

Ephesians: What's God Saying to You? What are You Going to Do About It?

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I. Introduction

Is there really a spiritual battle, demons and all? It sounds like fantasy, right? But what if it's true. Think about how humans behave: Why are we able to lie, cheat, steal, and kill so easily? Why is it so hard for us to forgive and so easy to hold grudges? This behavior is no surprise; we see it and do it all the time. But is there more to it than environment or us? Is there an evil force behind us pushing, egging us on? If there is, how can we protect ourselves?

II. Ephesians: What is God Saying to You and What are You Going to Do About It?

Chapter 6

God needs us to wake up, 5:14, because there's a battle raging all around us and we're in the middle of it. Whether we like it or not, we will either fight for God's army or Satan's—in this battle there's no neutral ground; there's no Sweden to run to; you *will* fight on one side or the other. In this battle, there are Christians walking around clueless and are unwittingly fighting on the enemy's side. There are also non-Christians who are likewise ignorant to what Satan is doing to them and with them, 2:2. The Lord steps into this confusion and fog of war. He's got a message for us from Ephesians. He says,

“Do you know that I've chosen you to be in My army? In fact, you're not just in My army, you're in Me! 1:4-6. And it doesn't matter what you did before I met you, what failures you racked up, what wicked and horrible things you did, none of that matters; I've wiped it all clean, 1:7. And I'll let you in on a little secret, this battle we're in, you and I, I'm going to win it and you're going to get some spoils, 1:10-11. In fact, My Spirit guarantees that you'll get them, 1:13-14. In fact, I've already defeated Satan and his minions and if I've defeated him, so have you because I'm your Head and you're My Body, 1:20-23.

“You used to be walking around absolutely dead in your sin and misery. You were blindly doing Satan's bidding and you didn't even know it, 2:2. But then My Father, because He loves you so much, rescued you from Satan's grip and the death you were living in. He took you and Me and united us permanently, forever; you are now alive in Me! 2:4-6. And all you had to do is simply accept this gift of salvation by faith, 2:8-9. You used to be estranged from Me, My Father and My people, but when I died in your place, I brought you into My Father's family. In fact, you are now the house where My Father dwells! 2:11-22.

“It was always My Father's plan to include you among His people, 3:6, in fact, to give you complete access to Himself, 3:12. It is His desire that your strength come from His own Spirit which dwells inside you, 3:16, so that I will take up permanent residence in your heart. Our desire is that you will experience and live by the full depth of Our love so that you will constantly be filled with Our presence, 3:17-19. My Father will do for you far more than you can ever ask or imagine and His power will always be at your disposal, 3:20.

“Therefore, I need you to remember all this, to live by it. You are now one with Us and We with you, which should affect the way you live and breathe, 4:1-6. In fact, I’ve given you a role to play in this battle and in My Body: your goal is to stay in constant contact with Me, to strive to be more and more like Me instead of falling prey to Satan’s crafty lies, 4:11-16. I don’t want you going back to the blind and dark person you used to be; you’re no longer alienated from God, 4:17-19. I taught you better than this and you’re no longer wearing that person; you’re now wearing Me, 4:20-24. This means that you must refuse Satan a foothold in your life; instead, your speech, actions, care, concern, and your forgiveness must be like Mine, 4:26-32.

“I want you to imitate Me and My Father; be loving and selfless the way I am not wicked the way you used to be, 5:1-6. You’re God’s child now, walk like it, 5:8. It’s time to wake up and walk wisely, 5:14-15. Let My Spirit control you so that you can treat everyone the way you should, whether it’s your spouse, children, parents, boss, or your employees, 5:18, 21-6:9.

“This battle against Satan and his minions is real but since I’ve already won, all I need you to do is to stand strong in Me, in My power, 6:10. But to do this you have to be wearing My armor because this battle is not against other humans. The forces you face are invisible and they don’t fight with conventional weapons. Their weapons are crafty schemes intended to deceive you, 6:11-13.”

6:14-17, there are several theories as to what these pieces of armor represent. Some think they represent items that a Christian already possesses, e.g., Christians already possess the truth, God’s truth, about life and death which saved them. They already have Christ’s righteousness which was imputed to them when they believed, 4:24, cf. Romans 3:22. They already possess the Gospel of peace, faith, and salvation, 1:13, 15; 2:8, 11-22. Others think the armor represents personal qualities that a Christian must practice in order to fend off Satan’s attacks, i.e., a Christian must be truthful, righteous, peaceful, faithful/trusting, aware of their salvation, and live by God’s Word. In the past I thought that this armor represented God’s Word, since each piece either speaks directly about God’s Word or can be tied back to His Word. I still think this is true and makes a lot of sense in light of what it’s designed to protect us from: Satan’s wiles/schemes designed to deceive (6:11 cf. 4:14). Satan’s three weapons are Isolation, Deception, and Accusation. And what will protect us from them all, especially Satan’s lies is God’s Truth. We see this play out in Jesus’ battle against Satan after He fasted 40 days. At the end of that battle, Satan ran away (Matthew 4:1-11) just like God said he would (James 4:7).

But I also see something else at work based on the reality that our Lord reveals in Ephesians about us, Him, Satan, and this battle we’re in: we are in Him, wearing Him, 1:6; 2:5-6; 4:24, and Satan has already been defeated, 1:20-22. There is a battle, 6:12, but since He’s already won, all we have to do is stand, 6:11, 13, 14. But in order to do that we have to be wearing *His* armor, standing in *His* might, 6:10-11, 14-17. In a very real sense, the armor represents Christ, i.e., He is Truth, righteousness, the Gospel, faith, salvation, and the Word (John 1:1).

The battle is real and it’s on every time we go to work, every time we go home, every time there’s a pandemic, election, etc., etc. A man struggles at work, but the Lord delivers him...

III. Conclusion

*Finally, my brethren, be strong **in the Lord** and in the power of **His might**.*