

Standing Firm

Spiritual Warfare — Supplementing Ephesians 6

Anchor Text — Ephesians 6:10-18: *Paul's charge to "be strong in the Lord," put on "the whole armor of God," and stand against "the schemes of the devil," because our struggle is "not 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" (v.12).*

Ephesians 6 gives us the armor list, but it does not stand alone. Scripture builds the full picture of spiritual warfare across both Testaments — who the enemy is, how he attacks, who we are in Christ, and how the battle is actually won. This guide gathers the key supporting passages by theme, with discussion questions and practical steps, especially for a man new to the faith who wants to understand this clearly and put it into practice.

How to use this guide tonight: *Read the anchor text (Eph. 6:10-18) aloud first. Then walk through each theme below — read the verse, discuss "why it matters," then land on the practice. Close with the discussion questions and the armor prayer on the last page.*

1 Who We Are in Christ (Our Position)

Before fighting, a soldier must know whose army he's in. New believers especially need this: the fight starts from victory, not toward it.

Colossians 2:13-15

"...God made you alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses... He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him."

Why it matters: The decisive battle is already won at the cross. Satan is a defeated, disarmed enemy — we fight from victory, not for it.

Romans 8:31-39

"If God is for us, who can be against us?... in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us."

Why it matters: Nothing — no power, spiritual or otherwise — can separate a believer from God's love. This is the confidence a new believer stands on.

1 John 4:4

"...he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."

Why it matters: The Holy Spirit living in every believer is greater than the enemy. Warfare is fought in that strength, not our own.

Luke 10:19

"Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you."

Why it matters: Jesus delegates real authority to His followers over the enemy's power — not to seek out a fight, but to stand unafraid.

2 Knowing the Enemy (His Character & Tactics)

Ephesians 6:11 warns of the devil's "schemes" (Greek methodeia — methods, strategies). Scripture names his tactics so we're not caught off guard.

1 Peter 5:8-9

"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..."

Why it matters: Alertness matters. The enemy targets the isolated and unguarded — this is why community and sobriety of mind matter for a new believer.

John 10:10

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."

Why it matters: Contrast is key: Satan's aim is always destruction; Jesus' aim is always life. Any voice pulling toward death, shame, or despair is not from God.

2 Corinthians 11:14

"...Satan disguises himself as an angel of light."

Why it matters: Deception, not just brute force, is his primary weapon — lies dressed as truth, sin dressed as freedom.

James 4:7

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

Why it matters: The formula is simple and practical: submission to God first, then resistance. Order matters.

Genesis 3:1-15

The serpent's first tactic: questioning God's word ("Did God actually say...?") and God's goodness.

Why it matters: The oldest scheme is still the most common one — doubt God's word, doubt God's goodness. Verse 15 also gives the first promise of the enemy's ultimate defeat.

3 The Battleground (Mind & Flesh)

Ephesians 6 pictures armor for a physical stand, but the actual battlefield Paul describes elsewhere is the mind.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

"...the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments... and take every thought captive to obey Christ."

Why it matters: This is the clearest picture of how the fight actually works day to day: identifying lies, tearing them down, and replacing them with truth — one thought at a time.

Galatians 5:16-17

"Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit..."

Why it matters: For a new believer, much of the daily 'warfare' is this internal pull between old patterns and new life in the Spirit — completely normal and expected.

Romans 12:2

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind..."

Why it matters: Warfare includes actively resisting the world's default patterns of thinking, and replacing them through Scripture.

4 The Primary Weapon (God's Word)

Eph. 6:17 names "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Jesus himself models exactly how to use it.

Matthew 4:1-11

Tempted three times in the wilderness, Jesus answers Satan each time with Scripture: "It is written..."

Why it matters: This is the model for a new believer: don't argue with temptation in your own logic — answer it with Scripture, the way Jesus did.

Hebrews 4:12

"For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword..."

Why it matters: Scripture isn't just information — it actively exposes and cuts through deception and self-justification.

Psalms 119:11

"I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you."

Why it matters: Memorizing Scripture puts the weapon in hand before the battle starts, not after.

5 Prayer as Warfare (The Unseen Realm)

Eph. 6:18 immediately follows the armor with "praying at all times in the Spirit." Prayer is how the armor gets activated, and it connects us to a battle we can't see.

Daniel 10:12-13

An angel tells Daniel his answer was delayed 21 days because "the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me," until Michael came to help.

Why it matters: There is real unseen spiritual conflict behind our circumstances and delayed answers to prayer. Persistence in prayer matters even when nothing seems to change.

Philippians 4:6-7

"...in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God... will guard your hearts and minds..."

Why it matters: Prayer is presented as a guard — the same defensive function as the armor — protecting the heart and mind from anxiety and attack.

Zechariah 3:1-2

Satan stands to accuse Joshua the high priest, and "the LORD said to Satan, 'The LORD rebuke you, Satan!'"

Why it matters: Accusation and shame are enemy tactics, but God himself silences the accuser on behalf of His people — a picture every new believer wrestling with guilt over past sin should know.

6 The Outcome (Assured Victory)

Spiritual warfare in Scripture never ends in doubt about who wins. It ends in worship.

Revelation 12:11

"And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death."

Why it matters: Victory comes through Christ's finished work (the blood of the Lamb) plus our own testimony spoken out loud — not through our own strength or willpower.

Romans 16:20

"The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet."

Why it matters: The enemy's defeat is certain and near; we stand firm in that confidence, not in fear of the outcome.

1 Corinthians 15:57

"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Why it matters: Victory is a gift received, not a prize earned by our own effort — good news for a new believer who feels weak or inexperienced.

Putting It Into Practice

For a new believer, spiritual warfare isn't abstract theology — it's daily habits. Here's how the passages above become practice this week.

1. Pray the armor on, daily

Each morning, pray through Eph. 6:14-17 piece by piece: truth, righteousness, readiness from the gospel, faith, salvation, the Word. This isn't superstition — it's re-anchoring your identity before the day starts.

2. Memorize one weapon verse

Start with Hebrews 4:12 or James 4:7. Write it on a card. When a specific lie or temptation hits, say it out loud — follow Jesus' example in Matthew 4.

3. Name the lie, then answer it

Per 2 Corinthians 10:5, when you notice discouragement, shame, or a temptation, ask: 'What lie am I believing right now?' Then find the Scripture that answers it directly.

4. Don't fight alone

1 Peter 5:8-9 warns the enemy targets the isolated. Regular time in this group, and one trusted brother to call when things get hard, is not optional — it's part of the armor.

STRATEGIES FOR OVERCOMERS

5. Confess quickly, don't carry shame

Per Zechariah 3, take accusation and guilt straight to God rather than sitting in it. Confession disarms shame fast (1 John 1:9).

6. Watch, don't just react

Be 'sober-minded' (1 Peter 5:8) about your own patterns — what time of day, what situations, what moods tend to open the door to temptation for you specifically.

Discussion Questions for the Group

- 1 Ephesians 6:12 says our struggle is not against flesh and blood. What's one situation this week where you fought a 'flesh and blood' battle when it was really a spiritual one?
 - 2 Which piece of the armor (truth, righteousness, gospel readiness, faith, salvation, the Word, prayer) do you feel weakest in wearing right now, and why?
 - 3 1 Peter 5:8 says to be 'sober-minded and watchful.' What specific pattern, place, or mood tends to be when you're most vulnerable to temptation?
 - 4 For a new believer: has shame or accusation (Zechariah 3) ever kept you from praying or coming to God after you sinned? What does it change to know God himself rebukes the accuser on your behalf?
 - 5 What's one verse from tonight you'll commit to memorizing this week, and who will you tell to keep you accountable?
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CLOSING: THE ARMOR PRAYER

Lord, I stand in Your strength, not my own. I put on the belt of truth against every lie; the breastplate of righteousness against every accusation; the readiness of the gospel of peace for every step I take; the shield of faith to quench every fiery dart; the helmet of salvation to guard my mind; and the sword of the Spirit, Your Word, as my weapon. I submit myself to You and resist the enemy, and I thank You that the victory is already won in Christ. Amen.

(based on Eph. 6:14-17; James 4:7)

Prepared for men's Bible study · ESV/standard translations referenced · Eph. 6:10-18 as anchor text