



Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians

**SIT
WALK
STAND**

STUDY EIGHT – TAKING OUR STAND FOR JESUS

Read Ephesians 6:1-9

Before moving to the main section of this chapter, I believe we should take note of what Paul has to say about our family lives. Although many of us are now grandparents, we can perhaps encourage those of our children who are parents to consider these instructions. Whilst we do not have slaves, we may need to think in terms of our employers and how we serve God in the workplace or in other organisations in which we are involved.

- Do we see ways in which we could apply this in our lives?
- Notice what verse 8 says.

Read verses 10-20

Here, Paul comes to his final words to the Ephesians: *Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. "Put on all of God's armour so that you will be able to **STAND FIRM** against all the strategies of the devil. For we are not fighting against flesh and blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places."* (verses 11-12)

- Many people, even Christians, are not certain of the existence of a 'real' devil. What do we believe?

Let's look at some of the scriptures which show that the devil is real and seeks to destroy anyone who belongs to God?

Read 1 John 3:4-10, Hebrews 2:14

- Does this help us to understand that yes, the devil is real, but that Jesus came to destroy his works. And, as the song we sing says: *"I'm no longer a slave to fear, I am a child of God."*
- Does being a child of God mean we can forget about the devil and his works?

The daily prayer app I have, breaks up the Lord's prayer and gives suggestions as to how to pray about each sentence. Under *Deliver us from evil*, it says: *"Pray for God's protection against any of the strategies of Satan."*

So, whilst we should be aware of the devil and his works, we need not be afraid if we follow God's instructions. A verse in an old hymn says: *Jesus is stronger than Satan and sin, Satan to Jesus must bow.*" Back to our song again, *Our God is a great big God!*

So, how do we put on God's armour, and what does that mean?

[Verse 14: "Stand, your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armour of God's righteousness."](#)

The belt of truth is God's word, and we should hold it close to us, just as a belt is worn close to the body. Roman soldiers needed a belt to hold their weapons!

We frequently talk about the importance of regular reading of the scriptures. How can we know how we should live, if we don't read what is in effect, God's manual for living? It is essential that we can distinguish what is true from a lie. The devil is a liar. Remember how he came to Eve saying, *"Did God really say you must not eat of any of the fruit in the garden?"* (Genesis 3:1)

In John 8:44, the scripture says: *"..He (the devil) was a murderer from the beginning and has always hated the truth. There is no truth in him. When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar the father of lies."*

The body armour of God is his righteousness. We should always be aware of the importance of right living, *acting in accord with divine or moral law.* As Christians, we cannot *'do our own thing'*, it has to be God's way.

[Verse 15: "For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared."](#)

Isaiah 52:7 says: *"How beautiful on the mountains of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, YOUR GOD REIGNS!*

Many years ago, a song frequently sung was *OUR GOD REIGNS* *"How lovely on the mountains are the feet of Him, who brings good news.... Our God reigns."*

- Why are shoes so important to us? (That is, aside from fashion!)
- Do we have God's peace in our lives?

[Verse 16: "In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil."](#)

I remember when teaching the history of the Romans describing to the kids what these shields were like. They were not tiny round shields, but large, slightly curved rectangles. When they went into battle and the enemy had a height advantage, or they shot their arrows high, the Roman soldiers would each raise their shield so that they

all touched creating what is a carapace or a tortoise shell, making the soldiers safe from the arrows of the enemy.

That is exactly what knowing God's word will do for us. We can deflect any arrows of the devil, especially when we stand together in prayer.

Verse 17: "Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

There is so much going on in our world that we don't need to see or hear and Romans 12:2 tells us not to conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of our minds. We need to believe and trust in God's word to protect our minds from all evil. Again, it comes back to reading God's word.

Verse 18: "Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere."

We don't always find it easy to pray but this verse says we must be alert – have our spiritual antennae up and running! Also, we must be persistent in our prayers for ourselves and others. I've said before, it can start as a duty, then grow to a discipline but then it can become a delight.

- Do you find it encouraging that Paul had to pray for the right words and asked for prayer on his behalf?
- These things don't happen overnight. It takes time and perseverance.

As some versions put verse 13: **HAVING DONE ALL, STAND!**

Paul himself is evidence of this, as verse 20 tell us he was in chains but still preaching this message as God's ambassador. Despite his chains Paul was still standing!

- How do we support each other to do these three things that Paul exhorts: SIT, WALK AND STAND.



Prayer

Father God, may we be your soldiers, fighting the good fight of faith.