

Discovery Group - Ephesians

War of the Spirit

Accountability

Share how your obedience commitment from last week went, and who you shared with.

Bible: Ephesians 6:10-24

Read *passage* aloud & someone retell in their own words

- What do we learn from this passage about God?
- What do we learn from this passage about people?

Read the *article* on the next page.

- Consider each piece of God's armor for us: Truth. Righteousness. The Gospel. Salvation. Faith. God's Word. Prayer. How does each piece help us in our warfare against powers of darkness?

Commit

What is Jesus calling you to do in *obedience* this week?

Who can you *share* this with? Who can you reach out to in order to make disciples?

Abide: Read the whole book of Ephesians

War of the Spirit

“Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes.”

— Ephesians 6:11

In this final section we are still very much dealing with how the Church fulfills its great purpose. Remember, God’s vision for the Church is to reveal Jesus to the world and make known His wisdom to the powers - and we have been given a glorious picture of that playing out. Paul reveals in this short book the amazing things Jesus has done for us - adopting, forgiving, unifying, making us belong, providing good works for us to do. He has made us into a new humanity with an important and lofty purpose. We are deeply loved by the Father and part of His family. We have a key role to play in the Father’s plan for redemption. We have gifts which are needed for the body of Christ to be fully mature.

But in this final section things take a turn. The metaphors shift from bride to warrior; from son to soldier. Paul introduces the fact of a terrible enemy who is opposed to all the purposes of God. He warns us of spiritual forces that are arrayed against us - undefined entities of great craftiness and power. We are called on to resist this malevolent force with power that God gives us. The ultimate victory is ensured, but we have to engage in the struggle - much like the Israelites who had to strap on their battle gear and wade into the deadly conflict as they received the gift of the Promised Land. Like them, our confidence is in the Lord, and we wield powerful weapons given us by Him. Truth. Righteousness. The Gospel. Salvation. Faith. God’s Word. Prayer.

The devil is taking aim at you. Faith is your shield. Maybe you have suffered some hits. Perhaps you have faced confusion in the face of injustice or seemingly unanswered prayer or failure or depression. Still God calls you to stand. Trust that He is present and He is at work no matter how it feels and no matter what the enemy whispers to your mind.

Ultimately, faith is more a decision than a feeling. You may feel doubt, but you still live by faith. Perhaps the best way to fight this faith battle is by doing all the things Paul lays out in chapters 4-6. Watch your speech. Be thankful. Forgive. Be pure. Don’t wallow in bitterness or anger. Submit to one another. Love your wife. Do not exasperate your children. Respect your husband. Work hard. Pray. Read and obey the Word.

There are no easy answers to the complexities and the hardness of life, but we can know that Jesus foresaw these attacks, and He has called us and equipped us to stand in the face of them.