

Ephesians 6:11 by Wayne Barber

PREVIOUS

NEXT

Series of 7 Messages on Spiritual Warfare	
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

Related Resource: Verse by Verse

Notes

Ephesians 6:10

Ephesians 6:11

Ephesians 6:12

Ephesians 6:13

Ephesians 6:14

Ephesians 6:15

Ephesians 6:16

Ephesians 6:17

Ephesians 6:18

Ephesians 6:11 SPIRITUAL WARFARE, PART 2

by Dr. Wayne Barber

We are going to move to Ephesians 6:11 (Click commentary)

Put on (enduo) ([2PAMM](#)) (command to do this now! Don't delay! It's urgent!) the **full armor** (word study on panoplia) of **God, so that** (term of conclusion) you will be **will be able** (word study on dunamai) ([PPN](#)) to **stand firm** ([AAN](#)) **against** the **schemes** (word study on methodoia) of the **devil** (see word study on diabolos).

We need to understand that we, as believers, live in a spiritually hostile world. The book of Ephesians tells us what a believer is.

Look at Ephesians 1:13 (see notes). Paul says,

"In Him [Christ], you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation."

They had heard the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Word containing the gospel. Someone's testimony does not save us. It is the Word of God that is the seed that must fall in the man's heart. bade light and as I walk as a child of light, wearing the garment of light, I begin to irritate the darkness that is around me. This whole world system is the product largely of the influence of darkness. It is hostile to the Lord. It is hostile to the people of God. Everything and every place have been influenced by darkness. The economic systems of our world have been influenced by darkness. The political systems of our world have been influenced and infected by darkness. The educational systems of our world have been influenced by darkness. The social mores and values have been influenced by darkness.

First John 5:19 says

"We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one."

John says that the whole world lies in the arms of the evil one. They are not even cognizant of the fact that they have been affected and infected by DARKNESS. They do not understand.

In Ephesians 4:17-19 Paul writes...

17 This I say therefore, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; 19 and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. (See notes Ephesians 4:17; 4:18; 4:19)

So here we are told that the whole world, their minds are darkened, therefore, their morality is depraved. They are infected and influenced by darkness. Now here we are. We have been made light, living in a world infected by darkness. The main instigator of all that darkness is the prince of darkness himself, Satan.

In Ephesians 2:1, 2:2 (see notes) we are introduced to him.

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience" (See notes Ephesians 2:1, 2:2)

In John 8:44 Jesus said

You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature; for he is a liar, and the father of lies.

The devil was once an angel in heaven, the most beautiful angel in heaven. He led a rebellion against God and, as a result, was cast into the lower heavens. He walks on this earth, but he still has access into heaven to accuse the brethren both day and night.

In [Genesis 3](#) we read that

the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?" (see Ge 3:1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

The devil deceived the woman and caused the man to sin. By getting Adam to sin, sin entered the world and something else happened. Paul writes...

"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned-- (See notes Romans 5:12)

As a result of the sin of Adam, the depravity of man, the authority of this earth, its inhabitants and its lower atmosphere became Satan's legally in the just system of God. When man sinned, it was like the world was turned over to the authority (Ed note: exousia = now Satan had the right and might) of darkness, legally, because man chose to disobey his God. Death, the result of the curse of sin, was his weapon. His kingdom is a kingdom of darkness and deceit. Every person is born into his kingdom.

People are always saying,

"That little baby could not be born a sinner."

Well, if you could give that little baby the intelligence to know what we know and the words to say what we know to say at three in the morning when it wants milk and you want to sleep, you will find out how affected by darkness that little child is. Nobody ever taught that child that. It was passed down from Adam from generation to generation (see Romans 5:12-note). Every person, every man, is born into the kingdom of darkness. Thank God for His provision of young ones when they don't understand that.

David said when his son died,

"He cannot come to me. I can go to him." ([2Sa 12:23](#))

There appears to be an age of accountability with children, but we don't know when that age stops because it is different

for every individual when they come to realize that what they are doing is sin.

After the fall, God raised up Abel and immediately Satan infected Cain to kill his brother. Once Satan had gotten the authority of the people on this earth, once he was the prince of the power of the air, God would do something in a man. Then Satan would infect another man to come against him. It appears to be a chess game all through the Old Testament until you come to the book of Malachi. When you come to the book of Malachi we realize that God backs off. He withdrew the fire from the temple and there is nothing done on either part it seems for a period of about 400 years. Then God broke the silence by revealing His plan that had been before the foundation of this world. Instead of raising up a man, God became a man and Satan said,

"I am in deep trouble! Now Jesus is on the scene."

The whole world is surrounded by darkness. Demonic control is all over the whole earth. The whole world is infected and influenced by darkness. But Jesus is the Light. No one turned Him on, and no one can ever turn Him off. He is the Light. He is not like light. He is not a light. He is Light. (cf Jn 8:12) He came through the darkness to this earth. He walked on this earth as the God-man, took our sin upon Himself, died on the cross, resurrected, ascended, is glorified and now man for the first time man has the hope of being delivered out from underneath the captivity that he has been held by Satan. Now Jesus is here. He offers man the opportunity to be transferred from the domain of darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son.

Before the cross and the substitutionary death of Jesus on the cross, man lived in fear of the devil and death. But Jesus conquered them both. In Ephesians 1:20 it says that He, Jesus, was seated far above all principality and powers. As a matter of fact, look at verse 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 1:20; 1:21)

He didn't say He seated Him above, he said He seated Him ["far above"](#). Let me explain to you what that means. If you could take the power of Satan and put it on a scale next to the power of God, his doesn't even show up. God's is far above all principalities and powers. I want you to know that warfare is not a struggle against power. It is a struggle to maintain truth. We will see that as we walk through this. Satan is no equal to God. He is a creation. God is the Creator!

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

is not a struggle against
POWER.

It is a struggle to maintain
the TRUTH.

Well, the believer needs to be aware that Satan is around. We are told that by Peter in his epistle. We need to be aware of the demonic. We need to be aware of darkness. We need to be aware that it has infected a world system and is in our face daily. We need to be aware of that, however, our focus is not to be on that. Our focus is to be on the resurrected, ascended, glorified Lord Jesus Christ and on His resurrection power in each individual life.

FOCUS ON THE LIGHT

Our FOCUS is to be on the resurrected, ascended, glorified Lord Jesus Christ and on His resurrection power in each individual life. That is our focus. We do not focus on darkness. We focus on light. The Prince and the power of light is the Lord Jesus Himself.

Each one of the words in verse 10 shows us something different about the strength of the God who wants to empower our lives.

The word *ischus* means inherent power. He doesn't have to do anything. You can just be in His midst and be overwhelmed. I imagine that is the power that overwhelmed Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego when they said,

"Our God is able. But even if He doesn't...." ([Da 3:17](#))

He doesn't have to do anything folks. The word *ischus* is the one Paul takes us deep into understanding in the book of Ephesians. You see, when you want to know about power, you have to go deeper than the outside plug on a wall. If you want to know about the power of electricity, you have to go somewhere where the power is manufactured. You have to go

deep down inside the dam and see all the generators and the power and the strength. Paul takes us deep down into Ephesians and helps us see who it is that we serve and who it is that lives in our lives.

So he says in Ephesians 6:10,

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

He wraps up the whole book in one phrase. Then he begins to extend and explain what he is talking about and that is what I want us to see. Verse 11 is another command, but it extends what he has already said. He begins to explain what he has been saying for six chapters. Now watch this. The tense is aorist middle imperative.

He says in verse 11,

"Put on the full armor of God"

What does aorist middle imperative mean? Aorist imperative means "do it." Do it now. It's urgent. Put it on. Make sure this happens. Middle voice means it is by your own choice. It is not going to just jump on you. You've got to make your choice. Imperative means it is a command.

Now he says in verse 10,

"be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might."

Then he turns right around and says,

"Put on the full armor of God"

THE GARMENT OF EPHESIANS 4 AND THE ARMOR OF EPHESIANS 6

The word Put on (click word study of enduo) there is referring to putting on a garment. It is the same word used in Ephesians 4:24 where he says, "put on the new man" (see notes Ephesians 4:24). I have a difficult time believing that the ARMOR of chapter 6 is different from the GARMENT of chapter 4. If you look at the context of Ephesians, Paul is putting the garment of chapter 4 in a different light in chapter 6. It is almost like he is saying,

"Finally brethren, I want you to see the urgency of what I have been telling you. Put on [like putting on a garment] the whole armor of God."

I believe that the garment of chapter 4 is the armor of chapter 6 when understood in light of the context of Ephesians.

Let me explain. If you take the view that the armor is something else you put on top of what has already been taught in Ephesians, then here is what you are saying. You are saying that being strengthened in the inner man by the Spirit of God, allowing Christ to rule in every area of our hearts, understanding and experiencing for ourselves the love of Christ in us and through us, wearing the brand new garment of a new lifestyle, refuting, reproving and removing the deeds of darkness around us by wearing this garment, being constantly moment by moment filled with the Spirit of God, allowing Christ's love to permeate our homes and our work place, surrendered to Christ, letting Jesus be Jesus, living a righteous life which is your garment, is not enough. You are saying you need to put something on top of that if you are ever going to defeat the devil. I do not believe that is what Ephesians is teaching.

TRUTH NOT POWER

We get caught up in the fact that it is aPOWER against a POWER. That is not the picture. The picture is we are dealing with TRUTH. We are dealing with OUR MINDS. We are dealing with lives that are surrendered so that we don't get caught off guard by the schemes, by the trickery of the devil. So I beg to disagree with the statement that we need to add something to what Paul has beautifully brought out is a life strengthened in the inner man with an outer garment which is a life of righteousness from head to toe, minds being renewed, hearts being stirred to righteousness. All these things to me are our weapon. It is our armor against the adversary.

Listen, folks, if you say you deal with the devil, remember he is only in one place at one time. He moves fast, but he is a spirit. He is only in one place at a time. What we are dealing with is a SYSTEM he has infected into this world and is in every area that we look at. It is in our face when we turn the television set on. It is in our face when we walk out into the humanistic society that we live in.

The only way to combat him is to be filled with the Spirit, empowered in the inner man, wearing the garment of righteousness, letting the Word richly dwell in your hearts (cf [Col 3:16](#)). Then you have your armor on and that armor will shut down the wiles of the devil.

Let me walk through it with you. In verse 11 it says to put on the full armor of God. This is another clue. Paul shows us that the garment, which is now armor, is made up of several things. He is going to mention them later on. But he says if you have only one of them on it is useless. You have to have them all on. The armor then is like a garment. It is one unit. You can't have a piece of it on and another piece not on. You have to have the "full armor". The word panoplia, refers to the totality of armor worn by a soldier. Now we must realize Paul has in his mind the Roman soldier his readers saw on the street day by day.

Two things are important in that verse. One is the full armor. It is a garment. It is one fabric, which to me again points back to [Eph 4](#). You put on Christ. You don't put on a piece at a time. You put on Christ. That putting Him on involves the mind, the breast plate, the feet, all those things.

Secondly, it is the "armor of God". It is not the armor of man. He says,

"Put on the full armor of God." (Ed note: "put on" is an imperative which often conveys the sense of an urgent action needed ~ "Just do it & do it now" is the idea)

Do you remember when David took lunch over to his brothers who were fighting against Goliath? David gets over there and sees that it is Goliath they are fighting. David said, "Let me fight him." Of course, everybody thought he was crazy. He said,

"The Lord delivered me from the bear and the lion. Let me go over and fight him." (See discussion of this warfare on Jehovah Sabaoth, LORD of hosts)

Saul wanted to help him out. Saul takes his armor and tries to put it on David. It is a good picture here of what I am talking about. You see, this doesn't fit. You don't come against the wiles of the devil, who is a master of deceit, a liar from the very beginning, in this world that is his territory, that he has infected, that he has influenced. You don't come against him in the power of man. You come against him in the armor of God. It is God's armor. Put on the full armor of God. To me what he is saying is,

"Don't take this garment lightly. It is armor. When you put it on remember that is the only way you can stand against the wiles of the devil."

You don't come against the wiles of the devil, who is a master of deceit...in the power of man. You come against him in the armor of God.

Now, this righteous garment, which is our armor, has a purpose. He says,

"so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil".

The word " " They tell me that the sandals of the Roman soldiers had spikes on them so they could dig in and hold their ground and not be knocked off course. (Ed note: Click picture to enlarge figure of the spiked soldier shoes called "caligae") That is sort of the idea of standing. It is not just a casual standing up. It has the idea of standing firm and holding the ground that you are on, not being knocked off course. Now folks, you need to understand something. Satan is in this world. Satan wants to come in your face and put deceit in your mind. Friend, if you are not being strengthened in the inner man, your mind being affected by truth, letting the Lord Jesus Christ motivate you and live His life through you, you are a dead duck. If you are not in the Word of God, you are not consistently seeking to let Him control your life.

**SPIRITUALITY IS NOT PERFECTION.
IT IS CONSISTENCY!**

Remember spirituality is not perfection, it is consistency. I come back continually to repent. It is being dressed and undressed constantly. As I continue to do that, then I will be protected against the deceit that Satan wants to put in my face. If your life is sort of a haphazard life as far as your Christianity is concerned, you are already deceived and you don't even know it. Apply that to your own life. Apply that to your thinking about the church. Apply it to your thinking about your family. If you are not being affected and consistently seeking Him and letting His Word radically change your mind, you have already been deceived and you don't even know it. That is how good Satan is, folks. He talked Eve into talking Adam into sinning and the depravity of man resulted. (Ro 5:12-note) That is how good he is. He knows what he is doing. This world is his territory right now. He is the prince of the power of the air. He has legal authority over this earth.

However, we are transferred out of his kingdom into the kingdom of God at salvation (Col 1:13-note). Therefore, we have to have on our garment which is going to be our armor against him. You don't stand with your back to him. You stand with your face to him. Friend, he is in your face. Folks, this is his world. He knows what he is doing. If you are not putting the Word in your mind, letting truth affect your life, then you have missed the whole point of what this conflict is over. It is not power against power. God can sneeze and put him down. It is the battle of truth. That is why it is so important for us to understand that we need to be strengthened in the inner man at all times because that affects the way we think and that affects the way we live.

Then Paul says,

"the schemes of the devil".

"Schemes" (Ed note: the Greek = methodeia > English "method" - see note below on "schemes") refer to the trickery of the devil. He is the old deceiver. The word "devil" is an interesting word. He has other names like [Satan](#) (meaning "Adversary"). But Paul uses the word "devil" here again. He has used it twice. The word "devil" (click word study on diabolos) here is the word that means diabolical. He is the slanderer. It means the one who tries to get in and separate you in any relationship. He will separate you in your walk with God and your fellowship with Him. He will separate you in your work with others, simply because you are holding on to something that has not been affected by what the Word of God has to say.

So he is good at what he is doing. He is constantly trying to deceive us. He tries to trick us, but we are to stand and hold our ground. It is a command. He says, "You do it. Be strong (Ed note: present passive imperative ~ command to continually allow yourself to be strengthened) in the Lord. That is where your strength to stand comes from. But you have to make up your mind to put on the armor, to wear the garment which is a righteous lifestyle of Jesus being Jesus in your life.

My proposal to you to think about is this -- Jesus Christ in His life being released through us, spiritually empowering us in the inner man by His garment of a righteous lifestyle is our armor against the tricks of the devil as we stand in a spiritual war zone and he tries to knock us off balance. Our armor is the Lord Jesus manifesting His life in and through us.

Look at Isaiah 59:17 which is speaking of Jesus...

"He put on righteousness like a breastplate and a helmet of salvation on His head and He put on garments of vengeance for clothing And wrapped Himself with zeal as a mantle "

Paul is quoting this passage here in Ephesians 6. We are to put these things on, but we put them on by putting on Christ, just like we put on the garment. He and His Spirit affects our minds, affects our righteous living, which brings peace in our life. He gives us the helmet of salvation. Ephesians 6:14-17 says almost the same thing, talking about the different pieces of armor that Paul has referred to.

I want to refer you to a hymn we sing quite often in our church. (Ed note: Play [A Mighty Fortress Is Our God](#) note alternative translation) I want to read it for you. This comes right out of the truth we have just studied.

*A mighty fortress is our God, A bulwark never failing;
Our helper he, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing:
For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great, &, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.*

There is not one person down here who can stand up against him.

*Did we in our own strength confide, Our striving would be losing;
Were not the right Man on our side, The Man of God's own choosing:
Dost ask who that might be? Christ Jesus, it is he;
Lord Sabaoth, his name, From age to age the same, & he must win the battle.*

He must win the battle because of Who He is.

*And tho this world, with devils filled, Should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear, for God hath willed His truth to triumph thro' us:
The Prince of Darkness grim, We tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure. For lo, his doom is sure, One little word will fail him.*

*That word above all earthly pow'rs, No thanks to them, abideth;
The Spirit and the gifts are ours Thro' him who with us sideth:
Let goods and kindreds go, This mortal life also;
The body they may kill: God's truth abidest still, His kingdom is forever.*

That is exactly what I believe Paul is saying. He is simply putting the armor into the context of a spiritual war zone. He is saying,

"Listen, this garment is more important than you think. If you don't have it on, then you have no defense against the master deceiver who wants to lead you off the path and knock you from your standing on truth, the Lord Jesus."

To me he is saying,

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

By the way, that garment is your armor and that is how you are going to be defended, by Jesus being Jesus in your life.

Word Study Methodeia

Paul writes that...

in order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes. (Greek = noema = thoughts, devices, contrivances, that which he thinks) (2Corinthians 2:11)

But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. (2Corinthians 11:3)

Note that the enemy seeks to establish his major base of operations in our mind, which is another reason we are to "eat the Word" and meditate on it night and day so that our minds might be continually renewed.

Schemes (3180) (methodeia from methodeuo = to work by method in turn from meta = with, after + hodos = a way) refers to an orderly, logical, effective arrangement, usually in steps followed to achieve an end. It describes deliberate planning or a systematic approach and can have a positive or negative connotation. The negative meaning of methodeia implies the use of clever methods or strategies to attain the desired end. The Scripture always uses methodeia with a negative connotation.

Think about this simple definition in the context of spiritual warfare. Satan is orderly and logical in his steps employed against you to achieve his nefarious purposes. This realization should prompt each of us to be even more appreciative of the fact that we cannot stand against our invisible enemy in our own intelligence, our own strength or our own human "methods" or "schemes". We must put on the full armor that God supplies in Christ.

As alluded to above, the negative connotation of methodeia implies the use of cleverness, craftiness, cunning and deception. The "deceiver" uses specific, subtle, stealthy plans to target each individual, his goal being to defeat, discourage and dishearten. Stated another way, Satan's attacks are "tailor made" ("*the schemes*"), carefully and methodically selected to attack each person's specific weaknesses and vulnerabilities. His wiles and methods are usually attractive, always deceptive, and often ensnaring. Stay sober and alert!

There is only one other use of methodeia in the Scriptures...

Ephesians 4:14 (note) As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; (methodeia)

Methodeia is translated with a number of words as shown in the list below with each word followed by a definition. As you read through this list think about how each describes your mortal foe, the devil.

Craftiness - adept in the use of subtlety and cunning. No place in Scripture reveals Satan's schemes better than Genesis 3, which records Satan's initial contact with man.

Cunning - characterized by wiliness and trickery. It describes the faculty of executing well what one has devised.

Scheming - given to making plots; shrewdly devious and intriguing. Synonyms include artful, calculating, conniving, cunning, deceitful, designing, duplicitous, foxy, Machiavellian, slippery, sly, tricky, underhand, wily.

Strategies - careful plans or methods. Strategy can also refer to the art or science of the planning and conduct of a war. The Columbia Encyclopedia notes that "strategy and tactics, in warfare are related terms referring, respectively, to large-scale and small-scale planning to achieve military success. Strategy may be defined as the general scheme of the conduct of a war, tactics as the planning of means to achieve strategic objectives. Synonyms for strategy include: blueprint, design, game plan, project, scheme.

Stratagems - an artifice or trick in war for deceiving and outwitting the enemy. A cleverly contrived trick or scheme for gaining an end. Stratagem implies a ruse used to entrap, outwit, circumvent, or surprise an opponent or enemy.

Tactics - The derivation of the word tactic is very interesting and gives us some insight into the meaning of the devil's methods. The word "tactics" is from the Greek word taktikos which means "of order, of tactics, fit for arranging" and which in turn is derived from "tassein" which means to arrange or place in battle formation. Tactics is defined then as the science and art of disposing and maneuvering forces in combat. It refers to the art or skill of employing available means to accomplish an end. In short, the tactics of the devil are calculated plans specifically designed to bring the downfall of God's people and His kingdom.

Trickery - the practice of crafty underhanded ingenuity to deceive or cheat. It implies ingenious acts intended to dupe or cheat.

Wiles - tricks or strategy carried out with the intent to entice, ensnare or deceive. Wiles suggests an attempt to entrap or deceive with false allurements.

Friberg states that *methodeia* can have a neutral or positive meaning referring simply to a...

"method or procedure (but) in the NT (is used) in a bad sense, (and refers to) scheming to deceive, craftiness, cunning, deception (see notes Ephesians 4:14); In the plural (as used in Ephesians 6:11) *methodeia* can refer to stratagems, cunning attacks, tricks" (Adapted from Friberg, T. Analytical lexicon of the Greek New Testament. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books)

John MacArthur writes that *methodeia* ("wiles") conveys...

the idea of cleverness, crafty methods, cunning, and deception. Satan's schemes are propagated through the evil world system over which he rules, and are carried out by his demon hosts. "Wiles" is all-inclusive, encompassing every sin, immoral practice, false theology, false religion, and worldly enticement." ([MacArthur, J.: The MacArthur Study Bible Nashville: Word Pub](#))

The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament has the following note on *methodeia* specifically commenting on its use in Ephesians 6:11...

"The reference is to machinations or (in military terms) attacks against which one must be armed. The nature of the attacks (the plural suggests that they are constantly repeated or are of incalculable variety) constitutes their great danger, against which the armour of God is the only defence. They are distinguished not so much by technique or strategy as by refinement and insidiousness (Vulgate translates *insidiae*, Luther "cunning attacks," A.V. "wiles")" ([Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Eerdmans](#))

The only other use of methodeia is in Ephesians 4:14 where as a result of being equipped and growing in maturity, the saints...

are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness (methodeia) in deceitful scheming (See notes Ephesians 4:14)

The KJV has a picturesque rendering of Ephesians 4:14 stating that

"they lie in wait (methodeia) to deceive."

Kenneth Wuest writes that "methodeia" is derived

"from the verbal form methodeuo "to follow up or investigate by method and settled plan, to follow craftily, frame devices, deceive."

Methodeia was used to describe a wild animal who cunningly stalked and unexpectedly pounced on its prey, a vivid depiction of the Adversary's "methods" against believers.

Satan's schemes are propagated through the evil world system over which he rules, and are carried out by his demon hosts. "Wiles" is all-inclusive, encompassing every sin, immoral practice, false theology, false religion, and worldly enticement. Methodeia is a Greek word that denotes a path or roadway that is traveled over. This is because the devil continuously attempts to secure a foothold so that he may begin construction of a roadway to your mind."

Marvin Vincent adds that

methodeia means a deliberate planning or system.

Albert Barnes writes that

"methodeia means properly that which is traced out with "method;" that which is "methodized;" and then that which is well laid - art, skill, cunning." (Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible)

Ray Stedman in his excellent book "Spiritual Warfare" has this note regarding "methodeia":

"What are the tactics the devil employs? He destroys by deceiving, by lying, by distorting, by counterfeiting, by masquerading, by clouding human minds with illusion and fantasy. This is what Paul calls "the devil's schemes," or as some translations put it, "the wiles of the devil" Read through the Bible and see how many times the work of the devil is referred to in that manner - the snares and the traps of the devil, the lies and illusions, the stratagems and the wiles. That is why we must look closely at the tactics the devil uses against us so that we can be strong and well-defended when he comes to us to defeat us, weaken us, and ruin our lives....By far, the majority of attacks of the devil against Christians are not direct but indirect. That is why they are called the "schemes" of the devil. Schemes suggest deviousness or acting in a way that is subtle, secretive, and treacherous. We need to examine this more thoroughly, for the major attack of the devil and his powers against human life is not by direct means, but indirectly by satanic suggestions through the natural and commonplace situations of life ([Click](#) for more in depth discussion)...So we have an enormous responsibility before God and before the entire world to give ourselves, body and soul, to this great battle against the schemes of the evil one. We have a responsibility to battle the schemes of the devil in this world, and to point the way to the peace and security that lies ahead of us in the world to come...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." ([Stedman, Ray. Spiritual Warfare. Revised edition, 1999](#) -- highly recommended) (Bolding added)

Stedman goes on to write

"Friend, in Christ there is nothing that more clearly indicates that we have succumbed to the schemes of the devil than to complain about our lot in life. Again and again, the Word of God shows that the mark of a Christian who has learned how to be a Christian is that he rejoices in everything and gives thanks in all things." (Ed note: Only possible for one continually filled with the Spirit - see notes Ephesians 5:18) ([Ibid](#)) (Bolding added)

Murphy writes that...

"The idea behind methodeia is deception. The apostle is warning us that the devil's entire system of warfare against us is based on deception. He fights not on a pitched field, but by sudden assault and secret and cunning onslaught." (Murphy, E. F. *Handbook for Spiritual Warfare*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson)

Eadie in his classic commentary on Ephesians adds that...

The great enemy of man, a veteran fierce and malignant, has a method of warfare peculiar to himself, for it consists of "wiles." His battles are the rush of a sudden ambush (ambush). He fights not on a pitched field, but by sudden assault and secret and cunning onslaught. Vigilance, self-possession, and promptitude are therefore indispensable to meet him: and as his aim is to throw his opponents off their guard and then to surprise them, so there is need to be ever clothed in this complete armour of God. His "wiles" are seen in unsettling the mind of Eve by representing God as jealous of the first man and woman; in stirring up the warlike aspirations of David to take a military census and force a conscription as the basis of a standing army; in inflaming the avaricious and sordid spirit of Judas; and in his assaults on our Lord by an appeal to appetite, piety, and ambition. (John Eadie, D., LL.D. *The Epistle of St Paul to the Ephesians*)

Oswald Chambers has a good word about the methodeia of the devil writing that...

We cannot stand against the wiles of the devil by our wits. The devil only comes along the line that God understands, not along the lines we understand, and the only way we can be prepared for him is to do what God tells us, stand complete in his armor, indwelt by His Spirit, in complete obedience to Him." (Oswald Chambers 1874–1917)

Jonathan Edwards wrote that...

the best protection one can have from the devil and his schemes is a humble heart.

James Burns writes that...

The danger of listening to the voice of the Tempter, and the subtlety by which he accomplishes his wiles, is illustrated by R. Spencer Stanhope in a picture in the Manchester Art Gallery, entitled 'Eve.' In it he represents the Serpent whispering in her ear while she listening, plays with the sin within her mind. At the same time, unseen by her, he bends a branch of the tree with a coil of his body, and lo! as she dallies with the sin in her mind, an apple drops into her open hand. When the temptation has once been permitted to enter, the means of gratifying it is at hand." (Tan, P. L. *Encyclopedia of 7700 illustrations*)

MacDonald warns that

"the devil has various stratagems—discouragement, frustration, confusion, moral failure and doctrinal error. He knows our weakest point and aims for it. If he cannot disable us by one method, he will try for another." ([MacDonald, W & Farstad, A. *Believer's Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson*](#))

The Open Bible defines our Adversary's "schemes" as

"superhuman craftiness, capable of drawing careless Christians into sin."

Warren Wiersbe writes that...

The danger on the battlefield is that we do not take the enemy seriously and therefore fail to put on all of the armor. By faith, you put on the armor through prayer, which must be done at the beginning of every day. Never underestimate the strategy and strength of the devil." (Wiersbe, W. W. [With the Word : The Chapter-by-Chapter Bible Handbook](#) Nashville: Thomas Nelson)

Seldom does Satan ever attack openly with an overt frontal assault (and by the way most of us will probably never be attacked by Satan himself as he is a finite not omnipresent being. But he does command a host of fallen angels who share his evil design for mankind). In contrast, Satan's Schemes are nearly always unseen, shrewd, and perfectly tailored to ensnare his victim like a fowler camouflaging his net to trap a bird ("methodical"). "Schemes, wiles and methods" speak of the trickery and subterfuge by which evil and temptation present themselves in our lives. Evil rarely looks evil until it accomplishes its goal. It gains entrance by appearing attractive, desirable, and perfectly legitimate. But to reiterate it is a

baited and camouflaged trap. As Paul puts it in 2 Corinthians 11:14, Satan masquerades as an angel of light.

Below is a brief Scriptural survey of some of the "methods" of our adversary.

God's Word teaches that the devil...

- 1) Accuses - Job1:6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11; Job 2:1, 2, 3, 4; Zech 3:1; Rev 12:10
- 2) Afflicts - Job1:12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19; Job 2:6, 7; Luke 13:16; Rev 2:10
- 3) Conquers - Acts 10:38; Eph 6:16; 2Ti 2:26
- 4) Deceives - Ge 3:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6,13; Jn 8:44; Ac 13:10; 2Co 4:4; 11:13, 14, 15; 2Th 2:9, 10; Rev 2:9; 3:9
- 5) Hinders - 1Th 2:18
- 6) Murders - John 8:44
- 7) Perverts - Acts 13:10; 2Th 2:9, 10
- 8) Prompts - 1Chr 21:1; John 13:2,27; Acts 5:3
- 9) Schemes - 2Cor 2:11; Eph 6:11; 1Ti 3:7
- 10) Stalks - 1Pe 5:8
- 11) Steals - Mt 13:19; Luke 8:12
- 12) Tempts - Mt 6:13; Mark 1:12, 13; Luke 4:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13; 1Cor 7:5; 1Th 3:5
- 13) Threatens - Heb 2:14, 15

This list of the "wiles of the devil" should thoroughly convince each of us of our need to be totally dependent on the full of armor of God and not hesitate to put on the whole armor! What are you waiting for dear Christian friend? Are any of the "pieces" missing or in disrepair. Then return and confess and repent and go forth into battle as more than a conqueror through Him Who loved us.

A. T. Robertson warns that the devil...

"...is a crafty foe and knows the weak spots in the Christian's armor."

One of the Devil's most effectual schemes, stratagems or wiles is to instill doubts about God's goodness. These seeds of "doubts" can grow into an ungrateful spirit that refuses to thank God at all times for all things. Doubts about God was one of Satan's greatest tools against Martin Luther. After the frightful Anfechtung (Contestation) of 1527 Luther wrote that "For more than a week I was close to the gates of death and hell." It is therefore no surprise that Luther's great hymn [A Mighty Fortress Is Our God](#) has such great stanzas on "spiritual warfare.

Roland Bainton, Luther's biographer, writes:

"The content of his depressions was always the same, the loss of faith that God is good and that He is good to me."

[Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus](#)

"Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
Stand in His strength alone;
The arm of flesh will fail you,
You dare not trust your own.
Put on the gospel armor,
Each piece put on with prayer;
Where duty calls or danger,
Be never wanting there."

-----George Duffield