

1 Turn in your Bibles to Ephesians 6:10

Matthew 16:18 is the first mention of the church in the Bible. Jesus is speaking and He says, “*And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hell shall not overpower it.*” The very first time that Jesus speaks of the church, He speaks of it as being at war against hell. The word ‘gates’ speaks of the place of power and authority. This means that Jesus is saying that the very power and authority of Satan is at war with the church BUT Satan will not overcome the church.

In **Ephesians 6:10-25**, Paul concludes his letter to the Ephesian believers by noting that they are at war. Follow along in your Bible as I read...

Paul began in **1:3** by noting all believers are blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ *in the heavenlies*. Now Paul concludes in **6:10-25** by noting that every believer is engaged in a spiritual war *in the heavenlies*.

2 SIX STRATEGIC STATEMENTS

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| 1. Every believer is at war that is real and has eternal consequences. | Vs. 10-12 |
| 2. Victory is achieved by STANDING in Jesus’ power. | Vs. 13-14a |
| 3. To STAND , believers must acknowledge and use God’s armor. | Vs. 14b-17 |
| 4. To STAND , believers must pray in the Spirit. | Vs. 18 |
| 5. Victory is achieved by SHARING Jesus’ Gospel. | Vs. 19-20 |
| 6. Victory is achieved by SHOWING Jesus’ love. | Vs. 21-25 |

3 1. Every believer is at war. (vs. 10-12)

*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.

The devil & his demonic army hates you, seeks to destroy you & is more powerful than you.

1 Peter 5:8 ‘*Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.*’

A. Satan is real and his Schemes are directed against you... Vs. 11
Satan seeks to...

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| 1. <u>Counterfeit</u> God’s activity so you follow him not Jesus Christ. | Isaiah 14:14, Rev. 13 |
| 2. <u>Deceive</u> you to believe lies rather than love/follow Jesus Christ. | 2 Cor. 11:3 |
| 3. <u>Tempt</u> you to sin. | 1 Cor. 7:5, 1 Thess. 3:5 |
| 4. <u>Discourage</u> you by bringing trials into your life. | Job 1:11 |
| 5. <u>Accuse</u> you before God you when you sin. | Rev. 12:10, 1 Jn. 2:1-2 |

B. Every true believer wrestles with the devil and his demons... Vs. 12

1. *The real battle is not against people but demonic forces that are at work in all of life.*

Through direct demonic ‘oppression’ ...	Luke 22:3 ‘Satan entered Judas...’
Through the ‘world/culture/people’ ...	1 Jn. 5:19 Satan influences the ‘world systems’
Through the ‘flesh’ ...	Eph. 2:2-3 <i>Satan inspires & feeds your flesh</i>
2. *Satan and his demons are greater than you are in yourself.* **Heb. 2:7,14, June 9**

C. Living in Jesus’ strength is necessary for victory...Vs.10

Be strong... (command) “*Be strengthened in the power of His strength*” **Eph. 3:16-21, 1:19f**
‘I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me.’ Phil. 4:13, Col. 1:27a-29

4 **2. Victory is achieved by STANDING in Jesus' power.** (vs. 13-14a)

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,

God's strategy for victory (daily winning this spiritual battle) is to STAND in Jesus' power!

Four times Paul says that believers must STAND in Jesus, His strength, His power!

STAND don't run away or try to attack! STANDING: to rest, to rely on, to be fully content in Jesus.

To stand, we must live in Jesus' victory, strength, & position/power over Satan/demons.

5 **3. To STAND, put on (acknowledge) and take up (use) God's armor.** (vs. 11,13,14-17)

11 **Put on** the whole armor of God,

13 Therefore **take up** the whole armor of God,

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 (**take**) the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,

A. Put on (acknowledge)... Identity armor...

Believers have put on Jesus Christ—identified in His death/resurrection & life. **Gal. 3:27**

Believers are to put on Jesus Christ—believe/acknowledge their new life in Christ. **Rom. 13:14**

1. Having... fastened the belt of Truth Agreed with God=repentance

Belt: around the waist: Jesus has made me to know/rejoice in the truth—prepares me for battle

2. Having... put on the breastplate of Righteousness Received Christ's righteousness

Chest-protector: Jesus' righteousness is my righteousness—protects my heart/emotions!

3. Having... put on Gospel shoes of Peace Have peace with God

Cleats: Jesus, through the Gospel, is my peace with God—enables me to stand firm & not slip

B. Take up (use)... Fighting armor...

4. Take up... the shield of Faith Trusting Christ extinguishes darts

Shield: full length, protected the whole body from Satan's fiery darts (lies)

5. Take up... the helmet of Salvation Hope in Christ protects our minds

Helmet: covered the head, protects the brain: mind--

6. Take up... the sword of the Spirit Spirit's use of God's Word

Sword: offensive weapon, God's Word, to beat Satan back & to free people from bondage.

6 **4. To STAND, pray in the Spirit--acknowledge and use God's armor.** (vs. 18)

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,

A. Keep on praying...learn to pray in the Spirit

Don't stop living in the Spirit BUT keep praying in union with & submission to the Spirit

*Only praying in the Spirit is effective in this spiritual battle—fleshly praying does nothing!

B. Keep on being alert...learn to persevere in standing against Satan--praying for other believers.

Don't be sleepy BUT stay awake so you can pray for others.

*We need each other—we need to pray for each other—spiritual web of strength/encouragement!

7 **5. Victory is achieved by SHARING Jesus' Gospel.** (vs. 19-20)

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.

A. Victory is by standing strong in Jesus and assaulting the gates of hell (unbelievers) with Gospel. **Assaulting the gates of hell is done by sharing the Gospel with the hearts of unbelievers.**

Acts 1:8 'you shall receive power when the Spirit has come upon you and you shall be My witnesses...

Matt. 9:37-38 'the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few, therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.'

Pray for the words (conversational shifters) that give opportunity to boldly share the Gospel.

Pray that I will not be limited by my circumstances (chains) but rather boldly speak of the Gospel.

B. What is the Gospel? God's good news about Jesus--that God has provided a way for spiritually dead people—who don't personally know God, to become spiritually alive—who do know God.

1 Cor. 15:1-5

1. Believing that Jesus Christ died for your sins—that you are a sinner deserving God's punishment.
2. Believing that Jesus Christ physically rose from the dead—that only Jesus can save you.

8 **6. Victory is achieved by SHOWING Jesus' love.** (vs. 21-25)

21 So that you also may know how I am and what I am doing, Tychicus the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord will tell you everything. 22 I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage your hearts. 23 Peace be to the brothers, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

24 Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love incorruptible.'

A. Christian fellowship is a necessary to live victorious in Christ.

Christians need each other for encouragement—Paul sent Tychicus to encourage them!

Christians need to experience God's peace and love in Christ for them to live in unity together!

B. Receiving and giving Jesus' love is the glue that holds us together.

Christians are totally dependent on God's grace.

Christians experience God's grace as they genuinely respond to Jesus love for them by loving Him.

9 **INVITATION...**

1. Every Christian is at war! The war is real (often unseen). The stakes of this war are eternal.

True Christians persevere and stand--they stumble along the way, but they remain standing.

Are you aware that you are at war against the devil/demons?

2. Christians must stand in Jesus' victory, be clothed with His protection, & rely on His power.

Victory is found only in Jesus strength and His victory over Satan through the Cross! (Gospel)

Do you see yourself as being---in the truth, clothed with Christ, and at peace with God?

3. **Overcome--**
Direct Assaults... 2 Cor. 11:3
Deceptive Darts... 2 Cor. 10:3-5
Discouraging Bombs... 2 Cor. 12:7-9

