

# PAUL'S LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS

## SESSION 8

## Letter to the Ephesians: Ephesians 6:10-24 - **LEADERS GUIDE**

### ICE BREAKER

Start off with an ice breaker to get everyone warmed up.

### WELCOME

**Thank you for being a part of this CORE Seminar this semester!** We've received a lot of great feedback and we hope that you all have enjoyed them. But, today marks the end of the teaching portion of this semester. Finally we arrive at the end of Paul's Letter to the Ephesians – a letter in which Paul spends the majority of his time reminding the church to remember everything God has done for the church and the story that He has called them into. This is the story of God's redemption of His people, and that approximately covers the first 3 chapters of Ephesians.

Then we move on to the next 2+ chapters, and Paul will use this portion of the letter to explain, that since the church has been united with Christ – because we are in God's redemption story – there are implications for the church [unity] and implications for the individual [marriage, parenting and the workplace]. These implications are absolutely huge because we are not to live our faith out in a vacuum, in a bubble, or on the sidelines. There should be a natural "outflow" of the Holy Spirit that flows out of the Christian because of the work of Jesus Christ that has been formed in us.

And after all of this, Paul comes at the end of the letter – and what a way he ends it. In the last **14 verses**, Paul discusses how to navigate the spiritual battlefield with courage, strength, and an unwavering trust in God. He uses this conclusion as a powerful reminder to the Church that the armor of God is available to them – equipping them to withstand the schemes of the enemy, and emphasizes the importance of unity, prayer, and perseverance.

### SCRIPTURE

Have someone in the group look up and read **Ephesians 6:10-12**

### EPHESIANS 6:10-12

In his conclusion [because Paul uses the word "finally"], Paul reminds the church to remain in the Lord and rest in His **strength** and **might**. Without saying it in **verse 10**, Paul is building up to this idea of **battle**, and spiritual warfare. Now, this was not a new concept to the church and it shouldn't be a new concept for us. In the Old Testament, the writers knew God would fight the battles for His people OR would fight the battles against the nations who declare war on His people. Because of this understanding, God's people referred to God as the "**Divine Warrior**." Some great examples of this can be found in **Exodus 14:1-15:21; Psalm 28:7; Jeremiah 20:11; and, Isaiah 42:13**. But, His strength is not limited to the Old Testament. In the New Testament, the resurrection of Jesus Christ demonstrates that even the most formidable enemies – Satan and death – cannot prevail against God's power and authority.

So – the question should naturally be – who are we fighting **against**? Paul doesn't answer that question immediately. In fact, initially, he states WHO the fight is NOT against - "flesh and blood." Who is flesh and blood? That is you and I – that is the members of the church. That is the unity of the church in **Ephesians 4 & 5**. That is the husband and wife in marriages in **Ephesians 5**. That is the parenting, kid's obeying and workplace environment we saw in **Ephesians 6**.

But, that's not always how it goes – is it? Unfortunately, churches are often better fighting against one another – the flesh and blood – than we are against, "the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places." The point is this, far too often the church has lost its focus on the real enemy – and we end up focusing our energy on one another or Tier 3 issues. Paul commands the church not to focus on flesh and blood but **"against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places."**

We've been trained by our culture – and not by our Bibles – to look at the world around us as extremely **ordinary**. And any time we come across something in the Bible – like spiritual warfare – we tend to think of extreme examples OR we think that spiritual warfare is something that happens only on the mission field. When we think that spiritual warfare involves your head spinning around or something that happens ONLY "over there" on the mission field, we make our extraordinary, mission filled roles in God's redemption story – ordinary.

So, in order for us to understand what these schemes look like or what these battles look like, we must look at our daily lives and understand that these battles exist.

- To love my wife like Christ loved the church.
- To walk in all humility
- To speak truth in a way that builds up.

These are battles that contain a very real spiritual component with eternal **consequences**. And Satan – in his schemes – does not want us to see them in this way. The consequences of these ordinary battles are every bit as scary as the things that Hollywood has cooked up for us in horror movies.

What do we see around our lives every day? What is the pain that we experience in our personal lives and at First Baptist? I can tell you that we see marriages falling apart. We have seen "our" kids growing in bitterness towards their parents and towards the church. We see instances of **addiction, envy, pride, lust, anxiety,** and **depression**.

Paul is telling us to get our minds right...to understand – as the church and as Christians – that there is a battle going on. This battle is not an option because when we bear the blood of Christ, when we bear His name – then our involvement in the battle becomes **mandatory**. So, Paul tells the church to "suit up!"

## QUESTIONS

**From where does the church get their strength? Why is this important?**

**When it comes to the term "spiritual warfare," why do some Christians dismiss this as a possibility?**

- Why do some Christians only think this happens on the "mission field"?

- What dangers can occur when the Christian's public life [or church life] is different from the life they live at home?
- Why is it so important for Christians to understand that the gospel of Jesus Christ should fill our homes, our relationships and our workplaces?

**What kinds of misunderstandings do you think Christians have about the kind of battle – or warfare – that they are to participate in as they bear the name of Christ?**

- What dangers happen when Christians don't understand that our daily lives are engaged in spiritual warfare?

## SCRIPTURE

Have someone in the group look up and read [Ephesians 6:13-20](#)

## EPHESIANS 6:13-20

In this section, Paul tells us that in order to fight these battles we must put on the armor of God. He then provides a description and use of the full armor of God that the church should wear while in the midst of spiritual warfare.

Now armor is not always considered an offensive weapon. Meaning, you won't do a lot of damage to an army by the armor that you wear. Armor is primarily a defensive weapon – intended to shield the wearer from any weapon or potentially fatal wound WHILE allowing the wearer to move and fight effectively. So, knowing this, it is always good – in spiritual warfare – to not just grab some run of the mill armor BUT to put on the **whole** armor of God!

In [Isaiah 59:15-17](#), Isaiah writes about God wearing a similar armor to what Paul describes in [Ephesians 6](#). Isaiah tells the reader that there will be a day when God will suit up for battle and will no longer withhold His mercy and His eternal judgment. He will execute His justice and His judgment on His enemies. In this, He will defeat and will conquer His enemies – and they will endure full measure of His wrath. Putting on the armor of God means that we should always be prepared – dressed for battle through God - relying on His power and strength for the purposes of His **Kingdom**.

## QUESTIONS

**What do you think it means to “take up/ put on the armor of God”?**

- What steps can you take to put on the armor of God?
- How does your personal time with God equip you for battle?

**In [verses 19-20](#), what example does Paul provide on how to engage in spiritual warfare for His glory?**

- What type of war are asked to fight? Does the church recognize the fight?
- Is the church prepared for this fight?

## SCRIPTURE

Have someone in the group look up and read [Ephesians 6:21-24](#)

## EPHESIANS 6:21-24

I'm always amazed at the brothers and sisters that Paul ALWAYS has around him. He was always **discipling** others. He was always **connected** with others. His **community** was far reaching and it always revolved around the **gospel**. In this example, we should see that community and gospel centered discipleship is just as important as the armor we wear in our daily lives. In fact, I would say it's difficult to wear the armor if you are not discipling or being disciplined.

## QUESTIONS

**What words does Paul leave the church with as he closes his letter?**

- In **verses 23-24**, how do his words point the church to Jesus Christ and His gospel?

**What encourages and challenges you most in Paul's closing remarks?**

## CONCLUSION

**Was there anything that stood out to you from Ephesians 6:10-24?**

- Was there an "aha moment" for you?

Next week is **HANGOUT Night!** Don't forget to plan ahead and invite friends, neighbors, family or co-workers.

- *May 5th: Hangout Night or Content Make-Up*