy Satan uses in attacking that area.

Paul wrote these words to Christians in a local church, not to members of a Satanist society. The devil and his angels work within the church as they seek to influence the lives of believers. Even the Apostle Peter was influenced by Satan and didn't realize it (Matt. 16:21–23; and note 2 Cor. 11:1–4).

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- [Ephesians 6:10: Spiritual Warfare, Pt 1](#)
- [Ephesians 6:11: Spiritual Warfare, Pt 2](#)
- [Ephesians 6:14: Spiritual Warfare, Pt 3](#)
- [Ephesians 6:15,16 Spiritual Warfare, Pt 4](#)
- [Ephesians 6:17: Spiritual Warfare, Pt 5](#)
- [Ephesians 6:12,13 Spiritual Warfare, Pt 6](#)
- [Ephesians 6:18: Spiritual Warfare, Pt 7](#)

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- [James 1:14](#)
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THE AMALEKITES: A PICTURE OF PERSISTENT SPIRITUAL WARFARE

- [Jehovah Nissi: Exposition of Exodus 17:8-16](#)

AND IN THE STRENGTH OF HIS MIGHT : kai en to kratei tes ischuos autou:

- [Ephesians 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Ephesians 6:10: Spiritual Warfare - 1](#) - Wayne Barber
- [Ephesians 6:10-11 Standing Strong, Standing Firm](#) - Steven Cole
- [Ephesians 6:10 Satan's Attack on the Spirit-Filled Church](#) - John MacArthur
- [Ephesians 6:10-13 The Believer's Warfare, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur

■ [Ephesians 6:10-13 The Believer's Warfare, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur

High King of Heaven, my victory won,
May I reach Heaven's joys, O bright Heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all. ([play](#))

In the strength of His might - This shows how to get this strength and it does not happen by simply knowing these truths or memorizing them.

Guzik puts it this way...

It is not an incantation or a spell. You can't just walk around saying, "*be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might*" over and over and it will happen. Christianity isn't one of those self-help formulas where you go around saying, "Every day, and in every way, I am getting better and better." Those kind of mental games can accomplish something, but it certainly wasn't what Paul meant here. ([Ephesians 6](#))

Paul used the identical phrase in chapter 1 praying that the saints would come to know...

and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might 20 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. (See notes Ephesians 1:19; 1:20; 1:21)

In Ephesians 1 this phrase strength of His might relates to the surpassing greatness of His power and the power that God used to raise Christ from the dead. It follows that Paul is commanding the saints to be empowered with resurrection power that conquered death and sin and Satan, so that they might be enabled to stand firm. The victory over the enemy is certain because of Calvary, but as His soldiers we have to daily win the battle against our relentless foe the Devil (the world system he controls and the residual fallen flesh still in our mortal bodies and at which he can aim fiery missiles).

Every believer now has the resources within to deal with Satan, no matter what onslaughts the devil may bring. But there however two conditions that must be met -- (1) The believer's strength must be in the Lord and not in himself and (2) he must utilize the armor—the provision God has made for him. Remember that God would not command us to stand firm in (Ephesians 6:14) had He not provided us with the resources that ensure victory in each and every battle. By faith in God's Word (the fruit of which is obedience), believers can daily walk in the victory of the Cross as more than conquerors...

For whatever is born (perfect tense) of God overcomes (present tense) the world (all of which lies in the power of Satan); and this is the victory that has overcome the world-- our faith. (1John 5:4)

You are from God, little children, and have overcome (perfect tense - this tense speaks of the permanent overcoming effect! PTL!) them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. (1John 4:4)

(**Context:** Ammon and Moab were threatening to invade Judah and in 2Chr 20:12 King Jehoshaphat acknowledged his inability to defeat these mortal enemies -- "*O our God, wilt Thou not judge them? For we are powerless before this great multitude who are coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are on Thee.*" It was in this background of expressing dependence on God, that He sent His Spirit on the prophet Jahaziel who prophesied) "Listen, all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat: thus says the LORD to you, 'Do not fear or be dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours but God's...17 'You need not fight in this battle; station yourselves, stand and see the salvation of the LORD on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem.' Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out to face them, for the LORD is with you." (**2Chr 20:15, 17**)

(**Comment:** Note this is not just "Let go and let God". It is true in one sense that Judah did not have to fight, they did have to believe what God had promised and they did have to obey His instructions to stand. This is the same "pattern" Paul outlines in Ephesians 6:10-18 - [1] Recognize that in spiritual warfare with invisible forces you are totally inadequate and doomed to defeat if you trust in self. [2] Believe that in Christ you have all the strength you need and He will win the battle. [3] In obedience to your Commander in chief, take your stand against the invisible forces of Satan and his emissaries. There will never be a time when you cannot overcome Satan, but you must depend on Christ. In fact, as illustrated in the OT passage above, God's resources are most available to us when we are weakest! In 2Cor 12:9-10 Paul was afflicted with a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him and keep him from self-exaltation. After entreating God 3 times to remove

the thorn, His Lord spoke and said "*My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.*" [To which Paul responded] *Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me.*¹⁰ *Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.*" This principle is vitally important in spiritual warfare - When you acknowledge to God that you cannot handle a situation and you place your trust in Him and depend on Him, Christ in you will win the battle for you.)

In the midst of the battle, it is always good to praise God for His all sufficient provisions in and through His Son and the indwelling Spirit of Christ. You might pray something like the following psalm...

For the LORD takes pleasure in His people; He will beautify the afflicted ones with salvation. 5 Let the godly ones exult in glory; Let them sing for joy on their beds. 6 Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand. (Ps 149:4-6). (See Spurgeon's comment on [Verse 6](#))

Throughout the book of Ephesians we are told that we are "in Christ." We are in covenant (new covenant) with Him, at one with Him—His life is our life, His power is our power, and His truth is our truth. In Christ we are strong. No matter how strong our enemy is, Christ's strength is superior.

Alert soldiers regularly check their weapons and other gear. Sometimes they find damage inflicted during battle. Even daily wear and tear can weaken equipment, rendering it useless in conflict. Have you checked your armor lately?

Strength ([2904](#)) (**kratos**) (Click word study on kratos) refers to manifested power or power that is put forth in action. Kratos represents the exercise of might (ischus). When the muscular man uses his might to bend an iron bar, he uses his power (kratos). Kratos means that the reserve of strength is actually in operation. It is power to overcome resistance or whatever stands in the way.

Kratos refers to the inherent strength which displays itself in the rule over others. Thus it is strength or might, the power to rule or control or exert dominion (power to rule, supreme authority, sovereignty, the right to govern or rule or determine).

Guzik explains that...

God has vast reservoirs of might that can be realized as power (strength) in our Christian life. But His might does not work in me as I sit passively. His might works in me as I rely on it, and step out to do the work. I can rely on it and do no work. I can do work without relying on it. But both of these fall short. I must rely on His might and then do the work. ([Ephesians 6](#))

Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus going on before.
Christ, the royal Master, leads against the foe;
Forward into battle see His banners go! ([Play](#))

Might ([2479](#)) (**ischus**) refers to "power as an endowment." Ischus is the inherent ability which stresses the factuality of the ability, not necessarily the accomplishment. Ischus is inherent power or force. A muscular man's big muscles display his might, even if he doesn't use them. It is the reserve of strength. Ischus therefore conveys the sense of endowed power or ability. The idea is that it is the active efficacy of the might that is inherent in God, His indwelling strength. Ischus is that strength which one has in possession or ability. One might think of ischus as God's latent power. It is His capability to function effectively. He is able!

Ischus is used

of the ability of human beings in Mark...

AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.'
(Mark 12:30)

of angelic power in 2 Peter...

whereas angels who are greater in might and power do not bring a reviling judgment against them before the Lord. (See note 2 Peter 2:11)

as an attribute of Christ in the Revelation...

saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing." (See note [Revelation 5:12](#)) -

Vincent explains that...

The radical idea of ischus, might, is that of indwelling strength, especially as embodied: might which inheres in physical powers organized and working under individual direction, as an army: which appears in the resistance of physical organisms, as the earth, against which one dashes himself in vain: which dwells in persons or things, and gives them influence or value: which resides in laws or punishments to make them irresistible

Kratos is exercised strength whereas ischus refers to great inherent strength. Nevertheless, the distinction is somewhat difficult to appreciate and convey in the form of a simple definition.

Constable strings these words together writing that...

Power (Gr. dunamis) refers to a spiritually dynamic living force. "Working," "strength," and "might" or "mighty" further describe this power. These three words describe it as energetic, inherent in God, and able to overcome resistance respectively. This is the power of God that is available to believers.

In Eph 1:19-note ischus describes the strength of God has bestowed upon believers. What does this "working of the strength (ischus) of His might (kratos)" look like? Paul presents a fourfold demonstration of this very power which God makes available to believers - (1) God "raised Him from the dead" (Eph 1:20-note), (2) "seated Him at His right hand in the heavenlies" (Eph 1:20-note), (3) "subjected all things under His feet" (Eph 1:22-note), and (4) "gave Him as head over the church" (Eph 1:22-note). In summary, because we are in Christ and He is in us, believers possess resurrection (and ascension) power. To live in this power was ever Paul's desire as he expressed so powerfully in Philippians writing...

that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death (Php 3:10-note)

Victory in Jesus

Eliza Hewitt

Soldiers of King Jesus, raise the shout again,
Victory in Jesus, victory!
Marching to the music of the glad refrain,
Victory in Jesus evermore.

Refrain

*Victory, victory, victory in Jesus!
Sing His overcoming blood, sing the grace that frees us;
Ring it out more boldly, song of faith and cheer,
Till the whole wide world shall hear.*

O'er the pow'rs of darkness, o'er the hosts of sin,
Victory in Jesus, victory!
Trusting, watching, praying, we shall surely win,
Victory in Jesus evermore.

Send the happy watchword all along the line,
Victory in Jesus, victory!
Let all error perish, lives the truth divine,
Victory in Jesus evermore.

Ray Stedman writes that...

the devil can never totally defeat a Christian. Those who are genuinely the Lord's, who have come into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ, have been delivered from total defeat. The devil can never get us back into the position of unconscious control he once exercised over us, as he does over the rest of the world. But the devil can demoralize the Christian. He can frighten us and make us miserable. He can blunt our effectiveness and make us feel weak and unfruitful for God. Even though we are ultimately victorious through Christ, it is at times possible to be more miserable as a Christian than you ever were before. The devil has a special reason for wanting to make Christians feel defeated because a demoralized Christian is a Christian whose effectiveness has been diminished. the presence of every Christian in the world bothers the devil greatly. Why? Because each Christian is a potential threat to the solidarity of the devil's kingdom, to his rule over the rest of mankind and that is why the devil focuses special attention on us and seeks to hinder and discourage us.

When a Christian lives in obedience to the will of God, he threatens Satan's rule on earth. Every effective Christian is a potential door of escape, helping worldlings to move out of the devil's realm of darkness and into God's realm of eternal light. Every Christian who lives a life that is yielded to God and resistant to the schemes of the devil is a corridor of liberty, a center of light, dispelling one more patch of darkness and ignorance from the world around him.

The devil cannot allow people to escape from his dominion, so he is especially vicious and persistent in his attacks upon Christians. He marshals all his forces against us in order to discourage and dishearten us, so that we will not be effective and useful to God. Sometimes the devil attacks us as "a roaring lion," clawing at us through catastrophic circumstances in order to knock us off our feet and keep us from standing for God. At other times he comes as "an angel of light," a seductive and alluring temptation, offering us some attractive lure that seems so right yet which has a deadly, poisonous trap hidden within.

To be sure, Satan will assume direct control of a human life whenever he can, producing an Adolf Hitler or a Charles Manson demonic men, motivated by strange and unexplainable passions. Sometimes the devil assails us through "the world" with its intimidating pressure to conform, to not be different, to go with the flow lest we be ostracized and thought of as "fanatics" or "religious extremists."

But most often the devil comes in disguise, through the channel of "the flesh" our inner selves with silken, subtle, suggestive schemes. That is the avenue of satanic attack the apostle Paul warns us most strenuously about: the subtle schemes of the devil. ([Ray Stedman. Spiritual Warfare](#) - Available online and highly recommended!)

Sammy Tippit writes that...

We are in a battle for the souls of mankind. We war against Satan and all of the forces of evil in the universe. Satan has established his kingdom in the hearts of men and women. That kingdom must be destroyed and Christ's kingdom established, no small task for the church. But it can be accomplished.

One weapon God has placed within the church that can tear down the strongholds of Satan was used mightily in both the Old and New Testaments and throughout the history of the church. It's the life that is totally yielded to God. That person holds nothing dear to himself except Jesus and His glory. That life will contradict the culture of the day. (**Fire in Your Heart by Sammy Tippit** - Highly Recommended if you are in need of personal spiritual revival to fight the spiritual battles)

[Fight the Good Fight with All Thy Might](#)

By John Monsell

Fight the good fight with all thy might!
Christ is thy strength, and Christ thy right;
Lay hold on life, and it shall be
Thy joy and crown eternally.

Run the straight race thro' God's good grace,
Lift up thine eyes, and seek His face;
Life with its way before us lies,
Christ is the path, and Christ the prize.

Cast care aside, lean on thy Guide,
His boundless mercy will provide;
Trust, and thy trusting soul shall prove
Christ is its life, and Christ its love.

Faint not nor fear, His arms are near,
He changeth not, and thou art dear;
Only believe, and thou shalt see
That Christ is all in all to thee.

><> ><> ><>

Our nation has known many wars, but Vietnam was an especially frustrating campaign. Thick jungle terrain made the enemy hard to find, and guerrilla warfare made him hard to fight. Many Vietnamese who peacefully worked the rice paddies by day donned the black garb of the Viet Cong soldier by night and invaded

unsuspecting U.S. forces camped nearby. American public opinion was strongly anti-war, and morale among our troops was often low. Spiritual warfare has similar parallels.

><> ><> ><>

When the Communists overran China, missionary Isabel Kuhn escaped on foot with her young son across the dangerous, snow-covered Pienma Pass. Arriving in Upper Burma, she was stranded “at the world’s end” without money, unable to speak the language, and half a world away from home. In her perplexity, she made a decision. “The first thing is to cast out fear,” she said. “The only fear a Christian should entertain is the fear of sin. All other fears are from Satan sent to confuse and weaken us.” Isabel knelt and spread her heart before Him. “I refused to be afraid and asked Him to cast such fears out of my heart.” She then sought “light for the next step,” and God led her home. (Morgan, R. J. Nelson’s annual preacher’s sourcebook: 2003. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers)

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Spiritual Warfare defined - Constant struggle between the flesh and the spirit, between good and evil, between hope and despair, between faith and unbelief, and between carnality and spirituality in a believer. Spiritual warfare is waged on three fronts: personal, corporate, and cosmic. In all three cases the war is waged against unseen enemies, principalities and powers, and evil in high places. (Kurian, G. T. Nelson’s New Christian dictionary. Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson Pubs)

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The story is told of a chess champion who was on vacation in Europe. One day, while visiting an art gallery, he came to a particular painting that mesmerized him.

The painting was of a chess game, which deeply interested this chess champion. But this painting depicted a chess game like no other this man had ever seen. On one side of the chessboard was the devil, laughing, full of gaiety and even frivolity. He had his hand on the board getting ready to make a move.

On the other side of the chessboard was a young man who was shaking and trembling all over. His knees were knocking, sweat was coming down his forehead, tears were coming from his eyes, and he was biting his fingernails.

The chess champion came to understand the meaning of the portrait when he saw the title: “Checkmate.” The devil was about to make the final move to win this young man’s soul. The devil was laughing, while the young man was terrified because he knew he couldn’t do anything about it.

The chess champion was so taken by this portrait that he studied it for several hours. Then he broke out into a smile and went to look for the proprietor of the art gallery. “Sir, would you happen to have a chessboard here?”

The staff scurried around and found an old chessboard. The champion put the chessboard at the base of the painting and set it up to duplicate exactly the arrangement of the chess pieces on the board in the portrait.

After he had done this, the man looked at the portrait, then looked down at the chessboard. He did this several times, looking back and forth between the painting and the board. Then he turned the chessboard to the young man’s side of the painting and said, “Young man, I wish you could hear me right now, because if you could, you could stop trembling and wipe the tears from your eyes. I have good news for you.

“I’m a chess champion, and I know this game backward and forward. You are trembling for no reason at all. It only looks like the devil has the final move. He has tricked you, but there is still one more move left on the board. Your life can be transformed. The devil doesn’t get to make the last move.”

The human race is in the same position as the young man in the painting. It looks like the devil has won the chess game of history, and people are trembling in fear. (Evans, A. T. The battle is the Lord’s: Waging victorious spiritual warfare. Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press)

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One of every 400,000 babies is born each year with Severe Combined Immunodeficiency Disease a disease that leaves the child with no body-chemistry defenses to fight infection from the germs that constantly attack one’s body. For such children, life is often short and always filled with danger. In a similar manner, the Christian who is not protected by the armor of God is defenseless against the attacks of the flesh, the world, and Satan. Sin, like an infection, can eat its way into his life because he has no defense against it.

In regard to spiritual warfare you might enjoy the following illustration of MORE THAN CONQUERORS THROUGH HIM WHO LOVED US (Ro 8:37) that **Ray Stedman** gave years ago...

Just this week, I finished reading an amazing book written by Ernest Gordon, the dean of the Chapel at Princeton University. He tells of his own experience as a British officer in the Japanese prison camp by the River Kwai in Thailand. This camp was made famous by the movie, The Bridge over the River Kwai.

He was one of the prisoners that built that bridge, and he tells about that camp, and about their indescribable starvation diet which made them nothing but walking skeletons, yet they were driven out each day to do heavy labor on the bridge. Thousands of them died as cholera, and other diseases, swept through the camp. The morale of the camp plummeted to the bottom -- there was nothing left. It was a hopeless, hideous situation in which men lived in filth and squalor, and walked about as the living dead. He tells how he himself descended, through disease and weakness, to a place where his body was taken and laid away in the death house, among all the corpses. Though he was still alive, he was laid there to die.

In that camp, there were one or two people who, though they were not what we would call Evangelical Christians, nevertheless, entertained a deep faith in God. One or two men began quietly, in the midst of the darkest hour of the camp, to exercise a little faith and a little love, and to do things for one another. Gradually this spirit spread, and soon others became involved. They organized a massage team to go around and massage one another's legs to try to restore health to these members that had ceased working. Gradually this spirit transformed the camp, and faith and joy and hope sprang into being again. They organized an orchestra, made their own instruments, and finally had a 40-piece orchestra. They organized a church. They began Bible study classes, and a man who had been a skeptic all his life was the teacher. As he taught the Bible, he began to see something of the reality of these things.

The story goes on to tell how this whole camp was transformed, and though the outward circumstances were unchanged, the Japanese were as hostile and as cruel as ever, the work was as heavy and the disease was rampant, yet the spirit of those men was literally transformed and they became joyous, happy, victorious individuals -- many of them. The whole camp became entirely different.

He told how, when at last they returned to civilization, they looked forward to coming home -- to a place where they would experience again the joys of life. But, when they got home, they discovered that civilization is an illusion -- that the realities of life were discovered back in the prison camp. It was when they were down in the darkest, and the deepest, and the lowest depths of their lives that they began to lay hold of the eternal verities that strengthen a man's soul. They became, by faith, "more than conquerors."

The following illustrations are from Our Daily Bread ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

On Alert - In an article for Youth Ministries magazine, a 14-year veteran of the Navy SEALs describes the color-code system they use to indicate levels of combat readiness. Each stage has a parallel in spiritual warfare.

Condition White: The soldier is relaxed and daydreaming, unaware of his surroundings. A Christian in this condition is easy prey for Satan.

Condition Yellow: The soldier is relaxed physically but alert mentally. A believer at this level may sense trouble coming, but he's not ready to confront it.

Condition Orange: The soldier is physically prepared, mentally alert, and ready to fight. A believer at this stage has on the full armor of God.

Condition Red: As in condition orange, the soldier is ready to fight. The difference is experience. A battle-seasoned Christian knows quickly what to do because of his experience and familiarity with Scripture.

Wherever we as followers of Christ happen to be--at work, in the mall, on a business trip, even among fellow believers--we need to know about Satan's methods and be prepared to resist. He always seems to attack at our most vulnerable moments. But if we stay alert and armed, we can fend off his most powerful attacks. --D C Egner

Thinking It Over

Which color code describes your spiritual condition?

How have you responded recently to temptation?

Are you studying and obeying God's Word?

Spiritual victory comes only to those who are prepared for battle.

Shrike System - The ancient sport of falconry used trained hawks or falcons in the pursuit of wild game. When the "educated predator" was allowed to fly, however, it often rose too high for human eyes to see. So a hunter often carried a small caged bird called a shrike. By watching the antics of the little bird, the man could always tell where his hawk was, for the shrike instinctively feared the predator and cocked its head to keep it in view.

Christians desperately need an alert perception similar to that of the shrike to detect their spiritual enemy. Our adversary, Satan, "walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8). Our responsibility, according to the apostle Peter, is to be sober and vigilant. In other words, we're to be always on the alert.

It would be nice if God had giant sirens to warn us of an attack by the devil. But He doesn't operate that way. Instead, we must read the Bible regularly, meditate on its truths, maintain a prayerful attitude throughout the day, and be filled with the Holy Spirit. Only then will we be sensitive to an imminent assault by the evil one, and be armed by grace to meet it. —Mart De Haan

The devil is clever, deceiving us all,
He cunningly causes the strongest to fall;
But we his sly methods are sure to discern
By making God's warnings our daily concern.

—D. De Haan

The Battle Still Rages - The world has changed drastically since my dad stood his ground against the enemy in World War II. Back then, he and his brave comrades fought against nations that were threatening to destroy any country that dared stand in their way. Dad took a bullet in the leg and suffered the painful effects of that injury for the rest of his life.

We owe a debt of gratitude to the men and women who fought in that war. Their bravery issued from a cause they believed in—a mission they were willing to die for. They understood that if they did not go overseas, many people would lose their freedom, or even their lives, under the rule of ruthless dictators. Thankfully, the battles of those years are behind us.

A different kind of battle still rages today—a battle that we as Christ's followers must fight every day (Ephesians 6:12). Our enemy, the devil, continues to try to bring down our faith, take over our hearts, and stop the spread of the gospel. He is called "the wicked one" (6:16), and he will always be our enemy.

Are we willing to suffer for the cause? Are we brave enough to be a faithful generation of believers? Let's fight the good fight! —J Dave Branon

Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus going on before!
Christ, the royal Master, leads against the foe;
Forward into battle see His banner go!

—Baring-Gould

Christ's soldiers fight best on their knees.

Blackbeard - As a young man in the late 1600s, Edward Teach joined the crew of a British ship that was headed to the Caribbean. Much later in his nautical career, he managed to capture a merchant vessel and turn it into a 40-gun warship. Teach soon became known as Blackbeard—the most feared pirate in the hemisphere.

Blackbeard had some success as a pirate, but his "career" abruptly ended when he encountered a contingent of the British Royal Navy. In a desperate battle, he and his fellow pirates were killed, putting an end to their terrorizing exploits.

Long ago in the heavenly places, an angel fell into spiritual piracy. Lucifer was a cherub who stood in the radiant glory of God (Ezekiel 28:11-15). But his own self-love replaced love for his Creator. Desiring to be like the Most High, he led a rebellion and was cast out of heaven (Isaiah 14:12-15). Today he and his henchmen are doing whatever they can to commandeer the lives of human beings (Luke 8:12; 2 Corinthians 4:4).

Even so, we don't need to be afraid. Satan is a dangerous enemy, but Jesus sealed his ultimate fate when He rose from the dead.

And He has given us everything we need to withstand the devil's attacks (Ephesians 6:10-18). —Dennis Fisher

And though this world with devils filled
Should threaten to undo us;
We will not fear, for God has willed
His truth to triumph through us.
—Luther

He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. —1 John 4:4

Midnight Encouragement - The Midianites and their allies had invaded Israel. It was the time of the judges, and Gideon could muster only 32,000 men against an army "as numerous as locusts" (Judges 7:12). Then God cut the army down to 300 (vv.2-7). Gideon was afraid, so God sent him into the enemy camp at night. Crouching behind cover, the Israelite captain heard one soldier tell another about a dream (vv.13-14). A loaf of barley bread had tumbled into the Midianite camp, destroying one of its tents. His friend saw it as a sure sign that Gideon would win the battle.

Gideon was greatly encouraged. After worshiping God, he returned to the camp, organized his 300 men with their trumpets and lamps, and routed the superior Midianite forces (vv.15-22).

As Christ's followers we're not battling armies, but we are at war. Spiritual foes attack us (Ephesians 6:10-12). They undermine our confidence and sap our strength. We're also battling ourselves—our weaknesses, fears, doubts (Romans 7:15-25). After a while, we can get discouraged.

But our God is the great Encourager. When our resolve weakens or vision fades, by His power He will give us the strength we need (Ephesians 3:16)—even when the enemy seems more numerous than a swarm of locusts.—David C. Egner

As we meet fierce foes on the pathway of life,
Whether Satan or self or sin,
Let us look to the Lord for encouragement;
If we do, the battle we'll win!
—Fitzhugh

**To trust is to triumph,
for the battle is the Lord's.**

The Angel Of Music - In Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical The Phantom of the Opera, a young chorus girl named Christine Daae receives voice training from a mysterious musician she calls the "Angel of Music." Christine believes this is the angel her dying father had promised to send to complete her musical training.

As the plot thickens, we find that her mysterious mentor is really a demented man who wants to carry her away into a bizarre underworld beneath the opera house. What the girl thinks is a supernatural agent sent by her beloved father is really a madman who wants to possess her for his own ends. The "Angel of Music" is evil masquerading as good.

The believer in Christ also faces an evil one who masquerades. One of Satan's key strategies is to look like someone who is good. Paul told us, "Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:14). The Greek word translated as "transforms" means "to change appearance, masquerade, or disguise oneself."

In preparing us to face the evil strategies of the devil, God has provided all the equipment we need to stand our ground. Protecting ourselves with the armor of God unmasks the evil that opposes us and stabilizes our spiritual walk (Ephesians 6:10-18). —Dennis Fisher

When you're making a decision,
Evil sometimes wears a mask;
Trust the Lord for true discernment—
He'll give wisdom if you ask. —Hess

**God's armor is tailor-made for us,
but we must put it on.**

My Achilles Heel - Nobody is temptation-proof. Even mature Christians have weaknesses in their spiritual armor that make them vulnerable to a wounding attack by the enemy of their souls. Our pride can provide the very opening needed for the sharp thrust of a satanic dart. So can the love of money, a quick temper, a critical tongue, or chronic impatience.

What, after all, is temptation? It's any enticement to think, say, or do something contrary to God's holy will. It may be a weak impulse or a powerful urge. It's anything that's against what God approves or desires for us.

The ancient Greeks told a story of a warrior named Achilles. His mother had been warned that he would die of a wound, so she dipped him as an infant in the river Styx. That was supposed to make him invincible. But she held him by one heel which the protective waters didn't cover. And it was through that heel that he received his fatal wound.

Each of us must ask: What is my Achilles heel? We need to know our weaknesses, where we could easily be wounded spiritually. Then, as we rely on the Lord for His help, we will be protected from "the fiery darts of the wicked one" (Ephesians 6:16). —VCG

Leave no unguarded place,
No weakness of the soul;
Take every virtue, every grace,
And fortify the whole. —Wesley

Our greatest weakness may be our failure to ask for God's strength.

The Power Of Prayer - While crossing the Atlantic on a ship many years ago, Bible teacher and author F. B. Meyer was asked to speak to the passengers. An agnostic listened to Meyer's message about answered prayer and told a friend, "I didn't believe a word of it."

Later that same day, the agnostic went to hear Meyer speak to another group of passengers. But before he went to the meeting, he put two oranges in his pocket. On his way, he passed an elderly woman who was fast asleep in her deck chair. Her arms were outstretched and her hands were wide open, so as a joke he put the two oranges in her palms. After the meeting, he saw the woman happily eating one of the pieces of fruit.

"You seem to be enjoying that orange," he remarked with a smile. "Yes, sir," she replied, "My Father is very good to me." "What do you mean?" pressed the agnostic. She explained, "I have been seasick for days. I was asking God somehow to send me an orange. I fell asleep while I was praying. When I awoke, I found He had sent me not only one but two oranges!" The agnostic was amazed by the unexpected confirmation of Meyer's talk on answered prayer. Later, he put his trust in Christ.

Yes, God answers prayer! —Henry G. Bosch

For answered prayer we thank You, Lord,
We know You're always there
To hear us when we call on You;
We're grateful for Your care.
--JDB

God always gives us what we ask--or something better.

Standing Firm - As believers in Jesus Christ, we are engaged in spiritual warfare with unseen wicked forces. To overcome our enemy in the power of the Holy Spirit, we must remain resolute in our confidence in God and determine never to accept defeat.

A story from the Korean War illustrates this attitude. As enemy forces advanced, Baker Company was cut off from the rest of their unit. For several hours no word was heard, even though headquarters repeatedly tried to communicate with the missing troops. Finally a faint signal was received. Straining to hear, the corpsman asked, "Baker Company, do you read me?" "This is Baker Company," came the reply. "What is your situation?" asked the corpsman. "The enemy is to the east of us, the enemy is to the west of us, the enemy is to the north of us, the enemy is to the south of us." Then after a brief pause, the sergeant from Baker Company said with determination, "The enemy is not going to get away from us now!" Although surrounded and outnumbered, he was thinking of victory, not defeat.

Lord Jesus, help us to stand firm in the victory You've won for us through Your death on the cross and Your resurrection from the grave. --DJD

There's victory o'er Satan and freedom from shame;

Look only to Jesus, there's power in His name.
The devil can't harm you nor cause you to sin;
When you trust the Savior, the victory you'll win.
--Anon.

To defeat Satan, surrender to Christ.

Stay Protected - My married daughter called from her home in another state to report some "bad news." She had two cavities in her previously flawless teeth.

I asked Lisa, "Does your city fluoridate its water?" A couple of days later, she called me to say that it did not. As a result, her teeth were more vulnerable to decay than when she grew up drinking fluoridated water.

Admittedly, this was not a great tragedy. Worse things can happen, but Lisa's dental problems can point us to a vital truth in our Christian lives.

We would be wise to do all we can to prevent tooth decay, but it's even more important that we do all we can to prevent Satan from harming us spiritually (1 Peter 5:8-9). To ignore the prescribed protection that God has made available to us is to ask for trouble much worse than holes in our teeth.

In Ephesians 6, Paul said that to be protected from Satan's attacks we need to "put on the whole armor of God" (v.11). Verses 14-18 tell us we must put on the belt of "truth," "the breastplate of righteousness," the shoes of "the gospel of peace," "the shield of faith," "the helmet of salvation," and "the sword of the Spirit," along with "all prayer."

With God's armor we can stand and stay protected! —Dave Branon

And though this world, with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear, for God hath willed,
His truth to triumph through us.
—Luther

God's truth is the best protection against Satan's lies.

The Great Impostor - The arctic polar bear feeds almost entirely on seals. To enjoy such a meal, he sometimes resorts to a cunning bit of trickery. If the hole in the ice through which the seal gets his food is not too far from the edge of open water, the polar bear will take a deep breath, slip underwater, and swim to the seal's fishing hole. He will then imitate a fish by scratching lightly on the underside of the ice. When the seal hears this sound, he dives in for a quick supper, only to find himself suddenly caught in the huge, hungry embrace of his predator.

The devil entices us in a similar way. He baits us with some seemingly harmless pleasure and disguises the ugliness of sin with something that looks or sounds appealing. Then, when we've succumbed to the temptation, he catches us in his trap.

Christians have no excuse for being taken in by the deception of the enemy. We can put on the armor of God, and with the "shield of faith . . . quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one" (Eph. 6:16).

As we meditate on the truths of God's Word and rely on the Holy Spirit, we can know the difference between what is truly satisfying and what only appears to be. Don't let the great impostor fool you! --M R De Haan II

The devil is subtle, deceptive, and sly,
He cleverly tricks us to swallow his lie;
But his cunning methods we're sure to discern
By making God's warnings our daily concern.
-DJD

**Satan may look like an angel of light,
but he has the teeth of a lion.**

EVIL OR DEVIL? -Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. --2 Corinthians 11:14

Bible teacher William Evans wrote, "It is popular in some circles to day to spell the word devil with the letter "d" left off. This reduces the idea of an actual person called the devil to a mere influence called evil.

"If the devil can't mislead people that way," Evans continue, "he would have them think of him as a horrible, monstrous-looking creature with a forked tail, dressed in a fiery red suit, and with horns protruding from his head. If the devil can get folks to think of him like that, then when he comes as an 'angel of light', he will not be recognized, and so find it easier to beguile his unsuspecting victims."

When we trust Christ as Savior, we have peace with God, but at the same time we come into conflict with the devil. Our "adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8). That's why the Bible says, "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Eph 6:11).

We who know Christ can overcome the devil and the evil he creates by learning and obeying God's Word. And let's be thankful that He who is in us is greater than he who is in the world (1 John 4:4).-- Richard W. De Haan

The prince of darkness grim --
We tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure,
For lo! his doom is sure.
-Luther

**The devil may be out of fashion,
but he's not out of business.**

The Fruit Stealer -Four young men crept silently through the late-evening shadows toward the unattended farm market. One picked up a ripe watermelon and slipped to the edge of the darkness. He handed it to the second young man, who relayed it to the third. The fourth put it into the trunk of their car. In a few minutes they had taken a dozen watermelons, and they sped off.

Fruit-stealing happens more often than we realize, not only with real fruit but also with what the Bible calls spiritual fruit. The apostle Paul told believers to develop the fruit of the Spirit, which includes love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22-23). But Satan doesn't want that fruit to be on display in our lives. As soon as we begin to develop these spiritual virtues, the devil uses his wiles to "steal them away" from us by tempting us to sin.

The next thing we know, Christlike character traits are replaced by un-Christlike ones. Our fruit is gone. To protect ourselves, we need to focus on the truths of the Bible, choose to do what is right, remember our purpose as God's redeemed children, trust God, and pray always (Eph. 6:13-18).

As we do these things, we will be fruitful and not be victims of the fruit-stealer. -D C Egnor

You can trust the Savior's power
To protect from Satan's snare;
But you must be ever watchful--
Of the robber be aware!
-Hess

To bear the Spirit's fruit don't let sin take root.