

## Four Commands, One Objective!

Ephesians 6:1-24

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# Initial Insights

## Ephesians Visual Overview

In **chapter 1** of Ephesians, the Apostle Paul outlined our new identity in Christ. In **chapter 2**, he reminded us of who we were before knowing Christ and the futility of our efforts to please God and to navigate life successfully. In **chapter 3**, he affirmed the power that is available to each one of us through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

In **chapter 4**, Paul detailed the essence of our calling. In **chapter 5** we were commanded to walk in **four** specific ways. And now, in **chapter 6**, we're instructed on how we can stand our ground and keep the faith in the midst of a battle that is not only physical but also spiritual!

\*The first part of our passage (verses 1-9) should have been included in our last sermon.

## Walking In Submission

### Ephesians 6:1-9 (NASB95)

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. <sup>2</sup> Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), <sup>3</sup> so that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth. <sup>4</sup> Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. <sup>5</sup> Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; <sup>6</sup> not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. <sup>7</sup> With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, <sup>8</sup> knowing that whatever good

thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free.<sup>9</sup>  
And masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

Children & parents / Slaves & masters / masters & The Master!

Fear (vs. 5) relates back to [Ephesians 5:21](#)

And be subject (submit) to one another in the fear of Christ.

[Obedience](#) is best defined in [Ephesians 6:6](#)

Try to please them all the time, not just when they are watching you. As servants of Christ, do the will of God with all your heart.

And, the motivation for obedience comes in [Ephesians 6:8](#)

Remember that the Lord will reward each one of us for the good we do, whether we are slaves or free.

[Ephesians 6:10-24](#) (NASB95)

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.<sup>11</sup> Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.<sup>12</sup> For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.<sup>14</sup> Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,<sup>15</sup> and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;<sup>16</sup> in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil *one*.<sup>17</sup> And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.<sup>18</sup> With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,<sup>19</sup> and *pray* on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel,<sup>20</sup> for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in *proclaiming* it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.<sup>21</sup> But that you also may know about my

circumstances, how I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make everything known to you.<sup>22</sup> I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that you may know about us, and that he may comfort your hearts.<sup>23</sup> Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>24</sup> Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with incorruptible love.

## Four Commands, One Objective...

### 1. Be Strong vs. 10

Notice how we are to be strong - "*In the Lord & in the strength of His might!*"

[Ephesians 6:10](#) (NASB95) - Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.

English = Strong, strength & might - seems pretty redundant!

The Greek is much more illustrative: In the **dynamite** of the Lord, and in the strength (dominion/authority) of **WHO** He **is**!! (to have or be!) The power that is inherently His!

In other words, my power is **not** limited to **my own physical strength**, but rather is related to who I'm associated with, who I'm in relationship with! I'm a child of the Most High King!! That's **amazing** authority and dominion! Unrivaled authority and dominion!

### 2. Put On/Take Up vss. 11 & 13

Put on/Take up the "*full armor*" of God (repeated in **verses 11 & 13!**)

We tend to minimize preparation in our hurry to DO! We add as we go! Instead of fully suiting-up, we think we can add armor in the midst of the battle!!

**And**, **verse 12** informs us that a big part of our preparation is understanding the nature of the battle - it's spiritual not just fleshly!

Even David the shepherd boy, in the midst of a very physical, fleshly, challenge against

Goliath, saw the spiritual side of it as well! “*Who is this uncircumcised Philistine who taunts the armies of the living God?!*”

[1 Samuel 17:26](#) (NASB95)

Then David spoke to the men who were standing by him, saying, “...Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should taunt the armies of the living God?”

Personally, I believe this spiritual battle is most felt and experienced today in the realm of our minds. There are so many spiritual battle that begin in the mind, and have the potential of being won in the mind. Our actions merely follow what we've already decided, made-up-our-minds to do!

Examples: Lust, Envy, Gossip, Pride, Unfair Judgments & Prejudgments, Power Games...

But, also notice the **objective** throughout - to stand firm (vss. 11 & 13) and to resist (vs. 13), to extinguish the flaming missiles/arrows of the evil one (vs. 16).

God doesn't expect us to defeat the enemy, or to take the hill, seize a position. He merely expects us to stand our ground!

We do this by putting on ALL of the armor!

Let's talk about the armor for a minute. Often we spend so much time explaining each element of the armor, and what it would have been like back then, that we lose sight of what each piece of armor represents.

We are to suit-up with **Truth**, **Righteousness**, **Peace**, **Salvation** & **the Word of God!**

**First** of all, we are to gird ourselves with **Truth** (vs. 14). That word gird literally means to encircle or surround - like putting on a belt.

Gird - gird up one's loins. Prepare oneself for action. Originally it referred to tucking up the traditional long robe into a girdle (that is, a belt) so it would not hamper physical activity.

We gird ourselves with Truth by knowing **God's Word** (**the Sword of the Spirit**) and through **prayer** (intercession). These are really the two main offensive weapons in our

arsenal!

And, the **shield of our faith** extinguishes the flaming **arrows/attacks!!** ([explain](#))

**\*\*Now** I'd like to make a connection between what we're learning here and what we learned when we went through our **Identity Teaching Series**.

**Jamie Winship - Confession —> Repentance —> Transformation**

**Confession** = Truth-telling, not an apology. Confession is telling God what you believe about Him, yourself and others. It's the beginning of genuine transformation. If we don't tell God our truth, how can He enlighten our reality with His truth?

As long as we refuse to tell the truth, we remain in bondage to our lies, deceptions and rationalizations.

**Repentance** = Turning from, letting go of, the lie/deception we formerly believed. Quite simply, repentance is changing the way that we think. God's Truth empowers us to believe in a new way, think in a new way, act in a new way. This is transformation!

**Transformation** = Further change in the likeness of Jesus!

Yes, God already knows what we're thinking/believing. But, we don't discover the deception that we're holding on to until we tell the truth!

**\*\*Living Fearless** excerpt (pp. 48-49)

**“Confessing to one another is the greatest way to form true community because it draws people together!”**

3. **Stand Firm**

vss. 11, 13 & 14

**Stand firm** = “To establish, stay intact.”

This is our sole objective - to stand firm & resist the evil one and his attacks! The temptation of Christ is a great illustration of this.

[Philippians 4:1](#) (NASB95)

**Therefore, my beloved whom I long to see, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord, my beloved.**

**In what way?? How??**

[Philippians 3:20–21](#) (NASB95)

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;<sup>21</sup> who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

[Hebrews 12:2](#) (NASB95)

Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Standing firm means appropriating what has already been won for us, and in the present context this means putting on the armor of God and standing firm in the midst of the battle.

**Peter T. O'Brien**

(Australian pastor, missionary & NT scholar - commentary on Ephesians)

This is the theological center of Revelation - because Jesus has already won the war on our behalf, and because he is coming again, Christians can stand firm even in the midst of persecution and temptation.

**Matthew Y.**

**Emerson**

(Associate Pastor of religion at Oklahoma Baptist University - commentary on Revelation)

[Matthew 7:24–25](#) (NIV)

Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.<sup>25</sup> The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

4. Pray

vss. 18-24

[Ephesians 6:18](#) (NLT)

Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.

Our prayer is not just for us, but also for other believers - everywhere!

We are to **be alert & persistent!**

Alert = sleepless, like a guard on watch!

Persistent = continuous, without end!

### **Closing Comments**

Four commands: **Be strong**, **Take up/Put on**, **Stand firm & Pray!**

One Objective: **Stand Firm! Resist!**