



HUEYTOWN

— CHURCH OF CHRIST —

February 5th, 2023

"Keeping the Faith and a Good Conscience" (1 Tim. 1:19)

Issue 6

2023 Theme

The elders have selected "Be Strong in the Lord" as our theme for 2023. Their desire for all of us is to have Victory in Jesus! These words come from the pen of Paul as he wrote from his prison cell in Rome, writing to the Ephesians. The apostle was concerned about Christians being successful in warfare, as he said in another letter, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished

of life." (1 John 2:15-17) The "flesh" is the nature that is opposed to God (Romans 6:1-6; Galatians 2:20), and finally, the devil (Ephesians 1:19-23).

In other words, as Christians - children of God - we do not fight *for* victory, but we fight *from* victory! Remember the words of Paul, "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me."



the course, I have kept the faith; in the future, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me but also to all who have loved His appearing" (2 Timothy 4:7-8).

Sooner or later, every Christian discovers that the Christian life is a battleground, not a playground, and that he faces an enemy much stronger than he is - apart from the Lord.

As Christians, we face three enemies: the world, the flesh, and the devil (Ephesians 2:1-3). The "world" refers to the system around us that is opposed to God, that caters to "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride

(Philippians 4:13); "What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *is* against us?" (Romans 8:31; **Ephesians 1:19-23**)

In the last few verses of the sixth chapter of Ephesians, Paul discussed four topics so that his readers, by understanding and applying these truths, might walk in victory.

The Enemy (Ephesians 6:10-12)

We need to know who the enemy is, where he is, and what he can do, or else we have difficulty dealing with him. Not only in Ephesians 6 but throughout the entire Bible, God instructs us about the common enemy.

-continued on the next page

WORSHIP TIMES

Sunday Worship:

9:30 AM - Sermon
10:30 AM - Bible Class
11:30 AM - Lord's Supper

Wednesday Worship:
7:00 PM - All ages

Friday Bible Study:
10:15 AM @ Annex

Bible Class Topics:

Selected Psalms
Prison Epistles
Apologetics
Children: Sacred Hearts
Check with deacons for workbooks

Shepherds

Amos Rowe
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Feel free to stop by the preachers' offices for Bible studies, prayers, talks, or a meeting.

He does not leave us without strategic intelligence, and, definitely we should never be caught off guard.

- **The leader- the devil.** He has different names: accuser - because he accuses God's people day and night before the throne of God (Revelation 12:7-11); Satan - means adversary, because he is an enemy of God, and a tempter (Matthew 4:3); murderer and liar (John 8:44); he is compared to a roaring lion seeking whom to devour (1 Peter 5:8); he is also known as the serpent of old (Genesis 3:1; Revelation 12:9); and an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:13-15); as well as "the god of this age." (2 Corinthians 4:4). These names are more than names, they are descriptors of his character and desire to destroy God's children.
- **Satan's helpers.** The apostle called them "principalities...powers...rulers... spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephesians 6:12) "For our contest is not with human foes alone, but with the rulers, authorities, and cosmic powers of this dark world; that is, with the spirit forces of evil challenging us in the heavenly contest" (Charles Williams) The critical point here is that our battle is not against human beings. It is against spiritual powers. We are wasting our time and energy fighting people when we should fight the devil who seeks to control people and make them oppose the work of God.
- **Satan's abilities.** Never underestimate the power of the devil. Paul's warnings in Ephesians 6 indicate the devil is strong (Ephesians 6:10-12) and that we need the power of God to Stand Strong in the Lord Against the Devil. He is not compared to a lion and a dragon just for fun! John 10:10 says that the devil comes to "steal," "kill," and destroy." We are told to stand firm against the SCHEMES of the devil because he is

wise and subtle, and we need to fight against the "wiles of the devil. (2 Corinthians 2:11; 11:14). Satan wants to use our external enemy, the world, and our internal enemy, the flesh, to defeat us. His weapons and battle plans are formidable.

The Equipment (Ephesians 6:13-17)

Since we are fighting against the enemies in the spirit world, we need special "weapons" for offense and defense. God has provided the "WHOLE ARMOR" for us, and we dare not omit any part of it, or we will not walk in victory. Satan will always look for an unguarded and unprotected area where he can have an advantage (Ephesians 4:47).

- **Belt of truth.** Satan is a liar and has been a liar since the beginning (Genesis 3), but the Christian who is controlled by truth will be set free and will be able to declare victory over the father of lies! We must practice the truth to be able to use truth. When David quit practicing truth he was not able to use truth, and he failed.
- **Breastplate of righteousness.** If the devil accuses the Christian, let it be a false accusation! How is this possible? By wearing the breastplate of righteousness. The piece of armor symbolizes the Christian's righteousness in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21) as well as his righteous life in Christ (Ephesians 4:24). The life we live either fortifies us against Satan's attacks or makes it easier for him to defeat us (2 Cor. 6:1-10).
- **Shoes of the Gospel.** To stand and withstand, we need the perfect shoes of the Gospel. Satan has declared war, but you and I are ambassadors of peace (2 Cor. 5:18-21), and, as such, we take the Gospel of peace wherever we go.
- **Shield of Faith.** The battle shields of Paul's day and the kind the Roman soldiers used were unique because they

were made to interlock with other shields. Also, they were about four-five feet in height. When attacked, soldiers could form barriers like turtles by interlocking their shields and, at the same time advancing toward the enemy. The point is that the army fought, stood, and defended as ONE, UNISON, and in CONCERT unit. As a church, we should do the same.

- **Helmet of salvation.** Often people confuse the Bible heart with the organ in the chest, but the Bible heart is the mind. Satan wants to attack the mind, the way he defeated Eve (Gen. 3; 2 Cor. 11:1-3). The helmet refers to the mind controlled by God. It is too bad that many Christians believe that the intellect is not critical when in reality, it plays a vital role in Christian growth, service, and victory. When God controls the mind, Satan cannot lead the believer astray. The Christian who studies his Bible and learns the meaning of Bible doctrines is not going to be led astray too easily. We need to be "taught by Him as the truth is in Jesus" (Eph. 4:21).
- **Sword of the Spirit.** This sword is the offensive weapon God provides us. The Roman soldier wore on his girdle a short sword which was used for close-in fighting. Hebrews 4:12 compares the Word of God to a sword because it is sharp and is able to pierce the inner man just as a material sword pierces the body. You and I were "cut to the heart" (Acts 2:37; 5:33) when the Word convicted us of our sins. Peter tried to use a sword to defend Jesus in the Garden (Luke 22:47-51); but he learned at Pentecost that the "sword of the Spirit" does a much better job. Moses also tried to conquer with a physical sword (Ex. 2:11-15), only to discover that God's Word alone was more than enough to defeat Egypt.

The Energy (Ephesians 6:18-20)

Prayer is the energy that enables the Christian soldier to wear the armor and wield the sword. We cannot fight the battle in our own power, no matter how strong or talented we may think we are. Prayer is the power for victory, but not just any kind of prayer. Paul tells us how to pray if we would defeat Satan.

- **Pray always.** This obviously does not mean "always saying prayers." We are not heard for our "much speaking" (Matt. 6:7). "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thes. 5:17) says to us, "Always be in communion with the Lord. Keep the receiver off the hook!" Never have to say when you pray, "Lord, we come into Thy presence," because you never left His presence! A Christian must "pray always" because he is always subject to temptations and attacks of the devil. A surprise attack has defeated more than one believer who forgot to "pray without ceasing."
- **Pray with all prayer.** There is more than one kind of praying: prayer, supplication, intercession, and thanksgiving (Phil. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:1). The believer who prays only to ask for things is missing out on blessings that come with intercessions and giving of thanks. In fact, thanksgiving is a great prayer weapon for defeating Satan. "Praise changes things" as much as "prayer changes things." Intercession for others can bring victory to our own lives. "And the Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends" (Job 42:10).

The Encouragement (Ephesians 6:21-24)

We are not fighting the battle alone. There are other believers who stand with us in the fight, and we ought to be careful to encourage one another. Paul encouraged the Ephesians; Tychicus was an encouragement to Paul (Acts 20:4); and Paul was going to send Tychicus to Ephesus to be an encouragement to them. Paul was not the kind of missionary who kept his affairs to himself. He wanted the people of God to know what God was doing, how their prayers were being answered, and what Satan was doing to oppose the work. His motive was not selfish. He was not trying to get something out of them.

What an encouragement it is to be a part of the family of God! Nowhere in the New Testament do we find an isolated believer. Christians are like sheep; they flock together. The church is an army and the soldiers need to stand together and fight together.

May 2023 be the year we, as a united Church, Stand Firm in the Lord and fight the Good Fight - TOGETHER.

Member News and Prayer Requests

- Michelle Parks has COVID. She got sick on Friday and has been feeling pretty bad. She had fever and other symptoms for a few days, but is finally feeling better. Please thank our Lord for her improvement and pray that Keith will not get it.

- Jerry and Hilda Johnson both have COVID. Thankfully they have a mild case and are both feeling better. Prayers please.

- Billy Birtley's father suffered a stroke and is on hospice care. He is not doing well. Please continue to pray for the entire Birtley family.

- Chris Gill was diagnosed with COVID but is doing fine. She will begin her CHEMO treatments on January 31st. She has expressed confidence in God and her faith remains strong. Chris is facing three types of CHEMO and three rounds of treatment. She appreciates our prayers from Hueytown.

- Kim Horne, Brent's wife and Clara's daughter-in-law, broke her ankle and will have surgery on Monday, February 6, 2023. They have asked for our prayers.

- William Pearce is a 35 year old young man married and living in Dallas, Texas who is a Christian. Back in August he found out that he had late stage aggressive and rare esophageal cancer. The treatments they have tried have not worked and the cancer has spread. He is not doing well at this

time. Please pray for this young man and his family that the Lord will heal him.

- Carol is better but is still recuperating from a bad fall she had several days ago. She is going to therapy 3 times a week. It is helping a little bit. Please pray that she will continue to improve and for Don as he cares for her.



- We will have a Gospel Meeting with Bro. Joseph Casimier beginning Sunday, March 5-8.