

A Practical Study of EPHESIANS

HEAVEN'S PLAN for Life on Earth

“What It’s Like Living According to God’s Plan”

Key verse 5:17 — *“On this account, do not be foolish but be understanding what the will of the Lord is.”*

Study Number Twelve – His Plan for Defense – Ephesians 6:10-24

We’re at study number 12, Ephesians 6:10-24. We’ve made the journey through Paul’s epistle to the Ephesian saints. We come to this last study.

Why would we call this “His Plan For Defense”?

Satan has an amazing ability at a point of great blessing and victory to sneak up on the blind side and really cause some discouraging events or circumstances to bring about a disappointment or a defeat and to get us back to square one. It never happens that we go home from an experience like this without having some real cold water thrown on us in one way or another.

We fight a spiritual warfare.

Our key verse:

Ephesians 6:10, 11

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, to the end that you may be able to hold your ground against the stratagems (or the strategies and plans) of the devil.

Howard Hendricks in his book on Elijah quotes an experience that he had with his father in the Pentagon. It sets the stage for Ephesians 6.

(Elijah by Howard Hendricks)

While waiting for my father in his office at the Pentagon some time ago, I picked up a military journal and began to read a fascinating article by Gen. Douglas B. MacArthur, entitled “Requisites for Military Success.” He stated four such requisites. First, there must be morale or a will to win. There must be an esprit de corps. There must be a cause worth dying for. Second, there must be strength. An army must have capabilities in terms of adequately trained and well-equipped personnel. Third, there must be an adequate source of supply. Life lines must be kept open. The bulk of the article was devoted to the fourth: In order to win, an army must have a knowledge of the enemy. And General Douglas B. MacArthur made this statement: “The greater the knowledge of the enemy, the greater the potential of victory.” He traced this principle through military history, beginning with General Joshua and ending with the North African campaign in the

second world war where Rommel was finally defeated because of the successful work of counter-espionage. This principle has its parallel in the spiritual realm. Paul knew that, for he told the Corinthians that he did not want Satan to gain an advantage over them. And then he adds the reason: “for we are not ignorant of his devices.” We are not in the dark as to how the enemy operates. And the greater the knowledge of the enemy, the greater the potential of victory.
(source unknown)

When we make a decision to line up our life according to God’s plan and endeavor to begin to live it, we’re going to have some problems. It’s going to be tough because the evil one is just not going to sit around and let those kind of purposes go without being challenged.

Now he always comes in a deceitful way. We’ll never know whether he’s going to come like a roaring lion in an affront or attack or whether he’s going to come like an angel of light, preaching righteousness. But he’s always available to accomplish his purpose.

He wants compromise instead of conviction. He wants us to organize ourselves out of our spiritual discipline so we never have time to read the Word and to pray. He wants us to also try to work things out so we neglect and avoid any spiritual confrontation and time with the Lord.

He will work it and work it and work it to cause things to come into our life to keep us from being what we should

become.

Now the apostle realizes that. We're going to have WAR on THREE FRONTS. We have an:

1. EXTERNAL,
2. INTERNAL, and
3. INFERNAL enemy.

We have a battle against:

1. the WORLD,
2. the FLESH—that old nature in us that we talked about, and
3. the DEVIL himself.

The WORLD will always try to get us to conform to its system and its way of thinking. It rules God out. It's eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die. We live for the moment, for the excitement, for the pleasure of now. We don't think seriously about the future. That's the world system—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. It's pride in possessions. It's being a person caught up in the here and now.

What about the FLESH? We will always trigger the flesh in the area of our weaknesses. He'll get us in areas where he will

cause that thing to operate and we'll immediately get angry. Or we'll get involved in moral temptation or in some other area of weakness where we're compromising. He will make the old nature operate.

And third, the DEVIL himself is more interested—when he comes in a frontal attack—in getting us in the spiritual. He will work hard at keeping us from memorizing the Word, reading the Word, praying, fellowshiping with believers, finding conflicts in our schedule so we can't be with Christians. All of the things that have to do with the spiritual realm, he is there and he's ready to be operative and will jump into the middle of the scene as soon as he can.

Now with war on three fronts, we have to have a plan for defense. And this book wouldn't be complete if we didn't have that. So let's get into it—verse 10.

v. 10 Finally, be strong in the Lord in the strength of His might.

“Finally, be strong in the Lord in the strength of His might.”

Now we have an INTERNAL PLAN in verse 10 and an EXTERNAL PLAN in verse 11.

INTERNALLY—how are we going to be ready for this warfare? We aren't if we do it in our own strength.

We cannot, we are no equal to the evil one. He'll whip us up

the side of the head, he will accomplish his purposes. “But greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world.” (1 John 4:4)

When we find our source of strength and we are “strong in the Lord” and “in the strength of His might,” then we can sing that great old hymn “We Rest on Thee.”

We go in faith our own great weakness feeling
And needing more each day, Thy grace to know
If from our hearts a song of triumph pealing,
We rest on Thee, and in Thy name we go.
(source unknown)

Philippians 4:13

I’m ready for anything through the strength of the One who indwells me.

We are not adequate, we’re not capable to meet this frontal attack. But He is.

We read of Elijah:

1 Kings 18:46

and the Lord gave special strength to Elijah...

Paul asked three times this thorn in the flesh, this minister of Satan buffeting him, to be released from it on three occasions

and the Lord said no.

2 Corinthians 12:9

“But My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in your weakness.” ... Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, in my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

It’s a wonderful thing to know that the power that saved us is available to give us victory over the evil one.

There’s a whole entourage of materials and things that are coming out that are denying the existence of the evil one, and we certainly don’t see the Lord doing that.

It was a head-one attack in every situation. He found that the evil one was there constantly trying to frustrate the work of righteousness.

1 Thessalonians 5:24

Faithful is the one who is calling you, who also will do it.

We can claim some of those great promises and the Lord’s going to be with us in it and we have that internal source of strength to face him and to have victory.

Verse 11 begins to tell us about the **EXTERNAL EQUIPMENT** that Paul describes that is ours for the battle.

v. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, to the end that you may be able to hold your ground against the stratagems of the devil.

“Put on the whole armor of God, to the end”—or for the purpose of—that you may be able to hold your ground against the stratagems”—strategies—“of the devil.”

We aren't going to make any advances and we'll be lucky if we can just hold our ground.

How many verses do we read “Therefore my beloved brethren be ye steadfast, unmovable...” (ref. 1 Cor. 15:58)?

Just hold our ground. Hang in there. Stay with it and allow the Lord's armor to protect us.

So this is the second part of his plan for defense.

1. The first INTERNALLY is the strength of the Lord that dwells within us.
2. The second has to do now with putting on the “whole armor of God.”

What does this mean when it says that “you may hold your ground against the strategies of the devil”?

That tells him he's got plans for us when we get home. He has

designs because he knows us as well as we know ourselves. He knows where to shoot. He knows what kind of circumstances to create in order to accomplish His purposes. And his strategies are meant to divert our attention away from life according to God's plan.

He wants to keep us from becoming what we need to become.

Satan has a two-pronged program:

1. keeping us out of the family of God.

If someone is not a Christian today, he's been successful until now. And he's getting an awful lot of children these days of people who have not received Christ. It's a sad, sad story but it's true.

Secondly:

2. once we become a part of the family, to wreak a little havoc, he's going to keep us from ever growing up in Jesus Christ.

He'll keep us childish so we're ineffective and we'll never really bring glory to Him or live life according to God's plan. We'll never really finish significantly the accomplishment of the will of God in our life.

Those are his strategies.

God has a wonderful plan for our life is what Campus Crusade for Christ says in the four spiritual laws.

Satan has an ugly plan for our life and it's bent on our destruction. We can always count on him being very much at work.

Now let's look at some of the argument here and also some of the armory.

He says the reason we need this armor is in verse 12.

v. 12 Because we are not wrestling against blood and flesh, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

“Because we are not wrestling against blood and flesh, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”

Why do you need our armor?

1. Because we're fighting against first of all “principalities.”

There are FOUR ENEMIES that are described here. These are unseen spirits in the satanic domain.

2. “the powers”—they do have powers and they’re well organized.
3. “the world rulers of this darkness”—Satan is the god of this world.
4. “the spiritual forces of wickedness.”

Notice the word that the Greek text chooses to use as the word for “wrestling.” This is face-to-face confrontation. This is not some figment of the imagination. We’re going to be in hand-to-hand combat and he’s got one purpose and that’s to put us flat on the mat, face up.

So he’s whipped our tail and we cry uncle. This is serious business. As a Christian, have we had any doubts or any questions about Him? How successful has He been in accomplishing His purposes in our life the last six months? Talk about how much time we’ve spent in the Word, how much time we’ve spent in prayer, how much we’ve grown in the Lord, and we will have our answer as to how successful He has been in the accomplishment of His purpose.

Or have we been wearing our armor? Have we been drawing upon the strength so that we sit here joying and rejoicing in the Lord and our victory is ours in Jesus Christ?

Lovett says, when he describes this:

Huge satanic forces moving against the saints, they are

unseen, occupying a sphere which corresponds to their nature just as the earth and air corresponds to ours. This does not make them any less real, but it does make fleshly weapons useless. Behind all that is destructive and sinful in this world, Paul sees an evil armada with its commanding general, Satan himself.

(source unknown)

Since he is not a physical being, he can attack whenever he wants. We only become aware when he starts to do his dirty work and we recognize that evidently there's something for anyone who lets the one great piece. When he's the most active, man there's a blessing around the corner. We can recognize it as a Christian when it starts to show up. We can just plan on it. There's something pretty neat just around the corner because we've gotten stirred up.

Here's a quote that fits here:

"If you and Satan haven't met up recently, perhaps you and he are going the same way."

(source unknown)

When we're heading toward him and we meet him in some of these situations and we get him stirred up a tad and we start trying to be faithful and we get our hide nailed to the wall a couple of times, we begin to realize there's going to be some blessings that are going to come out of this and that's the comfort and the peace that every believer faces.

This is a great prayer:

The adversary!
How crafty, how clever his tactics.
Sometimes he comes to us as a roaring lion
Attempting to tear me
into scattered bits.
At other times he comes
As an angel of light
Suggesting with coy subtlety
“How could anything so beautiful be so wrong?”
Lord, I stand clad in Your armor
Claiming Your name
and singing Your praise.
For Your power over him
is greater by far
than his power over me.
(source unknown)

Again the key of victory is focusing on the Person of the Lord Jesus.

Isn't it wonderful, we started the book with the Lord Jesus. He's responsible for salvation but He's also responsible for victory.

Martin Luther said:

When Satan knocks on my door, I send the Lord Jesus. I don't go there myself. I don't want to mess with him. I'm no equal.

Because greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world.

(source unknown)

He's available. He's ready to lead us on from victory unto victory.

v. 13 On this account, take the whole armor of God in order that you may be able to stand your ground in the evil day, and after proving victorious over everything, to stand your ground.

“On this account,”—since we have this big battle we’re facing and this array of unseen spirits.

“On this account, take the whole armor of God”—don’t leave any pieces of it out—“in order that you may be able to stand your ground in the evil day, and after proving victorious over everything, to stand your ground.”

How do we “stand your ground”?

There’s a great verse in 1 Corinthians that helps us:

1 Corinthians 10:13

There is no testing or temptation taken you, but such is as common to man.

God is faithful. He will not allow us to be tempted or tested

above that which we are able. But will with the tempting or testing, provide a way of escape that we may be able to bear up under it.

He will only allow Satan himself to go so far.

Remember Job? He said you can take everything Job's got, just don't kill him. When the sons of men came to present themselves before God himself, God said you can do all you want to Job but just don't kill him.

Job of course, through that whole set of circumstances, proved to be victorious.

Does Jesus know what He's talking about? For 40 days and 40 nights He had to face the evil one head-on out there in the wilderness.

The first thing that the evil one says, "turn these stones into bread." Man acts independent of the Father so we can feed ourselves. And he took Him up to the pentacle of the temple and he says "cast yourself off of here. Doesn't the Bible say that the angels will bear you up on their wings." He can even take the scripture and quote it out of context.

And finally of course he says "if you'll come up here on these mountains and look out on all these kingdoms, I'll give those to you and you don't even have to go to the cross. You don't have to go through any of that stuff. That's all yours if you'll just bow and worship me for a minute."

Powerful, attractive temptations—and what does the Lord Jesus do? He grabs the sword of the Spirit and he slashes the evil one three times from the book of Deuteronomy. And that's the key to it. If we have the Word of God in our heart and in our mind, and when those things come and we're aware of them, then we have these promises. We're never alone. We know the Lord's with us. We know that He is going to provide the victory.

James 4:7

So give yourselves humbly to God, resist the devil and he'll flee from you.

And after proving victorious, keep on standing our ground. Why? Because after every victory we're the most vulnerable. And he knows there's a time of relaxation and that's when he comes to wail on our tail to try to catch us off guard.

Verse 14—now we're going to see SIX PIECES of the ARMOR that Paul suggests that we ought to wear as believers.

v. 14 Stand therefore, after you have girded your waists with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,

“Stand therefore, after you have girded your waists with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,”

Now what's the first thing we're going to put on? We're going to put on your BELT OF TRUTH.

What's the truth? The Word of God. The belt holds everything else together.

We're living in a time when the horrible onslaught in the theological world right now is on the doctrine of inspiration. The inspiration and the authority of the scriptures.

The evil one can get our belt, the rest of our armor will fall apart. He knows that! So there's a great war waging, a battle for the Bible. People questioning the inspiration and the authority of the scriptures.

May we never be found guilty telling anybody that we do not believe in the verbal full inspiration of the scripture. Inerrant is the only rule of faith and practice.

God help us if we ever cause anybody to have a doubt for a second that the Word of God is full and complete of divine revelation from Genesis to Revelation. It is a BELT OF TRUTH! We can count on it. It is one of the great instruments, one of the pieces of armor for waging war against the evil one. And he knows that. So as a result, he wants to cause doubt. He wants us to question how well it's going to work.

1 Timothy 4:1, 2

But the Holy Spirit tells us clearly that in the last times some

of the church will turn away from Christ to become eager followers of teachers with devil-inspired ideas. These teachers will tell lies with straight faces and do it so often that their consciences won't even bother them.

The second piece of armor is:

2. “the breastplate of righteousness,”

Why do you have to have that? One of the big problems that the evil one likes to cause to happen to us, and maybe we've already had this, just after we become a Christian he causes us to doubt that nothing happened. That we're just the same as we were. Nothing really happened. We just said that prayer and said we invited Christ but nothing really happened.

What's that doing? That's taking that “breastplate of righteousness”—the righteousness of Jesus Christ—away. All we have to do is agree with him at that point.

Yes we are sinful but we're clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. He doesn't see us as sinful anymore. He sees our breastplate, He sees the righteousness of Christ. We don't stand before Him clothed in our own righteousness but dressed in His righteousness and His alone.

First Peter chapter 3 talks about that:

1 Peter 3:14-16

But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness you'll be blessed. Have no fear of them or be troubled but set apart Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being those who are prepared to make a defense to everyone who is asking you for a reason concerning the hope that is in you, but doing this with gentleness and reverence keeping a clear conscience so that in case you are being spoken against they may be put to shame those who are insulting or reviling your good behavior in Christ.

He doubts our righteous standing. He doubts the quality of our life in Jesus Christ.

So we have the BELT OF TRUTH, we have the “BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS,” now we're going to go on and see the rest of it—verse 15.

v. 15 and having sandaled your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace.

“and having sandaled your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace.”

In the army we have to have some good shoes on. We have to have a good foundation under us.

Under us is the good news of “the gospel of peace.” We have peace inward, outward and upward. We have good, firm footing in the good news that Jesus Christ died for our sins. He's not going to knock us off our feet because our feet are

planted in the Gospel.

v. 16 In addition to all these, taking the shield of faith, by means of which you can put out all the flaming darts of the evil one.

“In addition to all these, taking the shield of faith, by means of which you can put out all the flaming darts of the evil one.”

What’s our fourth piece of equipment? It’s “the shield of faith.”

We hold that shield up there, catch all those fiery darts that he’s throwing at us.

Why do we need a “shield of faith”?

When the temptations come we’re there to trust Him to give us the victory to go through it.

What about when the testings come and we don’t understand it and some traumatic, unpredictable, horrible thing happens in your life? Can we still throw up our shield and catch his fiery darts? Or are we going to let his fiery darts get through and cause us to question Gods’ goodness? Cause us to fill our heart with bitterness?

Those things really sting when they get through. We have to keep that “shield of faith” up there.

The one thing Satan wants to do, more than anything else, is

to destroy our confidence in God's ability to handle the affairs of our life.

We can just mark that down as a truth that we'll find from the Garden of Eden when he tried to destroy Eve's confidence in God by restraining them from eating of the trees there in the garden. Even to the present day, he wants to destroy our confidence in God's love and His best interest for us.

That "shield of faith" is TRUST in the time of trouble.

Get back behind our shield when things get rough and the fiery darts are flying, because that "shield of faith" is going to quench them.

v. 17 And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

"And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

The fifth piece of armor is "the helmet of salvation."

No wonder we have the "salvation" on the top end and the "gospel of the peace" on the bottom end.

So we have the good news on both ends.

Why do we have a "helmet of salvation"? Because it's salvation past, present and future.

In the PAST, remember we have been saved from sin.

In the PRESENT, we're continually being saved.

Looking forward to that FUTURE day of salvation when we're going to be glorified, justified, and sanctified.

The tenses of salvation—the helmet is there—we're thinking right. Our head is protected.

But one other thing that Satan really loves to work on is the assurance that anything happened when we invited Christ in our life. And if he can get us questioning our salvation and the assurance of our salvation, he has got us into a position. He knows if he can get us thinking wrong, we're going to start acting wrong.

So the head is covered with the “helmet of salvation” which is ours in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. So protect the head!

“and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

We have one OFFENSIVE weapon. Jesus used it three times in Matthew 4 and Luke 4 against the evil one. Then we must have a good sharp sword, ready to use it on any occasion to parry, to put off, to put him down and use the Word of God as our sword to go on the offensive.

v. 18 Through every prayer and supplication, praying at all times in the Spirit, and maintaining a constant alertness in the same with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints,

“Through every prayer and supplication, praying at all times in the Spirit, and maintaining a constant alertness in the same with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints,”

Now notice TWO THINGS:

1. There’s no armor for the back.

God never provided anything for us to turn tail and run. We only stand our ground. We go on the offensive. We take your stand, let the darts fly. But there’s no armor for the back. God never meant the Christian soldier to turn around and flee from the battle.

2. Prayer is not a part of the equipment.

We have six pieces of equipment to wear but all of them are effective through prayer when we commit ourselves, and the use of the equipment, to the Lord.

Constant, earnest, spiritual prayer is added here to the careful equipment to fulfill the requirements of this equipment. And finally to be strong in the Lord and the strength of His might.

Lovett says:

Prayer is Godward, not directed against the enemy. If the armour is useless in our own strength, even as we speak to Satan, we simultaneously ask God to anoint the word to his blasphemous heart. Unless we meet Satan prayerfully, it is easy to slip out of the spirit and into the flesh. Meeting him in the flesh is a joke, he rules the flesh. Prayer humbles us, restraining any arrogant blasts. Paul enjoins us to pray. (source unknown)

Also to pray for the brethren—why? The Lord Jesus said “I’m praying for you Peter because Satan is desiring to have you that he might sift you like wheat and I am praying for you that your faith will not fail.” (ref. Luke 22:31)

He does have frontal attack and we have to be available to pray for our brothers and sisters who are finding it extremely difficult in these days to maintain the victorious stance.

v. 19 and on behalf of me, in order that there might be given me utterance in the opening of my mouth in boldness, to proclaim the mystery of the gospel,

“and on behalf of me, in order that there might be given me utterance in the opening of my mouth in boldness, to proclaim the mystery of the gospel,”

“Would y’all pray for me” he says, “that I could continue to be

bold, that I could continue to proclaim the message of the gospel”—the mystery that we talked about back in chapter 3.

v. 20 for which I am an ambassador in a chain, in order that in it I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

“for which I am an ambassador in a chain,”—he’s in prison in Rome—“in order that in it I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.”

2 Corinthians 5:20

We are Christ’s ambassadors, God is using us to speak to you, we beg you as though Christ Himself were here pleading with you, receive the love He offers you, be reconciled to God.

Philippians 1:12-14

And I want you to know this dear brothers, everything that has happened to me here has been a great boost in getting out the good news concerning Christ. ...

Acts 4:31

After this prayer, the building where they were meeting, shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and boldly preached God’s message.

v. 21 But in order that you also might know how I am, and what I am doing, all things to you, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make known.

“But in order that you also might know how I am, and what I am doing, all things to you, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make known.”

Who’s Tychicus? There are two things that are said about him.

What’s it say?

“beloved brother”

What does that tell us? He’s not a physical brother. He’s a brother in the body of Christ. He’s a “beloved brother.”

Secondly, he’s a “faithful minister in the Lord.” They can count on him. They can hang on it, he’s going to be there. He is a “faithful minister in the Lord.”

Dr. V. Raymond Edman in one of his works speaks about Tychicus and he said.

Tychicus had two pre-eminent qualifications as a Christian. He was a brother beloved, obviously of a loving disposition by the indwelling Spirit. A man considerate of others, courteous, compassionate and Christ-like, a living example of a loving Saviour. He was also a faithful minister. The word is old-

fashioned and means a servant.

Just as our Lord declared, whosoever will be great among you shall be your minister, even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many.

The Bible nowhere states that Tychicus, like Apollos was eloquent in the Scriptures but it repeats that he was faithful, who served with Paul as needed and willing to go anywhere. Like his master in heaven, Tychicus, all his days on earth was loving and loyal, diligent and dependable, indifferent to self and eager to serve. He preached the gospel as much by his life as by his lips. His conduct corroborated the content of his preaching and his actions spoke as loudly as his words. His commendation can be rightly coveted by each of us, a brother beloved, a faithful minister in the Lord.
(source unknown)

Why? That's the result of living life according to God's plan. God wants that for every one of us. He wants us to be just like Tychicus who steps on the sacred page for a second. He's going to take the letter over to them and give them the information about Paul and then he's going to disappear.

v. 22 Whom I sent to you for this same purpose, in order that you might know these things concerning us, and that he might encourage your hearts.

“Whom I sent to you for this same purpose, in order that you might know these things concerning us, and that he might encourage your hearts.”

v. 23 Peace to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Peace to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

v. 24 Grace be with all those who are loving our Lord Jesus Christ with undying love.

“Grace be with all those who are loving our Lord Jesus Christ with undying love.”

The letter ends.

It BEGAN with “grace” and it ENDS with “grace.”

What is the plan for defense?

What are the lessons that we get from this last episode?

Lesson #1: We are in a war on three fronts: the world, the flesh, & the devil.

Lesson #2: Endure suffering along with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. And as Christ’s soldier, do not let yourself become tied up in the affairs of this life, for then you cannot satisfy the one who enlisted you in his army. 2 Timothy 2:3, 4 (NLT)

Lesson #3: So I advise you to live according to your new life in the Holy Spirit. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. The old sinful nature loves to do evil, which is just opposite from what the Holy Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are opposite from what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, and your choices are never free from this conflict. Galatians 5:16, 17 (NLT)

Lesson #4: We use God's mighty weapons, not mere worldly weapons, to knock down the Devil's strongholds. With these weapons we break down every proud argument that keeps people from knowing God. With these weapons we conquer their rebellious ideas, and we teach them to obey Christ. 2 Corinthians 10:4, 5 (NLT)

Lesson #5: ...”even though I have received wonderful revelations from God. But to keep me from getting puffed up, was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from getting proud. Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. Each time he said, ‘My gracious favor is all you need. My power works best in your weakness.’” 2 Corinthians 12:7-9 (NLT)

Lesson #6: These people are false apostles. They have fooled you by disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. But I am not surprised! Even Satan can disguise himself as an angel of light. So it is no wonder his servants can also do it by pretending to be godly ministers. In the end they will get

every bit of punishment their wicked deeds deserve. 2
Corinthians 11:13-15 (NLT)

Lesson #7: Be careful! Watch out for attacks from the Devil, your great enemy. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for some victim to devour. Take a firm stand against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your Christian brothers and sisters all over the world are going through the same kind of suffering you are. 1 Peter 5:8, 9 (NLT)

Lesson #8: The plan for defense is: #1 Be strong in the Lord & #2 Put on the whole armor.

Lesson #9: The Devil has schemes for our defeat. "...so that Satan will not outsmart us. For we are very familiar with his evil schemes." 2 Corinthians 2:11 (NLT)

Lesson #10: The enemy is well-described in verse 12. "Because we are not wrestling **against** blood and flesh, but **against** the principalities, **against** the powers, **against** the world rulers of this darkness, **against** the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places." Ephesians 6:12 (DAV)

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Where’ve we been?

We looked at:

1. The Master Plan—Jesus Christ the center of it all.
2. His Plan for Getting to Know Him—The prayer Paul prayed that we’d get to know Him with an enlarged capacity for knowledge.
3. His Plan for Giving Life—it’s a gift by grace.
4. His Plan for Peace was to bring Jew and Gentile together in one through the blood of Christ.

5. His Plan for a Body was to melt Jew and Gentile into a body.
 6. His Plan for Power was Paul's prayer that ended the doctrinal section.
 7. His Plan for a Functioning Body as he talked to us about spiritual gifts.
 8. His Plan for Life on a New Level.
 9. His Plan for Living in the Light.
 10. His Plan for the Husband and Wife Relationship.
 11. His Plan for the Home and Business Relationship.
- And finally:
12. His Plan for Defense.

Father, as we come before You with this book that we've studied and shared together. We now have an obligation to be doers of the Word and not just hearers only deceiving our own selves. We would pray that You would indeed anoint our wills with a holy determination, to begin to live life according to Your plan, to be better equipped to live that kind of life because now we understand better what You intend for us to do. And through each of us we pray our Father that we would forget those things which are behind and we would press

toward those things which are in front. We'd press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, knowing that one of these days soon we're going to be like Him for we're going to see Him as He is. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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A Practical Study of EPHESIANS

HEAVEN'S PLAN for Life on Earth

“What It’s Like Living According to God’s Plan”

Key verse 5:17 — *“On this account, do not be foolish but be understanding what the will of the Lord is.”*

STUDY NUMBER TWELVE – HIS PLAN FOR DEFENSE – EPHESIANS 6:10-24

KEY VERSES 6:10,11

v. 10 Finally, be strong in the Lord in the strength of His might.

v. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, to the end that you may be able to hold your ground against the stratagems of the devil.

v. 12 Because we are not wrestling against blood and flesh, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

v. 13 On this account, take the whole armor of God in order that you may be able to stand your ground in the evil day, and after proving victorious over everything, to stand your ground.

v. 14 Stand therefore, after you have girded your waists with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,

v. 15 and having sandaled your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace.

v. 16 In addition to all these, taking the shield of faith, by means of which you can put out all the flaming darts of the evil one.

v. 17 And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

v. 18 Through every prayer and supplication, praying at all times in the Spirit, and maintaining a constant alertness in the same with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints,

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v. 19 and on behalf of me, in order that there might be given me utterance in the opening of my mouth in boldness, to proclaim the mystery of the gospel,

v. 20 for which I am an ambassador in a chain, in order that in it I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

v. 21 But in order that you also might know how I am, and what I am doing, all things to you, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make known.

v. 22 Whom I sent to you for this same purpose, in order that you might know these things concerning us, and that he might encourage your hearts.

v. 23 Peace to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

v. 24 Grace be with all those who are loving our Lord Jesus Christ with undying love.

QUESTIONS:

1. Read Ephesians 6:10-24 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

2. What two things are we supposed to do to be prepared for spiritual warfare in verses 10 & 11?

3. The word **against** occurs 6 times in verses 11 & 12 to describe our enemy. Record all six.

4. Why does God provide an armor according to verse 13?

5. Outline the pieces of armor supplied in verses 14-17.

6. Outline the battle strategy in verse 18.

7. Paul asks for prayer. There are four purposes for this request in verses 19-22. List these.

8. What three things does Paul pray for them in verses 23 & 24?

9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: We are in a war on three fronts: the world, the flesh, & the devil.

LESSON #2: Endure suffering along with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. And as Christ's soldier, do not let yourself become tied up in the affairs of this life, for then you cannot satisfy the one who enlisted you in his army. 2 Timothy 2:3, 4 (NLT)

LESSON #3: So I advise you to live according to your new life in the Holy Spirit. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. The old sinful nature loves to do evil, which is just opposite from what the Holy Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are opposite from what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, and your choices are never free from this conflict. Galatians 5:16, 17 (NLT)

LESSON #4: We use God's mighty weapons, not mere worldly weapons, to knock down the Devil's strongholds. With these weapons we break down every proud argument that keeps people from knowing God. With these weapons we conquer their rebellious ideas, and we teach them to obey Christ. 2 Corinthians 10:4, 5 (NLT)

LESSON #5: ...”even though I have received wonderful revelations from God. But to keep me from getting puffed up, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from getting proud. Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. Each time he said, ‘My gracious favor is all you need. My power works best in your weakness.’” 2 Corinthians 12:7-9 (NLT)

LESSON #6: These people are false apostles. They have fooled you by disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. But I am not surprised! Even Satan can disguise himself as an angel of light. So it is no wonder his servants can also do it by pretending to be godly ministers. In the end they will get every bit of punishment their wicked deeds deserve. 2 Corinthians 11:13-15 (NLT)

LESSON #7: Be careful! Watch out for attacks from the Devil, your great enemy. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for some victim to devour. Take a firm stand against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your Christian brothers and sisters all over the world are going through the same kind of suffering you are. 1 Peter 5:8, 9 (NLT)

LESSON #8: The plan for defense is: #1 Be strong in the Lord & #2 Put on the whole armor.

LESSON #9: The Devil has schemes for our defeat. "...so that Satan will not outsmart us. For we are very familiar with his evil schemes." 2 Corinthians 2:11 (NLT)

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