

Ephesians:

Handbook for Spiritual Warfare

The Apostle Paul's letter to the Ephesians has been called our handbook for spiritual warfare because it gives clear instruction about standing against Satan.

Paul said we are to be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. We are to put on the full armor of God and stand our ground against the devil's schemes. But before we pray on the armor of God, let's consider that Paul didn't begin his letter to the Ephesians with the armor—that's how he concludes.

The first three chapters of Ephesians focus on our position in Christ, on who we are in Christ. This is essential for us to understand if we are to stand against Satan and his evil spirits.

Then Paul makes clear the life we are to live *in Christ*, in chapters 4-6:9. Note his strong language:

I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling....

Make every effort...

I insist...that you must no longer live as Gentiles do....

You must put off...get rid of...have nothing to do with...

There must not be even a hint of....

Be careful how you live...

Once we understand who we are and how we are to live in Christ, Paul gives us our assignment: we're to clothe ourselves in the full armor of God, stand our ground and pray. The battleground is prayer.

If we are to successfully stand our ground against Satan, we must pay careful attention to everything Paul said leading up to the armor of God. Otherwise, we may have chinks in our armor, no matter how fervently we pray.

Who Am I in Christ?

Ephesians 1-3

Positive affirmations of the truth of our position in Christ. Excellent verses to speak aloud and to use as prayers of praise and thanksgiving to our gracious God!

In Christ...

I have been blessed with every spiritual blessing.	I was chosen before the creation of the world.
I am holy and blameless in God's sight.	I have been adopted as God's child.
I have been redeemed by His blood.	I have been forgiven by His grace.
I have been chosen as His child.	I have been predestined to be His own.
I have been marked with the seal of the Holy Spirit.	I have been guaranteed an inheritance.
I have been made alive with Christ.	I have been saved by grace.
I have been affirmed as God's workmanship, His masterpiece.	
I have been assured that God has prepared good works for me to do.	
I have been granted access to the Father by the Holy Spirit.	
I have been joined with others in the body of Christ to become a dwelling for the Holy Spirit.	
I have been given assignment to make known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms the manifold wisdom of God.	
I have been given freedom to approach God with confidence through faith in Christ.	

How am I then to live?

Ephesians 4:1-28

What lifestyle prepares us for taking up the full armor of God to stand our ground against Satan?

Paul describes it in Ephesians 4-6:9. Let's go through the points he makes as a way to examine our conscience and confess any sins God brings to mind:

Father, am I walking worthy of my calling?...

Does my character, do my relationships reflect—

a willingness to humble myself?

longsuffering, patience?

endeavoring to keep unity with others?

growing with others in my knowledge of Christ?

gentleness?

bearing with others in love?

living with others in peace? in unity of faith?

Is there in my life any—

lack of purity, even in thought?

giving in to immorality on any level?

failure to care about right and wrong?

greed or materialism?

Am I constantly putting off my old nature and any sinful habits, my former conduct?

Am I letting You renew my mind?

Am I consciously putting on my new nature, seeking righteousness and holiness?

Do I ever lie? exaggerate? shade the truth?

Have I gone to bed angry without apologizing and making things right?

Have I given the devil a foothold by failing to deal with all the sin in my life? Am I hanging on to any sins without confessing them, without repenting—turning away from them in God's strength?

Have I stolen anything? —

even small things, like office supplies?

anyone's time, with thoughtless interruptions?

someone's reputation, through gossip?

Am I sharing with others in need?

How am I then to live?

Ephesians 4:28-6:9

Do I ever say things that are unwholesome?

Am I an encourager, always building others up?

Or is my spirit critical and judgmental?

Do I grieve the Holy Spirit with sins?

Am I bitter about anything?

Do I lose my temper? Have anger or show rage?

Do I slander others with my talk?

Am I kind? Compassionate?

Do I forgive others as God has forgiven me?

Am I living a life characterized by love?

Have I been immoral? Impure in thought or action?

Am I greedy?

Do I engage in obscene language or foolish talk?

Off color jokes?

Am I living as a child of the light, giving no place to deeds of darkness?

Do I live wisely, making the most of every opportunity for Christ?

Do I understand what the Lord's will is?

Am I daily filled with the Spirit?

Do I sing psalms, hymns, spiritual songs with others?

Make music in my heart?

Do I always give thanks for everything?

Do I submit to others?

If married—

Do I love my wife as my own body?

Are my children obedient?

Do I respect my husband?

Am I bringing them up in the training and instruction of the Lord?

Do I serve my employers or those in ministry wholeheartedly doing God's will from my heart?

Do I honor my parents?

Praying on the Armor of God

Ephesians 6:10-18

Father,

I know we're in a spiritual battle. Keep me clothed in Your full armor. (Ephesians 6:10-18)

The armor is my lifestyle in Christ—my armor of light! Help me to live a life that exhibits the truth of my salvation: that I'm a child of God, given new life in Christ, and Satan cannot harm me. (Romans 13:12, 14; John 1:12; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 John 5:18)

I take up the belt of truth, acknowledging Christ as my truth—the way, the truth, the life. May I always tell the truth. Don't let me settle for half-truths, exaggerate, or withhold the truth. (Ephesians 6:13-14; John 14:6; 16:8; 1 John 1:9)

May right living guard my heart like a breastplate of armor, for it affects everything I do. Help me to make godly choices that keep me centered in Your will. (Proverbs 4:23; Ephesians 6:14)

May the truth of the gospel and the peace that it brings give me sure footing, like boots on a soldier's feet. Help me to stand in the confidence that my sins are forgiven, that I belong to You. Keep me ready to share the good news that Christ died for our sins, that we are saved by faith. (Ephesians 6:15; 2:8-9)

I take up Christ as my shield of faith, for He is the reason for my faith. May I live by faith, trusting in the promises of the Bible. Keep my faith strong enough to extinguish the flaming arrows Satan sends my way. (Psalm 84:9; Ephesians 1:15; 6:16)

Christ is my helmet of salvation, for there's no other name by which I'm saved. Jesus is my Redeemer, who laid down His life for me. May that truth keep me steadfast in my thinking. (Ephesians 6:17; Acts 4:12; Titus 2:13; Psalm 19:14; John 10:11)

Jesus defeated Satan with Scripture. May speaking the Word give me victory as well! May Your Word, spoken in prayer, be the sword in my hands that defeats the powers of darkness. May the Scriptures I pray be Your Word that does not return empty, but accomplishes Your purposes. (Matthew 4:1-11; Ephesians 6:17; Isaiah 55:11)

In Jesus' name, amen.

Jesus Is

We are told to keep our eyes on Jesus, and that's never more important than when we stand against Satan. Satan is described many ways in Scripture, but we should declare to ourselves and to him that Jesus is more than a match for him—they are not equals!

Jesus is the creator of all things (Colossians 1:16)
...but Satan is only a fallen angel (Luke 10:18).

Jesus is Prince of princes (Daniel 8:25)
...but Satan is only the prince of this world (John 12:31).

Jesus is the Lion of Judah (Revelation 5:5)
...but Satan is but only a roaring lion (1 Peter 5:8).

Jesus is the truth (John 14:6).
...who defeats Satan, the father of lies (John 8:44).

Jesus is the faithful and true (Revelation 19:11).
...so we need not fear Satan, the deceiver (Revelation 20:7-8, 10; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15).

Jesus is the one who bring us through every temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13).
...there is no reason to yield to Satan, the tempter (Genesis 3:13; Matthew 4:1-11).

Jesus is the One in whom there is no condemnation (Romans 8:1).
...we don't have to listen to Satan, our accuser (Revelation 12:10-11).

Jesus is the giver of abundant life (John 10:10).
...so there is no need to be concerned about Satan, the thief (Mark 4:14-15).

Jesus is Christ our life (John 14:6).
...no need to fear Satan, the murderer (John 8:44).

Jesus is the One who holds everything together (Colossians 1:17).
...so we are not afraid of Satan, the destroyer (Revelation 9:11—*Abaddon* and *Apollyon* mean "Destroyer").

Jesus is King of kings, Lord of lords (Revelation 19:16)
...so there is no need to fear Satan's kingdom or rule (Matthew 12:26; Revelation 2:13).