

Spiritual Warfare (I)

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Preacher: Paul Levy

[0:00] I'm going to turn to Ephesians chapter 6. And for the next couple of weeks, Chris is going to do a series and then I'm going to come back to this in June or July.

And we're going to look at spiritual warfare. And we're going to do that by looking at the armour of God. And there's a number of reasons why I want to look at this. My dad said to me, before Christopher Hyde read William Goon, also Christian Incomplete Armour.

And I said, no, he said it's amazing. He said he wished he'd read it 50 years ago. And then my mum said to me after Christmas, have you read William Goon's The Christian Incomplete Armour? She said, it's absolutely brilliant.

And so over the last couple of months, I begin to read it. And I do think, I think it's the best book I've read, well, in many years already. It's done me more good, I think, than any other book apart from the Bible.

I'm reading the abridged version, which is still about 1,200 pages. If you want to go for the original, Graham is a copy. But I think the modernised and the abridged version is absolutely terrific.

[1:10] The second reason why I want to look at spiritual warfare is I think in the reformed world, which you and I are a part and this church is a part, I think we've neglected the teaching of the devil.

And so I think some of us have got some pretty odd views about the evil one and about spiritual warfare. And two of my great heroes, Dr. Martyn R. Jones and Willie Still, as I've looked through their writings and their preaching, it's quite interesting that both those men taught and preached on spiritual warfare.

And I think you'd be hard-pressed to find somebody in reformed churches in London that's preached a series on spiritual warfare for the last, I don't know, 10 or 15 years since I've been here. I should also say there is going to be nothing original in what I said. It's normally not that. But all my good points have been pretty much stolen by William Gurnall. And I'm relying on most of you not having read the three volumes.

I want to talk about the armour of God and then there's going to be quite a few ways we'll branch out from there. But I want to start by saying that in the New Testament we are described as soldiers of Christ.

[2:18] You might not like that language, but that is how you and I are described. The Lord Jesus is described as the captain of our salvation. The New Testament is full of very strong military language.

And we are in a battle. There is no doubt, absolutely no doubt, hear this tonight, there is no doubt as to the outcome of that battle. We need to be really clear on that. Right at the very beginning. As believers in Christ we are on the winning side. If we are in Christ the war has been won. The fighting hasn't finished but the war has been won. So in the Second World War there was a day in that warfare when everyone knew that the war had been won.

Now they called it D-Day. It was the decisive day. D-Day. It was the journey pointing the whole war. The war had been won. But the fighting hadn't finished until much later.

They still had to go out and fight. And it was still serious warfare that they were engaged in. But the war had been won. There were still casualties. And there was still fighting to be done.

[3:29] And you and I are in the same kind of position. If I can put it this way. We live between D-Day and V-E-Day. We live between the cross and the crown.

The war has been won decisively on the cross. But the fighting isn't over. And will not finish until Christ returns at the end of the age. And what you've got in Ephesians 6 are our battle orders. And the whole passage is a call to fight. It is to fight. Let me read it to you. Verses 10 and 11.

Finally be strong in the Lord. And in strength of his might. To put on the whole armour of God. That you may be able to stand. Against the schemes of the devil. Let me use another illustration. Let's imagine that you were brought up in a totalitarian regime. Imagine you lived in a country. And people that were subject to government propaganda.

[4 : 33] Official propaganda. The only view of reality they were allowed. Their whole view of life. Their whole view of the world. Was conditioned by what the government told them. And they are not even going to see.

Let alone experience. What it is to live in a free country. But when some of them perhaps have their eyes opened. Maybe they are sent on an exchange. Or they come on a visit.

To a country that is free. Or some of them try to escape. When that happens. The full wrath of the government. Is turned against them. And that regime. Which for years.

Had been trying to pull the wall over their eyes. And keep them blind to the outside world. Well as long as they were in that state of affairs. They were quite happy. But that regime.

Now turns on. And they begin to experience. Opposition and persecution. Perhaps character. Assassination. And all sorts. But that is really how things are spiritually.

[5 : 29] For you and I. If you are a Christian. That is what has happened for you. This evening. Paul says. In 2 Corinthians chapter 4. And verses 3 and 4. All the passages. That I am going to quote.

Are on the sheet. So you can kind of strike them off. As we go along. That even if our gospel is veiled. You and I. Before we were converted to Christ. We lived in a totalitarian regime.

We were blinded. By the God of this world. We were blinded. By the propaganda of the war. We were blinded to reality. We were blinded to the gospel.

Of Jesus Christ. Himself. He's kept us from seeing. The light of the gospel. Of the glory of Christ. Who is the image of God. The devil is a strong man.

Now think of that picture. Jesus gives us. In Luke 11. Jesus is a strong man. The devil is a strong man. Who keeps his goods in peace.

[6 : 25] But he says. That when somebody comes. And is stronger than the strong man. And overcomes him. And he takes from him. All his armour in which he trusts. And he divides his spoil.

Well that is the picture. That of Satan. He is a strong man. Well as long as you live under his control. Well you are at peace. As long as you believe his lies. As long as you are outside of Christ. As long as you are unconverted. As long as you are. Conditioned by his view of reality. Then he's quite happy. But as soon as you break free from that.

As soon as you try to escape that. As soon as you are released from his kingdom. And you are translated. Transported into the kingdom of Christ. Then you begin to experience. All sorts of persecution.

And opposition. And hatred. And the venom of Satan. And that's why some of you. Who are Christians here tonight. You think it's hard isn't it. You're okay at first.

[7 : 24] When you believed. Now it was wonderful. But things are tough. And it's not as easy as you thought it was going to be. To be a Christian. And why is that? Well.

Because of this. Because you've escaped. And now the devil is after you. And he wants to spoil what you've got. That you are in the midst of a warfare. And Paul says.

You and I are to realise that. And we are to be strong. That is a command isn't it? Be strong. By putting on the whole armour of God. And if you are not convinced that you are in a war.

Well I hope by the time we finish this series. You will be convinced. What I want to do tonight. Is I just want to introduce this all to you. And I want to begin by asking. What exactly does the Apostle Paul have in mind.

When he speaks of the whole armour of God. What is the whole armour of God? What is Paul talking about? What's he got in mind. When he talks about the whole armour of God?

[8 : 21] If you read lots of. Contemplates on this. They will tell you. The popular understanding. Is that the Apostle Paul. Is thinking of a Roman soldier. And you can understand. Why people interpret it in that way.

I am not saying it is wrong. To think like that. It is quite natural. To think like that. Paul says in. Chapter 6. In verse 20. Can you see that? That he is an ambassador in chains. And so as Paul writes this letter.

He is under house arrest. In Rome. It is one of the prison letters. A lot of the Colossians. Philippians. And Philemon. And as Paul writes. This letter.

There is a Roman soldier. Looking over his shoulder. As it is quite natural. Isn't it? When he thinks about the Christian. As a soldier. When he thinks of the armour. That a Christian is to wear. It is quite natural. That he should think in terms. Of a Roman soldier. And I am not ruling that out. I think that is useful. But there is much more to it than that. And I think. If we don't see this.

[9 : 18] We will misinterpret. The armour of God. The Apostle Paul. Can you see. He speaks about the whole armour of God. Not of Rome. Pull on.

He says. The whole armour of God. Now look on your sheets. And look at Isaiah 59. And this is the context. This is how you have to understand Ephesians 6. It is not Rome. Or the way that the Romans dress themselves.

But scripture. Paul was a citizen of Rome. But before that. He was an expert. In the Old Testament. And Isaiah 59. Is a messianic prophecy.

That is. That it is written hundreds of years. Before the Lord Jesus. And yet he is looking forward to it. And the Lord speaks of himself. As a warrior. Look at verse 14.

It says. Justice is turned back. And righteousness stands far away. And that is what the world is like. When the devil gets a foothold.

[10 : 13] Justice is turned back. And righteousness stands far off. It is only the gospel. That brings justice into a society. Any remnants of justice.

Or truth that we have. Are remnants of Christianity. These things in our culture. Are being fast eroded. And their justice is turned back. Righteousness stands far away. And the second part of the verse.

Well truth has scrambled. In the public square. Righteousness cannot enter. Truth is lacking. And he who departs from evil.

Makes himself a prey. God looks at the state of affairs. As I say. And he sees something which concerns him. He says there is no justice. And anybody who makes a stand for justice.

Verse 15. Anyone who departs from evil. Instead of being protected. Instead of being helped. And strengthened. And encouraged forward. Or verse 15. They become a prey. They leave themselves wide open to attack.

[11 : 11] And the Lord says. That it displeases him. That there was no judgment. And he saw that there was no one. To take up the cause. Of those who depart from evil. He saw that there was no man.

I wonder. Why was there no intercessor. So he decided to do something about it. And this. Is the gospel of course. In verse 16. He saw that there was no man. And he wondered. That there was no one to intercede.

And then his own arm. Brought him salvation. And his righteousness. Upheld him. And he put on righteousness. As a breastplate.

And a helmet of salvation. On his head. He put on garments. Of vengeance. For clothing. And wrapped himself. In zeal as a cloak. And then we're told in verse 19 and 20.

So they shall fear the name of the Lord. From the west. And his glory. From the rising of the sun. And he will come like a rushing stream. And a redeemer will come to Zion. And to those in Jacob. Who turn from transgression. Declares the Lord. And I would suggest to you.

[12 : 11] That is the background. From which we must read Ephesians 6. It's the armor of God. That we're to put on. It's not merely the armor. That God supplies.

But his own armor. It's the armor. That he himself has worn. In executing judgments. Against his enemies. That is the armor. We're to put on. God gives us.

His armor. For the same fights. He is involved in. The very same armor. Which Christ wore. In the battle. Against his foes. That armor. Is made available for us.

In our battle. And victory. It's one of the same fights. And we need to see that. We're not fighting. Our own little private war. With the devil. We need to get this.

Really really clear. At the outset. We take ourselves. Far too seriously. And we get puffed up. With a real sense. Of our own importance. And we need to see. That actually. We are very small fry.

[13 : 08] In this battle. Because the battle. Is not ours. The battle is the Lord's. And we're not fighting. Our own little private battle. With Satan. We're not fighting. On our own account.

It's God's battle. And God provides us. With the very armor. That he himself has worn. So in putting on. The whole armor of God. Literally. God's complete armor.

What we're doing. Is we are entering into. And we are appropriating. What he has done for us. I think that's so important.

In understanding the passage. That is what spiritual warfare. Is all about. This principle. Is very important. But what we do. Is we put on the armor of God.

Is this. We are laying hold of. And we are entering. Into the victory. Which Christ has won. For us on the cross. The apostle Paul.

[14:04] Is not exhorting you. To get dressed up. Like a Roman soldier. But he's exhorting you. To put on Christ. He's not saying.

You go and. I'm a go to the devil. On your own account. By yourself. With your own resources. You be strong. No. He's exhorting us. And he's telling us. To appropriate.

What Christ has done. That's what he says. In Romans. Chapter 13. The apostle. There is writing. The city. And he's reminding us. How urgent the times are.

And he says. The hour has come. For you to wake up. From your sleep. What's he doing there? He's blowing the bugle. He's blowing the trumpet. He says.

It's high time. For you to wake up. For salvation is nearer. To us now. Than when we first believed. The night is far gone.

[14:58] The day is at hand. So then let us cast off. The works of darkness. And put on the armour of light. And then he tells us. What that means. So let us walk properly. At in the daytime. Not in orgies. And drunkenness.

Not in sexual immorality. And sensuality. Not in quarreling. In agility. But. Verse 14. Put on Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ. And make no provision for the flesh.

To glorify its society. The whole series. Really. Is going to be an exposition of facts. What does that mean? To put on the armour of God. Is to put on Christ.

It's to appropriate. What Christ has done for us. On the cross. So Ephesians chapter 1. And Ephesians chapter 6. Tie together. They hold together. So do you remember.

Ephesians 1. Tells you. That if you are in Christ. Tonight. You are seated in the heavenly realms. And Jesus is high above all. Principalities and power. And Ephesians chapter 6.

[15:56] Is telling you. You've got to live on it. You are to put on Christ. And you fight. These principalities. And these powers. And of course. We are no much of them. In ourselves.

Imagine you are going to fight. It's Tyson Fury. You know the heavyweight champion in the world. But he's not. Anthony Joshua.

He'll fight Anthony Joshua. You'd never do it. Would you? You'd never get in the ring. None of us. Would be stupid enough. To get in the ring with Anthony Joshua. But you would fight Anthony Joshua.

If he were in a tank. Wouldn't you? I'd take him on then. I'd have no problem. Him and Tyson Fury at the same time. Because if you're in a tank. Well.

Anthony Joshua. Tyson Fury. Deontay Wilder. Well. They're no problem at all. And so if you are in Christ. You can take on the devil. You can take on the devil.

[16:53] And to put on the whole armor of God. Is not to put on Roman armor. Is to put on God himself. It is to put on Christ. It is to appropriate. What he's done for us in the fight. Is to lay hold on the triumph.

Of Christ. Thanks be. And to God. Says Paul in Corinthians. Because. He gives us the victory. Through the Lord Jesus Christ. So that is the armor of God. We are to put on. At the second place. I want you to notice. It's the whole armor of God. That we're. To put on. And we're told that. In two places. And we look at verse 11. That we're to put on. The whole armor.

Verse 11. And then verse 13. Is it? Yeah. Again. The whole armor of God. It's just one word. In the Greek. It's one word. It's panoply. It's a complete covering. Put on the armor of God.

And we must have forgotten that. As we look at the armor. As we dismantle it. But we're to wear it all. The whole armor of God. And so. Let's. Let's kick it in for a moment. You know.

[17:52] You go to the armory. Have you been to the Tower of London? It's always amazing to me. Isn't it? How small. These soldiers were. People in those days.

Were so small. As you can have the Wallace Collection. It's a great place. Kind of. Instruments of torture. Down through the years. And. Armor. It's a great. It's a great place. To go on the Easter

holidays. The Wallace Collection.

But the armor. Is so small. Is it? We're much bigger. Today. But. Think of going around that place. You know. Hundreds of seats of armor. And just imagine. What you've got in Ephesians 6. Imagine you've got it in front of you.

Let's. Let's. Walk around it. Well the first thing you notice. That there's no protection. For the back. Now. I do think. Sometimes. In Ephesians 6. You can be careful. About reading too much into it. But as you read through the verses. I do think that it's significant. That there is no protection for the back. Which is quite odd. God intends. You and I. To face the enemy. Hebrews 10.

[18:52] Says the just shall. Live by faith. That's how we're to live our lives. We are to live by faith. In Jesus Christ. But look at verse 38. If any man draw back.

My soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them. Who draw back. Unto perdition. But of them. That believe. To the saving of the soul. Are you speaking of those Hebrews.

What's the problem in Hebrews. Is that people are in danger. Of turning around. Turning back. They become Christians. Now they found. That once they become Christians. They're in the middle of battle. And some of them are in danger.

Of going back. To what they used to be. And Paul says. You mustn't do that. Because there's no protection. For your back. If you turn back. You expose yourself to judgment.

And all sorts of dangers. And you make yourself vulnerable. And he says. We mustn't do that. We are those who believe. To the saving of our souls. There's no turning back. The danger in our culture.

[19:54] Is this. Is most of us think. That we can live as Christians. Whilst keeping our heads down. We can opt out. But no.

That is the most dangerous thing. Of all to do. Because when you opt out. When you keep your head down. When you backslide. You are at your most vulnerable. If you shrink back.

You lose the most precious thing. Of all. You lose the smile of God. From your life. See what it says. If you shrink back. God says. My soul. Will take your pleasure in you.

And the Christian. Who refuses. To face up to the implications. Of his faith. The Christian. Who refuses. To take seriously. His commitment to Christ. Well that person.

Is no Christian at all. First thing. We look at the armor. The whole armor. Is to see. That there's no protection. To your back. You know how Paul puts it.

[20:54] In 1 Corinthians 15. He reminds them. That he's. Delivered the gospel. To them. He says. Now I. Would remind you. Brothers of the gospel. I preach to you. Which you received.

In which you stand. And by which you are being saved. If you hold fast. To the word. I preach to you. Unless you believe. In vain. I'm amazed.

At the number of these. Ifs. There are in the New Testament. We miss them. We pretend. They're not there. The New Testament. Is littered with the word. If. And that's your safety.

The gospel. I preach to you. About a crucified. And a risen saviour. And that is what. Will save you. That's your protection. If. If you hold fast.

To the word. I preach to you. And as long as you haven't. Turned back. You. You are safe. Colossians 1. Verse 21. You've got the sin. Let me read it to you.

[21:52] And you who were once alienated. And a hostile in mind. Doing evil deeds. He is now reconciled. In his body of flesh. By his death. In order to present you. Holy and blameless. And above reproach. Before him. Verse 23. If.

If indeed you continue in the faith. Stable and steadfast. Not shifting from the hope. Of the gospel that you heard. Which has been proclaimed. In all creation. And the heaven. And of which I Paul. Became a minister. Are you are safe tonight.

As long as you stand. Facing the enemy. As long as you don't depart. From the gospel. As long as you don't. Turn your back. On the very thing. That saved you.

That will save you. There's no protection for you. If you do that. Look again. At the seat of the moment. Look. Closely. You'll notice. That it's occupied. If you lift.

The visor. You'll see a pair of eyes. Looking back at you. It's not in the catalogue. It's not hanging on a wall. Somewhere. It's being worn. And you know that.

[22:49] From the tense. Of the verbs. In verses 13 to 15. The tense of the verbs. In verses 13 to 15. Are the perfect participle.

Which indicates. That there's a. A past action. That has. Continuing effects. Something has happened. In the past. Which has. Continuing effect. Verse 13.

Therefore. Take up the whole armor of God. That you may be able. With sand. 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. Now he says. I don't want you just.

To look around. At the armor. I don't want you. Just admire it. On the stand. I want you to wear it. The belt of truth.

[23 : 44] The breastplate of righteousness. The shoes of the gospel. And in verse 16. The tense changes. He goes to the present tense. So he says. In all circumstances. Take up the shield of faith.

With which you can extinguish. All. The flaming darts of evil. And take the helmet of salvation. And the sword of the spirit. You see. The picture. It's a picture of.

A soldier. Sitting in a tent. Waiting for the battle. And he's got his army on. He's not sitting at home. Waiting for his call of papers. He's in the midst of the battle.

He's sitting in the tent. He's got his belt. And his breastplate. And his shoes on. He always wears that. And the christian. Is never out of his feet. In uniform. If I can put it like that.

He's always got it on. That's the meaning. Of the verbs. He's wearing these things. And near to hand. Are his helmet. And his shield. And his sword. The bugle sounds.

[24 : 39] He grabs the helmet. And the sword and the shield. And he runs out of time to fight. So the point I want to make is this. The battle is always going on all the time. And it's going on all around us.

And you and I. If we are in Christ. We are to be dressed and ready for it all the time. And I think that comes out in the immediate context. And that's a little bit of a shock to the system. When you read through Ephesians.

Because do you notice. That he starts to speak about the battle of the armor. And just before he's talked about. Home. And husbands. And wives.

And children. And work. And employers. And employees. And suddenly you're transferred. From peaceful homes. To the carnage of the battlefield.

And it's a shock to the system. And it's meant shocking. Because here's the point. The point is that the real spiritual battle. That you and I are engaged in. Is going on all around us.

[25 : 40] The battle is going on. As much in your home. And in your relationship. Between husband and wife. And parents. And children. And in your workplace. As much as it is.

On the. Darkest mission fields. You can think of. And we need to get this very, very clear. But what is the fight?

The fight is. If you're a Christian husband. To be the Christian husband you were meant to be. What is the war? The war is.

To be the Christian wife. That you're meant to be. If you're a child. The war is. To be the Christian child. That you're meant to be. If you're in the workplace.

The war. Is to be the Christian worker. In the workplace. And I think lots of us. Have watched too many horror movies. In our youth.

[26 : 36] Because we like to think. Don't we have Christian warfare. In terms of. Vampires. And demons. Under the bed. Don't misunderstand me. I think there are such things as humans.

I think there are such things as evil spirits. But that isn't the real battle. The real battle. Is to be. What you and I should be. As a Christian. And when I fail to be that. As a Christian husband. I'm a casualty. And the devil has won a victory. And that's where the battle is going on.

Now that's what Paul means. When he says. We wrestle not against flesh and blood. Don't misunderstand. What he's saying that. What he's saying is this.

When your spouse. Is really driving you mad. And you feel this rage. Welling up within you. You are to remember.

[27 : 34] That it's. Not them that you're fighting. When the children. Have driven you. To distraction. You are about to erupt. In rage. It is not them you're fighting.

But this crisis. In the home. Is actually. A spiritual contest. And behind the very real. Flesh and blood. Of those children. Of that awkward husband. There is a war going on.

And so when people rub us up. The wrong way. In work. Or in the church. And we are. We are. We are. Tempted to respond. To them. As flesh and blood. We're to check ourselves. Because this isn't.

About flesh and blood. The devil isn't this. And the devil. Gets into churches. And he gets people. Talking about. One another. Saying nasty things.

To one another. Making really small things. Into massive things. And you and I. Have to remember. This isn't flesh and blood. This is spiritual wickedness. Behind us. All I'm trying to impress upon you. [28 : 37] Is this. The battle is going on. All around you. You don't have to sit at home. And you wait up for a call up. You wait for a call up email. It's going on all the time. It's not just in the preaching. The gospel.

It goes on in your home. And in your office. And in the church. And we need to be always ready. Always closed. With our armour. Ready to fight. Third thing.

And the armour. It shows us. When we look at it as a whole. Is it tells us the nature of the conflict. It's a many sided conflict. And we must be aware. Of having a kind of one trick mentality.

When we think of spiritual warfare. The various parts of the armour. The armour tell us that much. There's great variety here. And you'll see that. The way Paul describes it. The various parts of the armour. Are safeguards against different kinds of attack.

The devil is really cunning isn't he. The devil will attack us in lots of different ways. And sometimes. He will attack us in lots of different ways. At the same time. And we need a covering for our hearts. [29 : 35] And for our minds. A helmet and a breastplate. If we leave one. And where the other. We're just asking for trouble. The devil can affect us on the level of our affections.

Our emotions. The devil can wreak havoc in our emotional life. He can attack us on the level of our thought processes. He can attack us in our imagination. He can attack us in our memory.

So have you ever wondered. Why is it that some things in your life. Are impossible to forget. And other things are almost impossible to remember. And there are things out there.

That I allowed myself to watch years and years ago. Which the devil keeps bringing back to my memory. And yet for the life of me. I can't remember Bible verses. I looked when I was a child. And that's why we need the whole armour. The full set. Because the devil is a very good shot. Because if there's a chink in our armour. If there's a weak point that's unprotected. Then he will wound us there. And so Paul said.

[30 : 36] Put on the whole armour of God. Don't leave any part of it off. And not only is it a many sided conflict. But it's quite clear as well. As we take a general look at the armour. That it's a conflict that goes through different phases.

So you'll see that the armour is both offensive. And defensive. And so we need to know. And when and how to defend ourselves. And when and how to attack. It's not always wise to attack.

It's not always wise to go into a situation. All guns blazing. It is sometimes. There are times. There are times when we need to retreat defensively.

Not turn our back. But we withdraw into Christ. And there's times when we take courage in both hands. And our lives in our hands. And we confront. We attack.

And we gain territory. This conflict is many sided. But goes through many phases. There are times when the enemy attacks us head on.

[31 : 35] The Bible describes the evil one as a roaring liar. Trying to frighten us. And to devour us. Well we need to know how to deal with him then. Don't we? But the Bible also says. The devil comes masquerading as an angel of light.

And he deceives us. And he creeps into the church. And he starts to tell us all kinds of lies. And he distorts the truth about God. And his people. And our object in all of this is to stand. Can you see the repeated emphasis?

And so verse 11. That you may be able to stand. And in verse 13. That you may be able to withstand.

At the end of the verse. And we've done all to stand. Three times. It's a picture of a soldier. Dressed for the fight. He stands there. The enemy attacks him.

And he withstands the enemy. And then after he's fought him off. He is still standing. Because there's no let up in the battle. Now finally.

[32 : 35] Let me just finish by saying a word. How do you and I put on the armour? How do you and I put on the armour? Have you seen what the spiritual armour is? How do you put it on?

I think it's in Mary Poppins. Is it? Mary Poppins is a little boy. He gets out of bed. Doesn't he? Stands there. And the clothes come floating out of their wardrobe. And they get put on him by magic.

Is that Mary Poppins? I don't know. None of you know. You're all asleep. And I think there are lots of people that have that view of the Christian life. This afternoon.

Well it's God's armour. Let him put it on us. We don't have to do anything. And so we just sort of carry on. And God will protect us. Now that isn't right.

God says you put on the whole armour of God. And you are to do that. You are to do it deliberately and consciously. Just as you get dressed up in the morning. Dressed in the morning. You are to put on the armour of God deliberately and consciously.

[33 : 40] And I think there's a hint how we're to do that. Look at verse 18. Paul drops the metaphor of the armour quite deliberately. He drops the metaphor of the armour for one reason. And that is because you cannot talk about prayer as the armour of God.

So God puts on the breastplate of salvation. He puts on the helmet of salvation. He doesn't put on prayer. God does not pray.

We pray to him. Seems to be some people take this and they think of it as prayer as an extra weapon.

I don't think of it. I don't think that's right in this context. Prayer is a weapon isn't it? It's a secret weapon. We've got. But I don't think that's what Paul is doing in Ephesians chapter 6. And I think he deliberately drops the metaphor of the armour.

He says in verse 18. He says praying at all times in the spirit with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance. Making supplication.

[34 : 45] Praying for all the saints. And I think what he's doing in verse 18 is showing you how do you put the armour on. There's a hymn isn't it? Put on the gospel armour. Each piece put on with prayer.

Shall I tell you why prayer is essential? Prayer is essential because it is the expression of our dependence upon God. Isn't it? The proudest Christian is a self-confident person who will fall flat on their face.

Praying always in all kinds of situations. Prayer is the expression of our utter dependence upon God. Because we can't even lift the armour. Can't we let alone put it on?

And wear it. Apart from the strength in God. This armour cannot protect us apart from him. It's his armour. He comes with it. In fact it is his armour. Listen to how Paul puts it in 2 Timothy.

He says. Do you remember that chapter chapter 4? He's fought the good fight. He's kept the faith. He's ready to be discharged. He's ready to go home. And in chapter 4 verse 17.

[35 : 50] He looks back on his campaign. And he says. And the Lord stood by me and struck me. So through me the message might be fully proclaimed. And all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth.

And the Lord will rescue me from every evil deed. And bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory forever and ever. It's a man with his armour on. It's a man who's in the fight.

It's a man who knows the secret of the warfare. And that's why he says to us. Be strong in the Lord. That's why he's able to say something that sounds so ridiculous.

Like I can do all things through him who threatens me. I can do these things. I don't let him do it for me.

I have to face the enemy. You have to face the enemy. I have to resist temptation. You have to resist temptation. I have to face the attack.

[36 : 56] You have to face the attack. I have to do it. But I can do it. Not in myself. But I can do it through Christ.

Who sentenced me. What a word that is isn't it? What do you face this week? What do you face this week? You can do it.

Through Christ. Who strengthens me. The Lord himself. He is my strength. He is my armour.

So then put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Put on the whole armour of God. He is my strength. He is my strength. That's it.

Before we come to the Lord.