



# Sermon Notes — Pastor Thomas Keys, SRMBC

**Ephesians: The Christian's Owners Manual IX—Strong And Engaged (Get Up, Get Dressed, Get To Work) Scriptures Ephesians 6:10 – 20**

## INTRODUCTION

Since the Covid Virus hit, many of us have been forced into working from home. Now I must admit that when I first thought of being able to work from the comfort of my house it would be a breeze. But I discovered that it takes much more discipline to work from home as it does from the office. In other words, there's a difference between working at home than to be at home working.

At my job we were presented with tips for working from Home: Tips for Teleworking: 1 - **Stick To A Routine** (Get up, Get Dressed, Go To A Specific Place) 2 - **Stay Focused** (Remove Distractions, Remember The Mission, Resolve To Complete the Work) In the same way, despite the changes all around us, The Church still has a mission to accomplish to live and share the Gospel – that can't be fulfilled if unless we are "Strong and Engaged"

## SERMON POINTS

We are concluding our sermon series on the Paul's letter to the Ephesians – A letter written to a good church that the Apostle Paul wrote to encourage and challenge them in their walk with the Lord I can Imagine the Ephesian believers hearing these from Paul in Chs. 1 – 6:9 thinking of themselves as being "all – that", being powerful and invincible...

However, as we end Ch. 6, Paul lets the Ephesians know that believers need to be strong in the Lord – because there is a spiritual warfare that we must be ready for. And the good news is that we are not sent out to the Battlefield with just some hope – but we have Spiritual Armor for our protection, and spiritual weapons to defeat our enemies.

As Jesus tarries, the enemy changes his tactics. We need to continually be reminded of the battles we face and everything God has given us so we can win, every time. So, what I want to do in this message, is to show us from this familiar passage how we can be ready and be successful in spiritual warfare that we face by being Strong and Engaged.

## I. Prepare For Spiritual Engagement (Eph. 6:10 – 13)

Paul after all that good teaching in the previous 6 chapters up to 6:9) says to us – Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the **power of His might** (somebody say His might) In other words, get up and be prepared to fight. You see if we are trying to do things in our own strength we will fail every time. But when we are weak – that when we can rely on God's Strength – His joy and power of His Spirit to keep us even when we don't want to be kept. And the reason of this is because we are not fighting or battling with people per se – in a natural battle, but with – the spiritual forces and wickedness in the heavenlies.

Let me be clear, a Christian cannot be possessed by a demon, but the devil can whisper thoughts in your head that come out in words and actions that cause division and strife.

Recently National Geographic ran an article about the Alaskan Bull Moose. The males of the species battle for dominance during the fall breeding season, literally going head-to-head with antlers crunching together as they collide. The heftiest moose, with the largest and strongest antlers, triumphs. Therefore, the battle fought in the fall is really won during the summer, when the moose eat continually. O that the Church would have Bull-moose sense: . Spiritual battles await. Satan will choose a season to attack. Will we be victorious, or will we fall? Much depends on what we do now--before the wars begin. Enduring faith, strength, and wisdom for trials are best developed and being prepared (word, prayer, obedience worship) before they're needed.

## II. Put On Spiritual Equipment (Eph. 6:14 – 16)

One thing I have neglected to mention in this series the circumstances in which Paul wrote this letter. Paul, the Apostle doing the will of the Lord, preaching and teaching the Word to the early church (doing what is right), finds himself in a Roman prison (Listen leaders/committed believers face more trouble and attacks from Satan) However despite being in prison, Paul still finds a way to bless the church – by writing these letter – which are blessing the church 2000 years later. As Paul is being guarded by Roman Soldiers, he uses this imagery to exhort us to be ready for Spiritual battles we face – by comparing the Roman Soldier's Armor to the Armor – we need to dress up in – so we can be ready to win...

- ♦ **Belt of Truth** – Like the belt hold ups the Armor – we need to make the truth of God and His Word the centerpiece of all we do and say.
- ♦ **Breastplate of Righteousness** – this peace of Armor covers the heart – the most vital organ. Knowing you are saved and filled with and following the Spirit
- ♦ **Shoes of The Gospel of Peace** – The shoes protected the feet from thorns, rough roads. It is the Gospel that moves the church and Christians to bring the lost to peace with God and one another.
- ♦ **Shield of Faith** – Like Roman Shield protected from flaming arrows, shot by the enemy. Faith in God is like a shield the deflect evil thoughts from Satan that try to get us to be afraid or doubt God's care for us.
- ♦ **Helmet of Salvation** – The Helmet obviously protects the mind. Once we been Saved, the battle begins between our old thinking and our new Christ – like thinking.
- ♦ **Sword of the Spirit/The Word of God** – Finally here we come to one Offensive weapon in the Armor. It is personal and it powerful. With the Word of God – we can be victorious.

In trials/battles of life, God orders us to put on, the helmet of salvation, our boots of peace, our breastplate of righteousness, our shield of faith, the sword of the Spirit, and gird our loins with truth. When it's over, we feel as if we are about to die. But when the next battle comes, we find ourselves wiser stronger, better much better and God, our Commanding Officer, makes ready for to keep standing for the next battle.

### III. Pray For Spiritual Empowerment (Eph. 6:18 – 20)

Paul says we are to Pray with all prayer: interceding, confession of sin, thanksgiving. Supplication (asking God for power and for help) in the Spirit in the will of God for all the saints – not just the ones in your crew, but for all believers in the Church. We especially need to pray for our leaders like Paul is asking this church to pray for Him – while he was in prison that – even though the Satan thinks he is having his way – Paul ask them to pray that He would still be bold and stand strong for the Lord and for the Gospel of Jesus despite what he gong through

O, if we would take the energy that we use to complain or gossip about ours or a brother or sister's situation, to take them to the Lord in prayer. When a church is Strong in the Power of Lord, Equipped with Armor of Lord and Praying in the Spirit, not even the gates of hell will be able to prevail against us.

As I close A marshal in Napoleon's army -- a man who was devotedly and enthusiastically attached to him -- was mortally wounded in battle. As the last struggle drew near and he lay dying in his tent, he sent for his chief. Napoleon came. The poor man thought his emperor could do anything. So, he earnestly pleaded with his leader to save his life. The emperor sadly shook his head and turned away.

In the hour of death, that soldier discovered that even the powerful Napoleon could not give him physical life. But Beloved while some trust in princes, kings human wisdom, money – not one of these things and give us the victory over Satan, sin and our greatest enemy – death

But I know of a King who fought my battle for me - One I couldn't win on my own:

- ♦ He stepped down from His throne in Heaven
- ♦ He stepped into time from eternity
- ♦ He was clothed in Human flesh
- ♦ He was falsely accused beaten and bruised
- ♦ He died on the Cross and it looked like the devil won
- ♦ But on the 3rd day He rose from with power and victory oven sin, Satan, death, hell and the grave

Beloved, In Christ we are strong and engaged, in a battle that is fierce, but already won – because the victory belongs to Jesus

### REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- ♦ What areas of your life do you need to be “Strong in the Lord and the power of His might?”
- ♦ Which parts of the “Armor of God” do you have the most trouble putting on or wielding?
- ♦ How does Satan launch his attacks against you? How does prayer and the Word make us ready for those attacks?
- ♦ Is there someone in your family or church that has been wounded in this spiritual battle? What are some things you can do to help them to stand?