

DAY
4

Stand Strong in the Power of God

Eph. 6:14-17; 2 Cor. 10:3-5

Paul uses the phrase “the full armor of God” two times in Ephesians 6:11 and 13. Then he describes that armor in verses 14–17. Paul uses the analogy of a Roman soldier who is armored and armed for battle. It was an image that his audience would see on a daily basis. For us, a contemporary example might be to put on Iron Man’s suit of armor!

Here is a high altitude meaning about the armor of God.

The Armor of God means to be completely protected and fully empowered.

The Armor of God is truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, and God’s Word (the six items described).

The Armor of God is a biblical worldview, a comprehensive ideology-theology, an alternative story of God’s presence, work, and Word. It is a new identity, a new character, a new mission, a new way of values and priorities.

The Armor of God is simply the main things of Christianity described in a very compelling way for his 1st century audience.

The Armor of God is the way, the truth, and the life of Christ that is personally engaged and powerfully transformative.

If this is so, then to put on the Armor of God means you fully adopt the Way, the Truth, and the Life of King Jesus and the Kingdom of God. It means you take every lie captive and eliminate them from your worldview. It means you reject all other ideologies and patterns of thought when they depart from the biblical faith. It means you put on the mind of Christ. It means you soak your heart and saturate your soul with the main things of the Christian faith.

That is what our ROOTED series will help you do—get the mind of Christ and build your life on a Christian worldview. Sign up for ROOTED. Get in a group for even more growth.

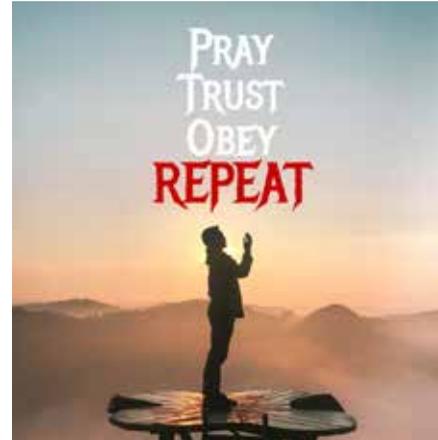
DAY
5

Stand Strong in Prayer

Ephesians 6:18-20

Paul has told you to stand strong—to stand strong against the powers of this world, to stand strong in the power of God (armor of God). He finishes with the encouragement to stand strong by the power of prayer.

Pray in the Spirit.
Pray on all occasions.
Pray with all kinds of prayers.
Pray for all God’s people.
Pray for Paul (and pray for all in Christian leadership).
Pray for courage (fearlessness).
And then pray some more.



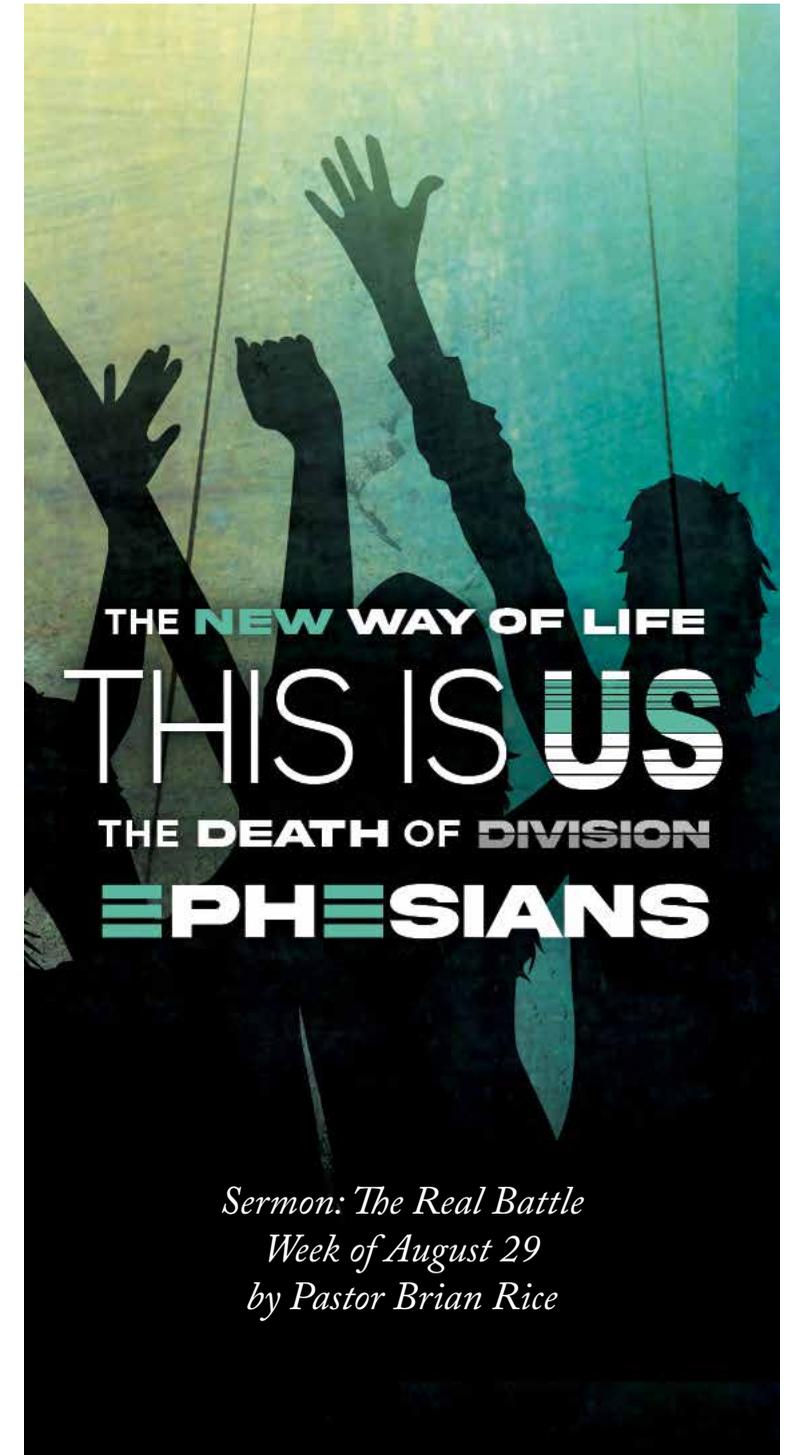
We pray because the battle is too much for us.
We pray because the enemies against us are too strong.
We pray because we grow weak and weary on our own.
We pray because the battle belongs to God.
We pray because the weapons we use that are not of this world belong to the Lord.
We pray because we belong to the Lord.

We pray as we put on the armor. We pray for our minds to be renewed. We pray for the Kingdom of God to advance and for the will of God to be done on earth as it is in heaven.

For every struggle you have, for every battle you are in, for every enemy that comes against you, for every ideology that is seeking to confuse you, for every spiritual attack that tries to destroy you, the answer is always “Pray.” And as you pray, then trust and obey.

Paul would like the meme above: Pray. Trust. Obey. REPEAT.

So, pray. . .



**DAY
1****Stand Strong
Ephesians 6:10-18**

This passage is about standing and about strength—and about standing strong in the mighty power of God. There are four themes: 1) standing strong, 2) the powers of this world, 3) the armor of God, and 4) prayer.

The first time reading through the passage, notice (or circle or underline) every time Paul mentions stand (4x) and the power words (strong, mighty, power, and struggle). We are in a spiritual fight. There is a contest underway. We don't sit, we don't retreat, we don't slouch. We stand strong.

Strong in the power of God.
Standing against the schemes of the devil.
Able to stand your ground on the day of evil.
Having done everything to stand.
Stand firm.

Take a moment and practice standing. Just stand there. Now, get in the strongest, most firm stance you can. What kind of stance would you take if someone wanted to push you over? That is the metaphor for standing strong spiritually.

It is more important than ever that Christians stand strong.

- What are the things we need to stand strong against?
- What do we need to stand for?
- What personal battles are you facing where you must stand strong?
- Who is against you so that you need to stand strong?
- How are you doing in standing strong?

It is understandable if you think the enemies are numerous and powerful—they are. It is understandable that you may ask, “How can I stand strong?” God will always provide when he instructs. Paul is going to tell you how to stand strong in evil days.

You can stand strong because the battle belongs to the Lord! Finish by reading 2 Chronicles 20:12, 15 and be encouraged!

**DAY
2****Stand Strong Against the
Spiritual Powers
Ephesians 6:12**

In addition to Ephesians 6:12, read the following verses. Make a comprehensive list of the words used to describe the “powers” in these verses. If some words are repeated, jot them down.

Ephesians 1:21 and 2:2-3

Colossians 1:13, 16; 2:8, 10, 15, 20-22

The language of POWERS is a BIG IDEA for the New Testament and it has several different meanings. First and foremost, the powers are all the super-human (supra-human, spiritual) powers of life. And many of these powers are fallen. They are evil and they are opposed to the Sovereign God. Your battle is serious. It is not “merely” flesh and blood, although you will see later that flesh and blood become the arena for the powers to work.

You wage war against spiritual evil. But go back and re-read the verses in Ephesians and Colossians and now, notice something else Paul says. Notice what Jesus has done about these powers. What do you learn about the supremacy of Jesus and these evil powers? Remember, the battle belongs first and foremost to the Lord.

Read Psalm 121 and use it to shape your own prayer and worship.

**DAY
3****Stand Strong Against the
Ideologies of the World**

Paul had a highly developed theology of the powers of this world. It involved the following four ideas.

1. The powers are the spiritual forces of evil.
2. The powers are then the ideologies (principles, belief systems, patterns of understanding, and ways of living) that are promoted by the spiritual powers. In other words, evil doesn't simply lie to and deceive individuals. Evil creates vast systems of beliefs that are false, deceptive, and in error.
3. The powers are the systems and structures of the world that embody these deceptions. Ideas are not just theoretically out there in the air, they are embedded in the very fabric of a society. There are religious, political, economic, and cultural ideologies that shape every aspect of life.
4. The powers are the flesh-and-blood players, the prominent people who represent and advance the ideologies.

As a simple example, think of Nazism. Obviously, Nazism displayed ideas 2, 3, and 4. Paul would also say it had supernatural origins as well. The sermon talked about expressive individualism and the supreme right of the individual over their own life.

These powers are everywhere. It is easy (and natural) to see them in all the other positions that are not your own. It is much harder to see these powers in our own thinking and living. Right now, our culture is experiencing the tension of worldviews in conflict and competing ideologies. Every group has them. Christians have them as well. None of us are purely Christian. None of us have only the Kingdom of God as our theology.

What are some of the ideologies that are evident in our culture today? What are some of your ideologies?

Jesus came proclaiming a new Kingdom, which means a new worldview, a new ideology, and a new Way: Truth of Life. The Kingdom of God is an alternative to EVERY ideology and system of the world. EVERY ONE OF THEM.