

Ephesians 6:10-20 – Battle Ready

The Battle (v.10-12)

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armour 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. -Ephesians 6:10-12

1. How do you think “schemes of the devil”, “cosmic powers over this present darkness”, and “spiritual forces in the heavenly places” affect our lived reality?
2. What might be some of the schemes of the devil that we fail to notice but may dangerously lead us astray?

“It does not matter how small the sins are, provided that their cumulative effect is to edge the man away from the Light and out into the Nothing. ... Indeed, the safest road to Hell is the gradual one—the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones, without signposts.” (C.S. Lewis)

3. In what ways is it possible for the Church and individual Christians to drift, fall asleep, become lukewarm in their discipleship and engagement in God’s mission in the world? Why do you think this happens?
4. What is the difference between a church functioning as a cruise-ship vs. a battleship?

The Armour (v.13-17)

Therefore take up the whole armour 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, -Ephesians 6:13-17

1. God has won the war and continues to fight for us – He has ultimately defeated the power of sin and conquered death, sealing and marking us by His Spirit, securing our eternal salvation and pouring out His spirit to live in us. How does that give you confidence and inform your perspective of how you engage in spiritual battle and mission while you’re still in this world?
2. If the “armour of God” are all things that He has already accomplished for us, why is it important for us to intentionally and vigilantly ‘put these things on’?
3. Which of these pieces of God’s armour have you been struggling or neglecting to put on and keep on in this season of life (*truth, pursuing righteousness, ready gospel-shoes, faith in God’s character and promises, confident assurance of your salvation, spirit-empowered word of God*)?

Prayer, perseverance, proclamation (v.18-20)

praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak. -Ephesians 6:18-20

1. Why is it so vital for us to be praying constantly for each other in our church as well as the global Church - to *keep alert* with all *perseverance* in prayer for all the saints?
2. How can we remind ourselves, and help each other as a church to that end? What disciplines, reminders, rhythms do you need to start putting in place, and how can you encourage and keep one another accountable as a group?
3. Paul calls the Ephesian church to be inward focused- making supplication for all the saints, but also urgently outward focused- ready to go (v.15), declaring the gospel boldly (v.20). How can we seek this balance as a church with our focus, prayers, energy and resources? In what area do you need to pray for boldness, like Paul, to overcome whatever is in the way of proclaiming the gospel?