

Are You Safe?



Sunday, 9/2 – 8:00 & 10:45 (9/3 is Labor Day – No Service)
15th Sunday after Pentecost / 14th Sunday after Trinity – 2018

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: What is Your Position on the food chain? Are you aware of the devil, *that GREAT and POWERFUL FALLEN ANGEL who wants to make YOU his lunch?* The Bible says that he “*prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour*” (1 Pet. 5:8 NAS). Therefore, ☹are YOU safe and ☹are YOU ready for his attacks?

Today, in Ephesians 6, God will tell us – *through Paul* – about
♦the devil, ♦those who work with him, ♦their power, and
♦their high positions! He will also remind us of the devil’s schemes to ☹pull us away from Christ and ☹drag us into hell! Then He will tell us how to be ➡armored, ➡armed, and ➡ready for the countless assaults that will come upon us!

1. **Where to be Strong?** ¹⁰ **Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.** // Some people are very strong, for example, Eddie Hall, in July of 2016, deadlifted 1,102 pounds! So IMPRESSIVE, *yet our human strength is nothing in comparison to the devil;* therefore, we are called to be strong “**in the Lord.**”

Actually, *when we know we are weak*; then we will not trust in self, *but in the Lord!* That is what Paul meant when he wrote, “*when I am weak, then I am strong*” (2 Cor. 12:10 ESV). So let us be strong *IN THE LORD!*

2. **Why to be Strong?** *The devil wants to eat us for lunch!*
 - a. Instructions: ¹¹ **Put on the whole armor of God, ~~that you may be~~ [so that you are] able to stand against the schemes** [*plans, sneaky attacks, tricks*] **of the devil.** // God doesn't tell us to defeat the devil; first, *we cannot*; second, **Jesus has defeated him on our behalf!** Instead, we are called “**to stand,**” *thus to not fall for his powerful sneaky attacks*, which are intended to **✦tear us away from Christ, ✦leave us dead in our sins, and ✦condemn us to eternal punishment!**
 - b. Our great opponents: So why do we need the whole armor of God? ¹² **For** [*Because*] **we do not wrestle** [*struggle, fight*] **against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers [world rulers] over [of] this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil** [*wickedness*] **in the heavenly places.** // So our fight is not physical, *but spiritual*; furthermore, it's not against *spiritual weaklings*, **BUT ✦against the rulers, those in charge of their designated areas, ✦against the authorities, those giving the forces of evil the right to come after us, ✦against the world rulers, those who hold a position over many others, and ✦against the spiritual forces of evil, not located in paradise with God but in very high places!** The contrast

between them and us is great; *SO WE NEED GOD'S HELP!*

- c. The solution: ¹³ **Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that** [*in order that*] **you may be able to withstand** [*resist*] **in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm** [*resist*]. // **As** we would certainly do everything possible *to keep someone from killing us physically, so* God is calling us to certainly do everything possible *to resist the devil from overcoming us and devouring us spiritually!*

3. **How to be Strong?** Based on this section of the text, *many picture a Roman soldier*; however, Harold shared info in his class last week that more clearly points to a *spiritual soldier*, thus *an OT priest* who is armed for spiritual battle. Paul wrote: ¹⁴ **Stand therefore,**
- a. **having fastened on the belt of truth** // That is God's truth about *our sin* and *His work to save us*; upon that truth we **STAND**, *trusting in Jesus!*
 - b. **and having put on the breastplate of righteousness** // So clothed with Jesus' right life for us, *we are called to live right for Him!*
 - c. ¹⁵ **and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by [equipment of] the gospel of peace.** // As shoes help us walk on rough ground, *so the gospel keeps us at peace when we sin.*
 - d. ¹⁶ **In all circumstances take [having taken] up the shield of faith, with which you can [will be able to] extinguish all the flaming darts [arrows] of the evil one** // The purpose of a flaming arrow is to burn up its target! But, with our faith in the Bible and in Christ, *we have God's protection!*

- e. **17 and take the helmet of salvation** // As a helmet covers the head, so God's salvation covers our mind – *so we are saved and at peace!*
- f. Belt, breastplate, shoes, shield, and helmet are all *defensive weapons*; now we come to two *offensive weapons* – Bible and prayer: **and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God** // The forces of evil hate the Word of God, so the more we **know it, live it, and share it, the more they will flee from us!**
- g. **18 praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication** [*asking or begging for something earnestly*]. // So, along with using the Word of God, we pray earnestly to God – in connection with the Spirit – *for His assistance!*
- h. **To that end** [of standing firm against the devil], **keep alert with all perseverance [and] making supplication for all the saints, 19 and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought [δεῖ] to speak.** // So, along with wearing and using the whole armor of God, it is important for us to **remain alert for the devil's schemes, pray for others believers, and be encouraged – knowing that they are also praying for us!**

Let Us Pray: Dear Holy Spirit, continue to work such things in each of us, *so that we are never the lion's lunch!*

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