



prayer *life!*

Weekly Prayer Focus

April 22, 2018

Preparing for Battle

Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand 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. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,
—Ephesians 6:13-17

Since spiritual battle is inevitable, preparing for it is essential. That's why Paul's command is in the present tense. We prepare now for what is sure to happen later.

So often, spiritual warfare comes in a whisper of doubt. "Is this Christianity thing worth all the effort?" "Will God really come through for me?" The devil doesn't need to daunt us with persecution or overwhelm us with fear. All he needed to swerve humanity into the fall and ruin God's creation was a single question. "Did God really say ... ?" But the tone in his voice whispered, "You've got to be kidding me!" and undermined all our confidence in the God of all grace, goodness, and power.

Spiritual warfare means standing firm against the doubt that ushers in the lie, because what we're fighting is falsehood. Satan's great lie is that God is not good, so He has no right to rule. He introduces his hegemony with masterful skill by insinuating that we should choose for ourselves (there's the bait) and follow him instead of our Maker (there's the hook).

Pick any evil in this world. Name any struggle in your soul. The worst wickedness. The greatest travesty. The carnage of all earth's wars and the subtle disruption of every good in the world all stem from the Adversary's temptation to distrust and disobey our good Lord.

But God calls us to stand. Our job is not to defeat Satan—that's already been done. Our job is to resist him and turn our confidence to Christ who has already won the battle. Now that Jesus has won the victory, He is training us to follow in His steps. When Israel invaded the Promised Land, God defeated their enemies and set them on the run. Afterward, He called His chosen people to do the mop up operation, trusting in His power to overcome.

The truth is, Christ defeated sin and Satan at the cross. The serpent's head is crushed. Jesus' command to stand is His call to battle and His promise of victory. And stand we will, because God is able to make us stand. He is the One who enables us to use His armor—the same armor He used when He conquered sin for us.

So, stand. Stand your ground by kneeling in prayer to withstand the devil's attacks on your faith, which is the victory that overcomes the world.

To the praise of God's glory.

Putting on God's Armor

- **The Belt of Truth:** Accept the Truth that the God is God and we are not. That decisive fact makes all the pieces of the armor of God fit correctly and function effectively.
- **The Breastplate of Righteousness:** We are righteous in Christ. In Him, all Satan's accusations mean nothing. But we cannot put on the righteousness of God without first taking off our own. Rest entirely in Christ's perfect righteousness, which is ours by faith in Him.
- **The Gospel of Peace:** The Gospel is the central truth. It proclaims our peace with God and enables us to stand firm. Jesus' blood saves us from sin's power and frees us from fear of God's judgment.
- **The Shield of Faith:** Jesus fights our battles for us, no matter what we face. By faith, we believe His truth and not the world's glaring attractions or the devil's subtle lies. Faith calms our spirits, even in the midst of battle and enables us in every circumstance to obey God's command to "Fear not."
- **The Helmet of Salvation:** Our salvation is sure in Christ, who keeps us "safe and secure from all alarms," as we lean on His everlasting arms.
- **The Sword of the Spirit:** God's Word defines Truth. It is living and active and powerful at all times and in every circumstance. Accepting the Truth of God's Word by faith gives us victory in every battle we fight in life.

Prayer for Northpoint.

- **For Our Leaders:**
 - **Pastors and Directors:** Brent Whitefield, Scott Williams, Terilyn Brown, Geoff Grant, Taylor Mendoza, Tamene Menna, and Marty Wiegman; **Lay Elders:** Tim East, Steve Flood, Mark Kiker, Mike Russell, and Vinoj Zechariah; **Church Staff:** Michelle Balga, Bob Brown, Andria Brucks, Jacob Williams, Carolee Jefferson, Josh Figureoa, Amber McEwen, Mark Norland, Corie Saunders, and Teri Vaughn
 - **Pray:** That God's grace and truth will define and empower their ministry. Pray that they will seek and receive God's power to be effective in their work. Ask God to display His love in their lives, so they honor Christ and His people.
- **For Our Body:**
 - Ask God to enable us to look to Him and receive His guidance, to honor Him and seek His glory, to grow in our love for Him and for one another. Ask God to move among us to seek Him in ongoing, earnest prayer.
- Please continue to pray for God's grace and guidance for **John Sloan and his family.**

Prayer Record

Record specific prayers you have below. Note when and how God answers your prayers. It will help you to see that He really is paying attention.

Date	Request	Date	Answer

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

–Isaiah 52:7