

## Refuge City Church — October 29, 2023 “Stand in Victory” (Ephesians 6:10-17)

### **Introduction**

- **LAST WEEK:** We looked at the witness we present to others closest to us, both in the home and in the workplace.
- **TODAY:** We shift from walking to standing in the midst of spiritual warfare believing and knowing who has the victory!
  
- **QUOTE:** “Sooner or later every believer discovers that the Christian life is a battleground, not a playground, and that he faces an enemy who is much stronger than he is—apart from the Lord.” [Warren Wiersbe]
- Context within Ephesians
  - Victory in Christ!
    - **Ephesians 1:19-22**, “and what is the immeasurable greatness of his *power* toward us who believe, according to the working of his *great might* that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church,”
  - From death & darkness to life!
    - **Ephesians 2:1-2**, “And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience.”
  - Walk in wisdom!
    - **Ephesians 5:15-16**, “Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.”

### **“Be strong and put on” [Verses 10-11]**

“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.”

- It is we who need to get strong!
- **Psalm 92:12**, “The righteous flourish like the palm tree and grow like a cedar in Lebanon.”
  - Abraham did so by glorifying God despite his age and barren wife that God would provide. [**Romans 4:20-21**, “No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God...”]
  - Moses did so by trusting in God’s promises.
  - Joshua did so by not wavering from God’s Word.
  - Elijah did so by invoking the name of God.
  - David did so by believing in God’s victory.
  - All of them believed and trusted *prior* the battles they faced, and then *acted* on that belief.

- **Ephesians 3:16**, “that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be *strengthened with power* through his Spirit in your inner being,”
- Not only do we need to be strong, we need to “*put on*”.
  - This is a spirit of cooperation with God in this world.
  - **QUESTION:** Is the devil working overtime, at all times, to get you discouraged, distracted, and to do/believe anything but God?
  - Then why do we slack off when there is a battle raging every day, and Satan is scheming to steal, kill, and destroy us?!
    - **Ephesians 4:14**, “so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.”
  - What is it that he actually does to trip us up?
    - “Mixes error with truth, lies, misquoting scripture, dressing up as an angel of light, and the list goes on...” [paraphrased from Watchman Nee]
    - Lust, pride, and greed are his tools of persuasion [1 John 2:15-17]
- In all this, we are given everything we need to battle against every temptation to sin, every attack that comes our way.
  - **1 Peter 5:8-9**, “Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith...” [Psalm 119:11]
  - **QUOTE:** “I do not think the Devil is concentrating in the nightclubs or on skid row or in the underworld or in the Mafia. [He already has these under his control.] I think he is concentrating on the church on Sunday morning. He is working on the spiritual front, and too many sleepy Christians seem to be totally unaware of that.” [J. Vernon McGee]

### “Stand your ground” [Verses 12-14a]

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. 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...”

- “Stand your ground” laws are provisions under self defense laws that justify the use of deadly force under imminent threat of harm regardless of whether a safe retreat is possible.
- Behind every *physical* battle we think we’re fighting, is the *spiritual* realm of darkness.
  - *Rulers, authorities, powers, forces:* There is an evil army doing all it can to distract, dissuade, discourage, and cause you to disregard, deny, and disobey God and His Word.
  - **2 Corinthians 10:3-4**, “For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds.”
- And yet, when we cloak ourselves in God’s armor, we can & will withstand!
  - What is the assurance of our victory?

- **Romans 8:38-39**, “For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
- What happens in the end? Jesus wins!
  - **1 Corinthians 15:24**, “Then comes the end, when [Jesus] delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power.”
- Stand firm, because every day that brings temptation is a day of battle!
  - Who’s armor do you put on? Nothing you have or weapon you can wield is good enough to gain victory in and of yourself.
  - Do you ever pray for God to give you the victory? If so, you’ve missed the point and by doing so, are already defeated.
    - **UNDERSTAND:** The victory has already been won... so stand firm in that knowledge!
    - **Colossians 2:15**, “He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by *triumphing* over them in him.”
    - **Proverbs 21:31**, “...the *victory* belongs to the Lord.”
- So stand your ground!
  - **Romans 5:2**, “Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this *grace* in which we *stand*...”
  - **1 Corinthians 15:1**, “Now I would remind you, brothers, of the *gospel* I preached to you, which you received, in which you *stand*,”
  - **1 Corinthians 16:13**, “Be watchful, *stand* firm in the *faith*...” [courage]
  - **Philippians 4:1**, “...*stand* firm thus in the Lord, my *beloved*.” [love]
  - **2 Corinthians 1:24**, “...but we work with you for your joy, for you *stand* firm in your *faith*.”
  - **Galatians 5:1**, “For freedom Christ has set us *free*; *stand* firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.”
  - **Philippians 1:27**, “Only let your manner of life be worthy of the *gospel* of Christ, so...I may hear of you that you are *standing* firm in one spirit,”
  - **Colossians 4:12**, “...that you may *stand* mature and fully assured in all the *will of God*.”

### “Armor up” [Verses 14b-17]

- **“Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth...”**
  - The greatest scheme of the enemy are lies. It was a lie that tempted Adam and Eve and ruined perfect righteousness.
  - It is the first thing we put on. If we don’t live in the truth of Jesus Christ, none of the other armor matters.
    - What is righteousness without truth? What is peace without truth? What is faith and salvation if they are suppressed by the lies we are believing and walking in?
  - **Luke 12:35-36**, “Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning, and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks.”
- **“...and having put on the breastplate of righteousness...”**

- The enemy is a deceiver. He will do all he can to make you question your right standing before God [attack on value, identity, purpose]
  - It is God who makes us righteous, not our own works.
    - **2 Corinthians 5:21**, “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”
  - We can stand confident of who we are in Christ, and that should give us determined grit to stand our ground in the face of attack.
- **“...and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace...”**
- The foundation upon which we stand is the message of the gospel [good news].
  - A soldier who does not take care of their feet is no good soldier at all.
  - **Isaiah 52:7**, “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.’”
  - One of the first things Jesus declared in His ministry was “The kingdom of God is at hand, repent, and believe the gospel.”
  - **1 Peter 3:15**, “but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, *always being prepared* to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,”
- **“...In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one..”**
- The image is that of a Roman shield which was large enough to cover the whole body in the face of attack.
  - The enemy will hurl fiery darts of accusation, sinful desires, doubt, fear, and lies that will penetrate to your very core, if you are not prepared at all times!
  - **Proverbs 26:18-19**, “Like a madman who throws firebrands, arrows, and death is the man who deceives his neighbor and says, “I am only joking!”
- **“...and take the helmet of salvation...”**
- God, by His grace, has saved us from the penalty of death.
  - And God will save us from this world in the end when He raptures us to glory.
  - **1 Thessalonians 5:8**, “But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.”
  - The hope of glory saves us from discouragement.
  - This is why we set our minds on the things above! Salvation in Jesus protects our mind and our thinking when we are under attack.
- **“...and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”**
- This is the word of God = “rhema”; spoken word.
  - How did Jesus defeat the temptations of the enemy? By speaking the truth of scripture.

- **Example:** My spiritual attack in Zambia.
- **QUOTE:** “Do not make a mistake here; the sword of the Spirit is not the Bible. This Bible is not the sword of the Spirit, it is the armory. There are thousands of swords in here and every one of them is powerful and two-edged.” [Harry Ironside]
- **Hebrews 4:12**, “For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”

### ***Conclusion***

- The motto of the British Royal Observatory Corp: **“Forewarned is forearmed”**
  - If you know what to look for, you can identify the enemy, know what he’s coming for, the angle of his attack, and be prepared to ward off the attack.
  - **Matthew 4:** Jesus in the wilderness prior to the start of His ministry.
    - He knew Satan’s tactics, and He fought off his lies with the truth of God’s Word.
    - He stood in victory, renewed in the Spirit, and marched forward in His purpose.
    - So let us do the same!
- **Isaiah 54:17**, “No weapon that is formed against you will prosper; And every tongue that accuses you in judgment you will condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, And their vindication is from Me,” declares the Lord.”