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Series: Wholly Armed, Part 1

Why The Put-On?

Text: Ephesians 6:10-11

J. C. Ryle(1816-1900), first Anglican bishop of Liverpool, wrote, *“The saddest symptom about many so-called Christians is the utter absence of anything like conflict and fight in their Christianity.”* He continued, *“But of the great spiritual warfare,--its watchings and strugglings, its agonies and anxieties, its battles and contests,--of all this they appear*

*to know nothing at all. (Soldiers and Trumpeters, *Home Truths*. Triangle Press. 1:90)*

We are engaged, as believers, in a war. There is no other word for it. We are not merely experiencing inconveniences, or trials, of difficult times, or some testing. No, we are in a battle. Our adversary, the devil, walks about, according to 1 Peter 5:8, like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

There are other names for the Devil:

- The accuser (Revelation 12:7-11)
- The Tempter (Matthew 4:3)
- Murderer and liar (John 8:44)
- Roaring lion (1 Peter 5:8)
- Serpent (Genesis 3:1; Revelation 12:9)

- Angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:13-15)
- The god of this age (2 Corinthians 4:4)
- Lucifer, son of the morning (Isaiah 14:12-15)

This teaching about our warfare begins with *finally*.

Comment [1]:

*Finally* is a summary word. Paul uses it to refer to all that has been previously said and done. Paul is writing from prison (v. 20; 3:1; 4:1 cf. also, Acts 28:16,20). It is easy to imagine Paul seeing Roman guards daily and connecting the warfare in which they engaged and the warfare in which Paul is engaged.

Finally, **be strong in the Lord.**

Comment [2]:

For every spiritual truth, there is a compelling secular counterfeit. So it is with strength. There are cultural, societal

cues that are called strength indicators, but they may have nothing to do with being strong in the Lord. There is physical *strength*. There is the *strong* resume. There is food with a *strong* flavor. Children with *strong* wills. However, when Paul writes here, he is speaking of a specific kind of strength, that comes from one source. Go with me to 3:14-16. Note the specific description of strength in 3:16: That strength comes *through His Spirit* and goes down to the inner person. This is not some topical salve, rubbed on us and then we're called *strong*. No, this spiritual strength is an imperative(command) in the passive voice, indicating that the subject is being acted upon. That is, we don't make ourselves strong. *God* makes us strong. Technically, this strength of which Paul speaks, is both active and passive. True, God puts His strength on and in us AND we strengthen ourselves by taking God seriously.

Cf. 1 Samuel 30:1-6, especially verse 6. David's encouragement is both active and passive, as is spiritual strength in Ephesians 6. The strength cannot be ours unless we are *in the Lord*. The imperative to be strong is not general, but specific. Be strong *n the Lord and in the power of His might*.

The "put on" of verse 11 is in the imperative as is the "be strong" of verse 10. We believers are responsible for clothing ourselves in the armor of God. Here is the active part of the command. Be open to God putting His strength in you AND, you, put on the armor of God.

The second clause of verse 11 gives us the *reason* we are to put on the whole armor of God. Why put on the armor? Why

bother? To do so is to buy in, to take the Christian life very seriously.

Q. Why make the investment? I'm glad you asked.

Comment [3]:

A. So that we will be able to stand against the wiles, schemes, strategies of the Devil. (Greek word for wiles is *methodeias*, used only here and in Ephesians 4:14). In 2 Corinthians 2:11 we read

Comment [4]:

*...lest Satan should take advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices. We ought to be studying the devil. We ought to get to know, specifically, his devices so that we can stand against them. I've been studying the schemes of the devil so that I might stand against them. He has many. For now, let me present four methods, schemes, wiles of the*

devil.

Comment [5]:

1. He puffs believers up with paralyzing pride. Some of us can hardly do ministry, so busy are we, patting ourselves on the back! Cf. 1 Timothy 3:6:

*Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil.*

2. He draws people into alliances with him. He recruits us to be part of his team. In 2 Timothy 2, Paul describes the ideal ministry workers. 2 Timothy 2:26:

Comment [6]:

*...that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.*

Comment [7]:

**Illus.**

*George was in his garage woodworking shop. The devil burst into George's shop and announced, "I am the devil!". George continued cutting and sanding and nailing and gluing. Satan again bellowed, "I am the devil. Aren't you afraid of me?" George replied, "No. Ive been living with your sister for 47 years." Clearly, Satan had recruited George's wife. :))*

3. The devil causes division among the people of God.

Comment [8]:

Ephesians 4:25-27:

**25** *Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor," [a] for we are members of one another. **26** "Be angry, and do not sin": [b] do not let*

*the sun go down on your wrath, **27** nor give place to the devil.*

4. The devil gets in the mind/head of a believer and generally deceives us, making us tolerant when we should be intolerant.

Comment [9]:

2 Corinthians 11:3-4:

**3** *But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity[a] that is in Christ. **4** For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted—you may well put up with it!*

Both verses 11 and 13, in describing the armor, use the word whole or full. Let's remember that putting one piece on is not going to do much good. We are admonished to put on the full outfit.

We are called to...stand. We are expected to...stand. See it in verses 11,13 and 14? Stand!!

Why the put-on? Why put on the whole armor of God?

Because without it, we'd be naked in battle and that's not good.

Amen