

How To Stand

Discussion Notes- December 7, 2025

1. If you could instantly become an expert in any skill, what would it be?

This week we were reminded that spiritual battles are real, but God gives us the strength and the armor we need to stand firm. Paul explained that sometimes we have the strength to wrestle, sometimes we can only withstand, and other times all we can do is stand; and God honors every one of those moments. We learned five key ways to stand: hold tightly to God's truth, live with righteousness, walk in peace, trust God fully, and fight using His Word. Each piece of the armor protects us from the enemy's schemes and keeps us rooted when life feels heavy or confusing. The main point was clear: no matter what season you're in or how strong you feel, God equips you to stand firm in Him.

Read Ephesians 6:10-13

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm."

Our battles are not against people but against spiritual forces, which is why we need God's strength rather than our own. Paul urges believers to put on the whole armor of God so they can stand firm when the enemy attacks.

2. What stood out to you about the explanation of the words wrestle, withstand, and stand from the sermon (using Ephesians 6)?

Read Ephesians 6:13-18

"Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication."

Ephesians 6:13–18 lays out the full armor of God, showing us how each piece equips us to stand firm against spiritual battles. From the belt of truth to the sword of the Spirit, every part is designed to protect, strengthen, and prepare us for the challenges we face.

3. Which piece of the armor of God do you feel God is highlighting for you personally right now, and why?

Read Colossians 2:6-10

“Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.”

There were five “Don’t Change” principles: don’t change what you believe, how you live, where you walk, whom you trust, or how you fight. God calls us to stand firm in what is true, even when the world around us pressures us to compromise. The belt of truth is foundational, because people often reject God’s Word not because it is false, but because it contradicts their own desires, habits, or beliefs. When we hold firmly to truth, we are able to live righteously, walk in peace, trust God fully, and fight using His Word without wavering. In a culture that constantly questions or reshapes morality, standing on God’s truth becomes even more critical. These principles show that our stability in Christ starts with truth and flows into every area of life.

4. How might the world or people around us try to influence us to change in ways that conflict with God’s principles?

Read 1 Peter 6:6-11

“Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

Life is full of challenges and spiritual battles, and the sermon reminds us that we are not fighting alone. God equips us with His full armor so that we can stand firm, even when life is hard or when the enemy attacks. Holding onto truth, living righteously, walking in peace, trusting God fully, and wielding His Word equips us to face personal struggles with confidence. Spiritual warfare is often unseen, but the effects are real, and being intentional about standing firm strengthens both our faith and our witness. As we reflect together, the goal is to see where God is calling each of us to take a stand in our own lives and support one another in doing the same.

5. Considering everything we’ve discussed about truth, righteousness, peace, faith, and God’s Word, where is God inviting you to take a stand this week?

Prayer/Closing:

- Pray for strength to stand firm in God’s truth amid life’s challenges.
- Pray for faith to trust God fully, even when circumstances are confusing or difficult.
- Pray for peace and righteousness to guide daily decisions and relationships.

DEEPER DIVE — Paul and the Church in Ephesus

Context/Background:

Paul wrote Ephesians while imprisoned to encourage the believers in Ephesus, a major city in Asia Minor known for its wealth, commerce, and the temple of Artemis. The church in Ephesus faced both external pressures from a pagan culture and internal challenges of unity and spiritual growth. Paul's words about the armor of God were meant to equip them to stand firm spiritually, reminding them that the battle is not against people but against spiritual forces, and that God provides the tools to endure and remain steadfast.

Paul's Perseverance in the Face of Struggle

Read 2 Corinthians 11:23–28

“Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one—I am talking like a madman—with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches.”

This passage illustrates the hardships Paul endured for the sake of the gospel. Despite extreme suffering, Paul remained steadfast and committed to God's mission. His life models the principle of “standing firm”. He could have given in to fear or compromise, but he relied on God's strength and armor to persevere.

The Armor of God Applied to the Church in Ephesus

Read Ephesians 6:10–18

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Paul reminds the Ephesian believers that their struggles are spiritual, not merely physical or societal. The armor of God equips them to stand firm in truth, righteousness, faith, and the Word

of God. Understanding the pressures of living in a city steeped in pagan worship, Paul provides practical spiritual tools for protection, perseverance, and faithful witness.

Encouragement to Stand Firm in Trials

Read Philippians 1:27–30

“Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.”

Paul encourages the believers that suffering for the gospel is not a sign of defeat but a mark of God’s work in their lives. He calls them to stand united in faith, knowing that their perseverance in trials demonstrates God’s power and faithfulness. This mirrors the message of Ephesians: spiritual armor enables steadfastness even in opposition.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does understanding Paul’s personal struggles and perseverance help you grasp the seriousness and purpose of the armor of God?
2. Why do you think Paul emphasizes spiritual battles for the Ephesian church instead of focusing on physical or societal challenges?
3. How can studying the context of Ephesus and its cultural pressures deepen our understanding of why standing firm in truth, righteousness, and faith is so critical today?