

Stand Strong in the Lord

Sermon Notes on Ephesians 6:10–18

Preacher: Dr. Wilfred Graves Jr.

Main Text: Ephesians 6:10–18

Theme: Spiritual strength, the armor of God, and prayer

Big Idea

The Christian life is lived in the strength of the Lord. Believers face real spiritual opposition, but God has not left his people defenseless. In Christ, we are called to stand, clothed in the armor God provides and sustained by prayer in the Spirit.

Background in Ephesians

Paul's Letter to the Ephesians shows what God has done for believers in Christ and how they are called to live in response. The earlier chapters remind us that God has blessed his people in Christ, redeemed them by the blood of Jesus, sealed them with the Holy Spirit, and raised them up with Christ.

Ephesians also reminds us that the Christian life is not merely private or individual. Through the Church, God displays his manifold wisdom to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places. The people of God live on earth, yet their lives are connected to a larger spiritual reality.

One helpful way to understand the movement of Ephesians is through three words: sit, walk, and stand.

Sit: Believers are seated with Christ in the heavenly places.

Walk: Believers are called to walk worthy of their calling.

Stand: Believers are called to stand against the schemes of the enemy.

Ephesians 6:10–18 brings these themes together. Because of who Christ is and what Christ has done, believers can stand strong in the Lord.

I. Find Your Strength in the Lord

Key Verse:

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.”

— Ephesians 6:10 NKJV

The strength of the Christian life comes from the Lord himself. Throughout Scripture, God’s people find that the Lord gives strength to those who trust him.

God raised Jesus from the dead and seated him at his right hand far above every spiritual power. The risen and exalted Christ now strengthens his people by the Holy Spirit.

Key Point:

We cannot face spiritual opposition in the strength of the flesh. We need the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

Application:

Where have I been trying to stand in my own strength? Where do I need to rely more deeply on the Lord?

II. Recognize the Battle You Are In

Key Verses:

“Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

— Ephesians 6:11 NKJV

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood...”

— Ephesians 6:12 NKJV

Paul makes clear that believers are engaged in a real spiritual struggle, but God has given his people armor for the battle. The enemy’s schemes are serious, yet the fight is not ultimately against people. We need discernment so that conflict, hurt, and opposition do not draw us into bitterness, division, or prayerlessness. Because Christ is exalted above every power, believers stand from a place of victory, not fear.

Key Point:

The enemy is real, but he is not greater than Christ. We stand by recognizing the battle and keeping our confidence in the Lord.

Application:

Where might the enemy be trying to bring discouragement, division, deception, or spiritual carelessness into my life? How can I respond with prayer, truth, faith, and obedience?

III. Put on the Armor God Provides

Key Verse:

“Therefore take up the whole armor of God...”

— Ephesians 6:13 NKJV

The command to put on the whole armor of God reminds believers that God has fully equipped his people for battle. Each piece of armor points to a provision God gives his people in Christ.

1. The Belt of Truth

Scripture:

“Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth...”

— Ephesians 6:14 NKJV

Truth is more than correct information. It includes what is genuine, faithful, reliable, and marked by integrity.

Key Point:

Truth stabilizes the life of the believer.

Application:

Are there lies I have been believing that need to be answered by God’s truth?

2. The Breastplate of Righteousness

Scripture:

“...having put on the breastplate of righteousness.”

— Ephesians 6:14 NKJV

Righteousness has to do with being right before God and living rightly before him. It includes the righteousness believers have in Christ and the righteous life the Spirit produces in them.

Key Point:

Holy living is part of spiritual warfare.

Application:

Is there any area of life where carelessness, compromise, bitterness, or hidden sin needs to be brought before God?

3. The Sandals of the Gospel of Peace

Scripture:

“...and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.”

— Ephesians 6:15 NKJV

When the enemy tries to unsettle us, the gospel gives stability. It reminds us that our sins have been forgiven, that our lives belong to the Lord, and that our future is in his hands.

Key Point:

The gospel gives us peace with God and readiness for witness.

Application:

How deeply is the gospel shaping my peace, confidence, and readiness to witness?

4. The Shield of Faith

Scripture:

“Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.”

— Ephesians 6:16 NKJV

Faith is complete reliance upon God. It trusts who God is, what God has said, and what God has done in Jesus Christ.

Key Point:

Faith lifts the promises and character of God against the attacks of the enemy.

Application:

What truth from God’s Word can I lift as a shield of faith?

5. The Helmet of Salvation

Scripture:

“And take the helmet of salvation...”

— Ephesians 6:17 NKJV

The helmet of salvation reminds us to guard our minds against fear, shame, confusion, and condemnation by remembering what God has done for us in Christ.

Key Point:

The assurance of salvation protects the mind.

Application:

What thoughts need to be brought under the assurance of salvation in Christ?

6. The Sword of the Spirit

Scripture:

“...and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

— Ephesians 6:17 NKJV

The Word of God is not only something to be read; it is something to be used against the schemes and attacks of the enemy.

When Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, his repeated answer to the devil was, “It is written.” The Word of God gives truth for the lies believers face, wisdom for the decisions before them, and courage for the obedience God requires. The Holy Spirit uses the Word to strengthen and guide believers.

Key Point:

We cannot use a Word we do not know, stand on promises we have never read, or answer lies with truth if the truth is not dwelling in us.

Application:

What Scripture do I need to learn, remember, or return to in this season?

IV. Keep Praying in the Spirit

Key Verse:

“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit...”

— Ephesians 6:18 NKJV

To pray in the Spirit is to pray under the guidance, power, and help of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit strengthens believers, helps them pray, fills them with power, gives gifts to the Church, and enables the people of God to stand in witness and warfare.

Spiritual warfare is not only individual. Believers are called to pray for one another, for the sick, for the lost, for their children, for their homes, for the Church, and for the people of God everywhere.

Key Point:

The battle is too serious for prayerlessness.

Application:

Where do I need to become more watchful, more persevering, and more faithful in prayer?

Final Encouragement

God has not left his people defenseless. He has given them what they need to stand: truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, faith, salvation, and the Word of God. Every piece of armor points us back to the grace, truth, salvation, and victory God has given in Christ.

Final Charge:

Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.

Put on the whole armor of God.

Keep praying in the Spirit.

Keep standing in the victory Jesus Christ has already won.

Reflection Questions

1. Where do I most need to be strengthened by the Lord right now?
 2. What lies, fears, temptations, or accusations have been coming against me?
 3. Am I treating people as the enemy, or am I discerning the deeper spiritual battle?
 4. Which piece of the armor of God do I especially need to attend to in this season?
 5. What Scripture do I need to know, remember, and use in the face of temptation or discouragement?
 6. How can I become more faithful and watchful in prayer?
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About the Preacher

Dr. Wilfred Graves Jr. is a pastor, scholar, and author. He directs the Center for the Study of the Work and Ministry of the Holy Spirit Today at Biola University and is committed to helping people grow in Christ through biblical teaching and Christian formation.

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