

Stand Firm

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” John 10:10

Some people believe that when we become Christians we will have easy lives full of blessings and prosperity. The reality is that we enter a battleground. As believers we are going to face new opposition, new problems and new dangers. Satan, sometimes called the devil, is a very real enemy and he comes to steal, kill and destroy everything that is good. Whilst Jesus defeated Satan by dying on the cross and coming back to life, Satan will still have an influence until the day that Jesus returns. We need to make sure we arm ourselves against this enemy who poses a threat to our lives and our faith in Jesus.

In Ephesians 6:10-18, Paul talks about this spiritual war we are in. Satan approaches us in many different ways. “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” Satan will always try to deceive us, taking a stand against God and his people. That is why we are urged to put on the full armour of God so that we may stand our ground in this battle.

Paul uses the armour of a Roman soldier as a picture for us. He talks about a belt of truth, a breastplate of righteousness and feet fitted with the readiness of the gospel. He mentions a shield of faith, a helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit. He finally emphasises prayer. This is the armour that God has given us and it will protect us from the attack of the enemy. When we face attacks these are the things that God wants us to hold onto. They will protect us and the enemy will be defeated.

When we live out our faith and do the work that God has called us to we will face opposition. However, we aren't left to fight these battles alone. God knows the enemy, he knows the threat that he poses and he has given us a full armour to stand firm against the schemes of the enemy. There may be a very real enemy, but he is a defeated enemy. We must remember that a group of Christians, standing together in prayer truth and action can repel the forces of evil. It was God's power that defeated evil at the cross and we are promised that the same power that raised Jesus from the dead lives in us.

Put it into Action!

Think about each piece of armour mentioned in the passage from Ephesians. For each piece of armour, think of physical ways that you could put this on both in your life and in your group. For example, when you hear lies try to speak the truth. Or when you feel threatened, make a commitment to pray. Over the next week as you face opposition and attacks in your everyday life, put these things into action and arm yourselves against Satan's schemes.

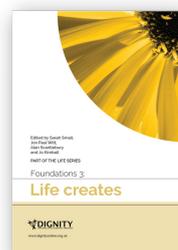
Pray that:

- 1) God will give you the gift of discernment so you can see Satan's influence and attacks.
- 2) God will help you as you practise using the armour.



Gift* grew up in a family that was steeped in Satanism. Curses had been spoken over her at a young age. She suffered from troubled dreams, sickness and social problems all her life. Gift started attending a Life Group. As they got to know her, the group prayed for her. The power of the curses was broken and Gift was set free to live a happier life.

- Gift, Mwinilunga, Zambia



This lesson is taken from "Spiritual Warfare" taken from "Foundations 3: Life Creates".

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