

Say Yes to God: Growing Deeper in God's Grace
“Standing Strong in the Armor of God”
Ephesians 6:10-18

THE BIG IDEA: As Paul wraps up his letter to the Ephesians, he tells them to “Stand strong in the armor of God” because the battle we fight as Christians is not against flesh and blood but spiritual forces, namely the devil. Although the devil is a formidable adversary, we have nothing to fear for we can access the power of God.

OPEN WITH PRAYER

GETTING STARTED What is your view of the devil and evil? Has this view changed throughout your life? How has it changed? Why has it changed?

LEARNING & APPLYING GOD’S WORD

Together, read Ephesians 6:10-18

1. C.S. Lewis wrote “There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race falls about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them.” What does Lewis mean in this quote? Do you know Christians who have been unbalanced one way or another in their view toward evil?
2. Go back and read Ephesians 1:19-21. Where is Christ now? How powerful is he? How does this instill hope in Christians as we encounter the evil forces described this week’s passage, specifically 6:10-12?
3. What and who are the “rulers . . . authorities . . . powers of this dark world . . . and the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms”? Are they only “personal’ in nature, or could they infect social and political structures too? Can you give examples of systemic or structural evil?
4. Steve gave three names for the devil or evil found in the New Testament:
 - Satan, which means accuser or slanderer.
 - The evil one, which means to twist or distort.
 - Diabolos, which means to divide, or separate.What insights do each of these names give to how the devil works?
5. What are the seven pieces of armor that Paul mentions in verses 14-18?

LIVING OUT “REAL LIFE”

7. Have you ever experienced the spiritual warfare that Paul is describing in these verses?
8. What piece of armor do you most need to put on in your life?
9. Does anyone in your group feel especially vulnerable to some of the warfare that Paul is describing in this passage? As a group, pray for them.

SHARING AND PRAYER (Prayer Requests)

Take some time to share prayer requests, where you need to find God's hope and the power of the Resurrection through one another. Be sure to give thanks for each other and pray for one another needs. There you find the power of God.

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My favorite book by C.S. Lewis is *The Screwtape Letters*. It is the book that put him on the cover of *Time* magazine. It is a very creative book in which a senior devil (Screwtape) writes a series of letters in which he instructs a junior devil (Wormwood) how to derail a young man who has just become a Christian. The book has great insights into human nature and the forces of evil. Following is a short passage from this book: (Senior devil Screwtape to junior devil Wormwood): *“The fact that ‘devils’ are predominantly comic figures in the modern imagination will help you. If any faint suspicion of your existence begins to arise in his mind, suggest to him a picture of something in red tights, and persuade him that since he cannot believe in that (it is an old textbook method of confusing them) he therefore cannot believe in you.”*