

### STANDING FIRM IN OUR FAITH

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.*

Ephesians 6:10-20 (NIV)

❖ Recognizing Our THREE-FOLD ENEMY:

*Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. (vs. 11-12)*

1. Our enemy... the WORLD.

*Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

1 John 2:15 (NIV)

2. Our enemy... the FLESH.

*Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

Galatians 5:19-21 (NKJV)

3. Our enemy... the DEVIL.

*He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.*

1 John 3:8 (NIV)

*... for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.*

❖ Responding With The PROPER EQUIPMENT:

*Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. (vs. 13-17)*

1. Put on the Belt of TRUTH.

*Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist... (vs. 14a)*

2. Put on the Breastplate of RIGHTEOUSNESS.

*... with the breastplate of righteousness in place... (vs. 14b)*

3. Have your feet Fitted with READINESS.

*... with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. (vs. 15)*

4. Put on the Shield of FAITH.

*... take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. (vs. 16)*

5. Put on the Helmet of SALVATION.

*Take the helmet of salvation... (vs. 17a)*

6. Carry the Sword of the SPIRIT.

*... and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. (vs. 17b)*

❖ Realizing Where We Get Our SPIRITUAL ENERGY:

*And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should. (vs. 18-20)*

1. Pray CONSISTENTLY.

*And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. (vs. 18a)*

2. Pray for other CHRISTIANS.

*With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. (vs. 18b)*

3. Pray for CHURCH LEADERS.

*Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel... Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should. (vs. 19-20b)*

❖ Closing Challenge: A mark of a mature Christian is PRAYER and PERSEVERANCE.

*I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.*

2 Timothy 4:7 (NIV)