

"The Practice of the Believer"

Ephesians 4-6

Part 26

Introduction: Today in our study of Ephesians we have come to the last section of Paul's letter. The letter can be divided into two parts. Chapters 1-3 deal with who we are in Jesus Christ. Paul taught these three chapters of doctrine to the *Gentile* believers at Ephesus. Then in chapters 4-6 Paul is teaching them how to live a life that matches our position as set forward in 1-3. So in chapters 1-3 we see our **POSITION** and then in 4-6 we see our **PRACTICE**.

Ephesians 4:1

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

Here is how Paul began the chapters dealing with the believer's practice. He was pleading with them to live worthy of their **POSITION** in Christ.

In Ephesians 4-6:9 he called them to:

1. Exercise their spiritual gifts according to God's blueprint for the church.
2. Abandon the sinful practices of their earlier life.
3. Be filled with the Spirit.
4. Allow Jesus Christ to be the center of the family.
5. Raise their children to glorify God.
6. Glorify God in the difficult tasks of life.
7. Treat those who were under their authority with love and respect.

Now as Paul comes to the last section of this letter, he is going to explain to them that there is an enemy that will do all he can to stop them from living in a way that honors their **POSITION** in Christ.

This then brings us to what we are going to consider today.

I. "Preparations for Battle"

Notice Ephesians 6:10

The word "finally" tells us we have come to the concluding section of the letter. The command in this verse is to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Paul may have been thinking of what David did in the 1 Samuel.

1 Samuel 30:1-6

And it came to pass, when David and his men were come to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the south, and Ziklag, and smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire;

² And had taken the women captives, that were therein: they slew not any, either great or small, but carried them away, and went on their way.

³ So David and his men came to the city, and, behold, it was burned with fire; and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, were taken captives.

⁴ Then David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep.

⁵ And David's two wives were taken captives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite.

*⁶ And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: **but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.***

This means that David "**strengthened himself in the Lord**" for the battle that was before him.

Now there is two components that are essential in this passage before us.

- a. **Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.**
- b. **Put on the whole armour of God.**

This first component is vitally important. If you take a weak man and you cloth him in battle armour he will be defeated rather quickly. The armour will not make the man strong. Therefore the first component cannot be overlooked. I want to take a few minutes and break this apart so that we can understand what Paul is saying.

be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

First of all we must notice that the command is to be strong IN THE LORD. This is a reference as to where we are to walk.

John 15:1-5

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

² Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

³ Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

⁵ I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

To be strong in the Lord begins with fellowship with the Lord. Walking with Him. Seeing Him as the Lord of our lives so that we follow His will and not ours. It is listening to Him and not to the world's philosophies. We do not stand a chance in the spiritual battles if we are not walking in fellowship with our Lord.

be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Now we need to understand what it means to be strong in the POWER OF HIS MIGHT. The word "might" means "ability." So the idea here is that we are to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His ABILITY. Now we can begin to see that Paul is calling his us to access the power of God and allow it to work in our lives. We are to serve Him with a surrendered spirit so that as we exercise our gifts it is not done in our power but in the power of His ability. This again is being surrendered over to the Holy Spirit so that He works the power of God in and through us. This makes us channels through which God can work. Let me show you several verses that we looked at a while back.

Ephesians 3:16-20

¹⁶ That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

¹⁷ That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

¹⁸ May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

¹⁹ And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

²⁰ Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

I want to consider for a moment why Paul spoke of the love of Jesus Christ in between these verses that focus upon God's might and power. Let us notice what happened to this church.

Revelation 2:1-5

Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks:

² *I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:*

³ *And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name 's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.*

⁴ *Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.*

⁵ *Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.*

This church eventually had their candlestick removed because they had fallen out of love with the Lord.

What about you? Have you left your first love? Do you love other things more than the Lord? If so repent! Get back to the basics and get on your knees and ask the Lord to restore the love which you allowed to get away. This church which started out so well and heard the warnings of Paul in this letter allowed the enemy to lead them down a path of divided allegiance. They may have had the armour, but they lost their strength.

II. "Understand our Enemy"

Part 1

Notice Ephesians 6:11-12

We will get to the armour next week. Here in verse 11 we see that our enemy is the Devil, and we need to be equipped to stand against his "WILES". His WILES are his craftiness and deceitful ways. I think we need to take a little time to understand our enemy and how he operates.

A. His origin and his fall.

Ezekiel 28:12-15

¹² *Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.*

¹³ *Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.*

¹⁴ *Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.*

¹⁵ *Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.*

Satan was created perfect. He was created to reflect the glory of God as we see in all the stones. Shortly after creation Satan fell.

Luke 10:18

¹⁸ *And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.*

Isaiah 14:12-15

¹² *How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!*

¹³ *For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:*

¹⁴ *I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.*

¹⁵ *Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.*

When Satan fell one third of the angels fell with him.

Revelation 12:4

⁴ And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

B. His power.

Satan is the most powerful being ever created by God.

Jude 1:9

⁹ Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

C. His ways.

John 8:44

⁴⁴ Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

Satan will twist the Scriptures to bring about deception and he will attack the weakest.

Genesis 3:1-5

Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

² And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

³ But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

⁴ And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

⁵ For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

Satan desired to get to Adam and so he went through Eve to do so. She was the weaker of the two. Adam knew the animals could not talk because he just named them all. Eve did not have that knowledge.

Not only does he deceive individuals, but he also deceives nations.

Revelation 20:3

³ And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

Conclusion:

I want to show you some detail as to how Satan works so that we can see the need to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

Deuteronomy 25:17-18

¹⁷ Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt:

¹⁸ How he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and he feared not God.