

WHO AM I?

Ephesians



Battle Ready

INTRODUCTION

Ephesians 6:10-17

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!¹

OPEN IT

1. **What is one tool or piece of equipment that you use on a daily basis either in your job or in your home and what does it help you accomplish?**

¹ Devotional by Ray Stedman. Found at: https://www.preceptaustin.org/ephesians_610-11

READ IT

Ephesians 6:10-17

EXPLORE IT

- 2. What does Paul call believers to be in this passage?**
- 3. What does Paul imply believers are part of?**
- 4. Who is the opponent in this spiritual battle?**
- 5. In view of this battle, what are believers to put on?**
- 6. List the different pieces of this armor that Paul talks about.**
- 7. What is the ultimate purpose for believers to put on the whole armor of God?**

APPLY IT

Paul makes the undeniable claim that every follower of Christ is caught up in a spiritual battle. It's not a matter of *if* you'll find yourself at war but *when* and *how* that war will present itself in your life.

"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! *Yet this passage in Ephesians 6 would seem to indicate that when you become a Christian, that's when the battle really begins!*"²

8. How have you experienced this spiritual battle in your own life?

9. Do you think this spiritual battle is a continuous battle or one that Christians face in "seasons" of their lives? Is there anything in this passage that supports your thoughts?

10. What concerns might you have if you are unaware of this spiritual battle in your own life?

² Quote by Ray Stedman from "Spiritual Warfare". Found at: https://www.preceptaustin.org/ephesians_610-11

Ephesians 6:12: *We do not fight against flesh and blood* means that our enemies are not human but demonic. Many in Paul's Ephesian audience had previously dabbled in the occult (Acts 19:18–20) and would have been familiar with the devil and his evil forces.³

11. What makes it difficult for us to remember that our battle is not against flesh and blood?

12. What does the Bible call our enemy, the devil (Satan)?

- John 12:31
- Ephesians 2:2
- 2 Corinthians 4:4
- Revelation 12:10

13. What are some examples of instances where we might forget that our battle is not against flesh and blood? What might be helpful for us to not identify the wrong enemy in those circumstances?

³ <https://www.gotquestions.org/not-fight-against-flesh-and-blood.html>

14. How does knowing the identity and nature of our true enemy in this battle impact the focus and strategies of our mission and ministry?

15. What might happen to the mission and ministry of a believer, or even the church as a whole, if we fail to remember who the real enemy is?

It doesn't make sense to use a hammer to plant a garden or a shovel to frame a wall. It's important to have the right tools for the right job. Paul tells us that we are in the midst of a spiritual battle which means we need spiritual equipment to be effective in this battle. So he tells us to put on the whole armor of God, "**that we might be able to withstand the schemes of the devil**" (v.11) and "**that we may be able to withstand in the evil day**" (v.13).

If we have been given this armor so that we might withstand the schemes of the devil, could it be that the armor and equipment that God has provided might also reveal the nature of what those schemes might look like?

16. Coach Paul shares strategies with us for defeating our enemy, Satan and his spiritual forces.

- What advice does he give to us in 2 Corinthians 2:11?

- What characteristics does Paul tell us about our enemy?
 - 2 Corinthians 11:14

 - Ephesians 6:11-12

17. In what ways is it helpful for you to know your enemy's playbook?

18. For each of the items Paul lists as parts of the full armor of God, write down what that piece of armor might reveal about the nature of the enemy's schemes and why that piece of armor is necessary for effectiveness in the battle.

- Belt of Truth

- Breastplate of Righteousness

- Shoes of the Gospel of Peace

- Helmet of Salvation

- Shield of Faith

- Sword of the Spirit

19. Which pieces of armor have been most effective for YOU in your arsenal against our enemy and his forces?

20. Is there any piece of the armor of God that you particularly struggle to put on? What could you do in the next week to practice putting on that armor?