



6

We Stand Together
in Spiritual Battle

?

WHEN HAVE
YOU BEEN
SURPRISED BY
SOMETHING
TOTALLY
UNEXPECTED?

The POINT >

We stand strong with God's armor
and the support of others.

> EPHESIANS 6:10-20

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil

one; ¹⁷ and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, ¹⁸ praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, 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 to speak.



THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

FACT:

Termites cause damage that often goes undetected—it's below the surface. Every year termites damage over 600,000 homes in the US, costing homeowners a total of \$5 billion.¹



LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // COMMUNITY & WORLD

God values all people—born and unborn, young and old, male and female, all ethnicities, those of opposing faiths—and calls Christians to live on mission for the sake of reaching the lost across the street and around the world through prayer, giving resources, loving actions, and sharing the gospel.

A friend of mine decided to try repairing his own car after a minor accident. However, a couple of other friends and I thought it might be a good idea to have a professional mechanic check out the car just to make sure there were no hidden problems. Thankfully, my friend agreed. When he got back the report, he found out that there was over \$5000 worth of damage. Had he put the car back on the road, not only would he have likely blown the entire motor, he'd have put lives at risk.

There's a valuable lesson in this experience—things aren't always what they seem on the surface. Spiritually, things might look okay to onlookers, but below the surface a war rages. And no one is immune to this conflict. As followers of Christ, we may not always think in these terms, but we need to be aware that the war is ongoing. It never stops. Thankfully, God does not send His people into battle ill-equipped. He provides the spiritual armor by which we can engage the enemy and stand strong.

One of our best tools is prayer. We need to pray continually, even when we're not aware of the battle in our lives. Further, we need to pray continually for our fellow believers. Chances are many of those around you are in a spiritual fight that's below the surface.

EPHESIANS 6:10-13

1 What have you been taught about spiritual warfare?

2 Where do you see spiritual battles raging in the world today?



We can stand against the enemy because Satan has already lost the battle. Jesus won the war the day He rose from the grave! #BSFLtheChurch



EPHESIANS 6:18-20

EPHESIANS 6:14-17

3 Why do we have trouble living as if we're in a spiritual war?

4 List some practical ways we can prepare for spiritual battle.

5 What are some real-life situations in which spiritual armor is essential for Christ-followers?

6 Why is prayer an important tool in spiritual battle?

7 In what specific ways has prayer helped you live well through spiritual warfare?

8 How would you summarize the principles of prayer taught in these verses?



LIVE IT OUT



LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // COMMUNITY & WORLD

God values all people—born and unborn, young and old, male and female, all ethnicities, those of opposing faiths—and calls Christians to live on mission for the sake of reaching the lost across the street and around the world through prayer, giving resources, loving actions, and sharing the gospel.

Many times, sharing with the lost seems like a fight. We have to fight against our own weaknesses and doubts before taking the step to share. We fight against cultural perspectives on issues of faith and Christ as we seek to share. We fight against mainstream values in education and politics. And we may be tempted to shrink back and disengage. But the truth is there are souls at stake—people whom God loves! Therefore, we should work to prepare ourselves for the fight, taking up the armor of God, and enter into the mission field as an expression of God’s love, even for those who have rejected Him.

> CHRIST

We are in a spiritual battle and are continually under attack from the forces of evil. Thankfully, God has provided all we need in order to stand strong. One of the greatest tools He’s provided is prayer.

This week, commit to praying at least three times per day for the following things:

FAMILY	CHRISTIAN FRIENDS
LOST FRIENDS	YOUR CHURCH
CHRISTIANS WHO ARE PERSECUTED	FOR THE GOSPEL TO ADVANCE POWERFULLY

(Three good times to pray are when you first wake up, at lunchtime, and before bed.)

GOD

JESUS

HOLY SPIRIT

BIBLE

SALVATION

CREATION

CHURCH

PEOPLE

FAMILY

COMMUNITY & WORLD

> COMMUNITY

If we're caught alone in this spiritual fight, we're extremely vulnerable. This is why it's so important that we are connected in real ways to other Christians—we need continual support and encouragement, and others need the same things from each of us.

9 Who do you know who may be suffering spiritual attack? What steps will you take to strengthen them this week?



10 How do you feel attacked? Invite a trusted Christian friend into your struggle—it's a part of God's plan for our victory.

> CULTURE

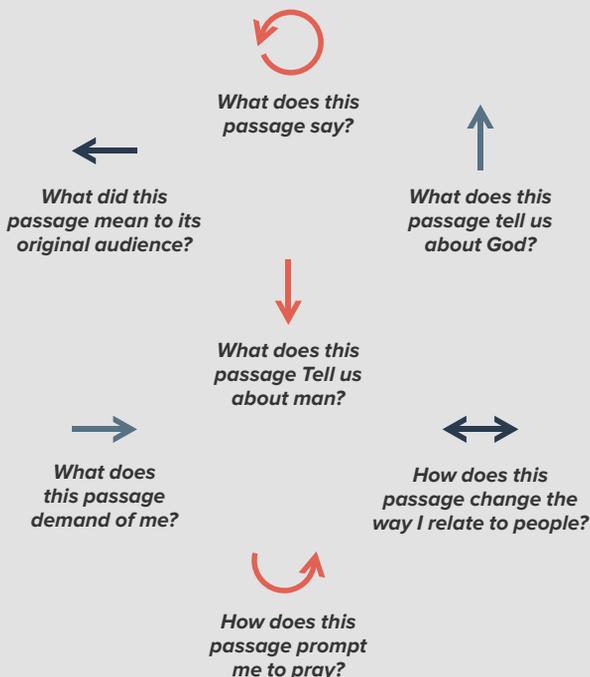
All around the world there are people who don't know God, but there are missionaries who have committed their lives to making a difference.

11 Become a part of this effort by praying, sending a letter of encouragement, donating funds, or going on a mission trip. Research local and international organizations and ask a leader how you might get involved.

DAILY DEVOTIONS



The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



Day One 1 JOHN 4:1

Satan's primary weapon in destroying people whom God loves is deception. The devil is called a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44). He parades as an angel of light in order to mislead God's people (2 Cor. 11:14), and he works to deceive the whole world (Rev. 12:9). One way the devil works to mislead is by sending out false prophets to lead people astray. Their messages usually have a hint of truth—just enough to get people to buy in—but it's twisted and manipulated, and ultimately leads people toward destruction. John taught that we are always to test a messenger's teaching against the standard of Scripture. If it's inspired by the Spirit, it will match God's truth. But if it doesn't hold up, we can know it was given by an evil spirit in order to deceive.

- **How can we know if a message is true or not?**
- **What are the consequences of accepting a false message?**

Day Two

1 JOHN 4:2



There is one clear way to know whether a message or belief system is true—what are the claims about Jesus? Many people today claim that Jesus was a good man, but they struggle with the idea of the virgin birth. Many claim that Jesus was a great teacher, but they can't believe He actually performed miracles. Many hold that Jesus was a prophet, but refuse to accept that Jesus arose from the dead or that He's truly the Messiah. Any spirit or teacher that would deny anything the Bible teaches about Jesus is not from God, but from the deceiver. The line between false teaching inspired by the devil and true faith inspired by the Holy Spirit comes down to claims about Jesus. It is essential that we believe all the Bible says about Christ. Anything else will lead us astray.

- **How would you summarize your beliefs about Jesus?**

- **Why is it necessary that we believe all the Bible says about Jesus?**

Day Three

1 JOHN 4:3a

Jesus left heaven and came to earth in order to be our High Priest. He lived a perfect life and died for sinners, and then He rose from the dead inflicting a death blow against sin—these things are indescribably wonderful! The central point of our faith—the culmination of all history—is the cross. Understanding this is absolutely essential in our relationship with God for Jesus is the only way to the Father. God wants us to believe this truth and live our lives in demonstrating true faith. He has enlisted the heavenly hosts, an army of angels, to help accomplish His purposes, including helping us to live by faith. However, there are spirits who rebelled against God and work against His purposes. They follow their leader, the devil, in deceiving people whom God loves, and one of their most devious strategies is to cause us to believe lies about Jesus.

- **What lies have you heard about Jesus?**

- **How can you help others make sure they believe the truth about Jesus?**

Day Four

1 JOHN 4:3b

There have been people working to invalidate Jesus' claims since the beginning of His ministry. When people live like this, they set themselves "against Christ," and this is the meaning of "antichrist." Anyone who makes claims about Jesus that are untrue is operating in a spirit that is against Him. These antichrists weren't just active in the world during the times when the apostles were working to establish the church and the New Testament books were being written. There are many antichrists at work in the world today leading people astray. We need to continually be aware of those who tell lies about Jesus, and we need to be so intimately familiar with the truth about Jesus that the second we hear something untrue, we can identify it as such. The way to make sure we don't buy the lie is simple—know and love the true Jesus!

- **How would you describe the spirit of the antichrist?**

- **What is the best way to identify a lie about Jesus?**

Day Five

1 JOHN 4:4



Dealing with the deceptions of the devil requires more than a comfortable commitment to Christ. We must understand that we are in a spiritual battle, and at times, it will require that we confront sin and lies with a wartime mentality. This may seem a bit scary, but we have no reason to fear. Jesus has conquered the devil, and we share in His victory. For those who belong to God, we are conquerors, not by our own strength, but by our faith in the one who had defeated death. Whatever the world throws our way, no matter how difficult it may seem, Jesus is greater. When we live by faith in Him, we can know we will be victorious.

- **What tempts you to fear?**

- **Why is it important that we understand Jesus has overcome the world?**