

Sermon, March 18, 2012
“The Christian Soldier” Ephesians 6:10-17
Pastor Thomas P. Bellhy

The 27 Books of the New Testament

- Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John
- Early Church: Book of Acts
- 13 Letters of Paul: Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, **Ephesians**, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon
- 8 General Letters: Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude
- Prophecy: Revelations

Overview of Ephesians:¹

- The apostle Paul wrote Ephesians between A.D. 60-62, while he was imprisoned in Rome (3:1; 4:1; 6:20),
- A number of churches in the province of Asia, including the one in Ephesus, most likely read this letter.
- During Paul’s day Ephesus was a thriving urban center and the capital of the province of Asia.
- , Ephesus’ strategic location at the center of trade routes attracted people from all over the known world.
- In Paul’s day thousands of people traveled there to worship in the temple of Artemis (Diana), one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.
- Activities in three gymnasiums, public baths and a theater that seated 25,000 people provided some of the local entertainment and recreation.

General Outline of Ephesians:²

- I. Salutation (1:1, 2)
- II. God’s Purpose for the Church (1:3–3:13)
- III. God’s Fullness for the Church (3:14–21)
- IV. God’s Plan for Faithful Living in the Church (4:1–6)
- V. God’s Son Endows and Builds the Church (4:7–16)
- VI. God’s Pattern and Principles for Members of the Church (4:17–32)
- VII. God’s Standards for Faithfulness in the Church (5:1–21)
- VIII. God’s Standards for Authority/Submission in the Church (5:22–6:9)
- IX. God’s Provision for His Children’s Spiritual Battles (6:10–17)
- X. God’s Appeal for Prayer in the Church (6:18–20)
- XI. Benediction (6:21–24)

Major Themes of Ephesians:³

- The first 3 chapters are theological, emphasizing NT doctrine, whereas the last 3 chapters are practical and focus on Christian behavior.
- A key theme of the letter is the mystery (meaning a heretofore unrevealed truth) of the church, which is “that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel” (3:6).
- A major truth emphasized is that of the church as Christ’s present spiritual, earthly body, also a distinct and formerly unrevealed truth about God’s people. This metaphor depicts the church, not as an organization, but as a living organism composed of mutually related and interdependent parts. Christ is Head of the body and the Holy Spirit is its lifeblood, as it were. The body functions through the faithful use of its members’ various spiritual gifts, sovereignly and uniquely bestowed by the Holy Spirit on each believer.
- Other major themes include the riches and fullness of blessing to believers. Despite, and partly even because of, a Christian’s great blessings in Jesus Christ, he is sure to be tempted by Satan to self-satisfaction and complacency.
- It was for that reason that, in the last chapter, Paul reminds believers of the full and sufficient spiritual armor supplied to them through God’s Word and by His Spirit (6:10–17) and of their need for vigilant and persistent prayer (6:18).

¹Kaiser Jr., Walter C.; Garrett, Duane (2010-10-19). NIV Archaeological Study Bible: An Illustrated Walk Through Biblical History and Culture (Kindle Locations 109015-109019). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

²MacArthur, John Jr: *The MacArthur Study Bible*. electronic ed. Nashville : Word Pub., 1997, c1997, S. Eph 1:1

³MacArthur, John Jr: *The MacArthur Study Bible*. electronic ed. Nashville : Word Pub., 1997, c1997, Eph 1:1

Sermon, March 18, 2012
“The Christian Soldier” Ephesians 6:10-17
Pastor Thomas P. Bellhy

The theological/ecclesiastical themes of Ephesians prepare you, as part of the church, to prepare for battle.

1. The Christian Soldier is to prepare for struggle against cosmic forces of evil BUT you are not to be afraid!

- The church is your base camp, command post, where you prepare for what lies ahead.
- We are battling a real enemy of God, evil in cosmic places, evil people who do despicable things, evil in your own heart!
- God gives you the means to engage such an enemy and not be afraid. Your strength, power and armor comes from God

2. God gives you the armor to protect yourself and to fight. Ephesians 6:13

- Evil is not something you can fight on your own. So take what he gives you to fight the good fight.
- You must actively “take up” the armor. Not lie passively on a message table.
- In the storms of life you often fail when you battle the elements by yourself.

3. You must live your life in the Truth of the Word of God. Ephesians 6:14

- Our enemy is one who relies on lies and deceit.
- God gives you the Truth so that you may prepare for the battle and the rest of the armor that attaches.

4. You must “put on” righteousness. Ephesians 6:14

- The righteousness that protects your heart and vital organs is the righteousness of Christ in which you were clothed upon accepting Him as Lord and Savior.
- You are to live holy, set apart from the world and for God.
- Unholy living will surely weaken our armor and make us vulnerable to the enemy.
- Our enemy relies on unrighteousness. God gives you the righteousness to prepare and protect you.

5. You must be ready to move with confidence and quickness with the message of peace. Ephesians 6:15

- Good shoes help prepare you to stand firm and move.
- Moving to deliver the life saving message of the gospel of peace.
- Our enemy is one who relies on bad news. God enables you to deliver good news.

6. You must be prepared for the arrows that the enemy will shoot at you. Ephesians 6:16

- The shield (large body shield in Greek) was able to protect against arrows, even flaming arrows.
- The enemy is not passive; he will fire at you many times to weaken your defenses.
- Your shield is trust and faith in God, believing His Word to you even as the enemy tries to tempt you.
- Our enemy is one who tempts you in sin. God saves you from temptation.

7. You must put on the protection from doubt and discouragement. Ephesians 6:17

- What you are protecting is the assurance of your salvation.
- Satan will always try to destroy the assurance of your salvation with doubts and discouragement.
- God gives you the assurance of salvation so that you can be strong in God’s promises of eternal salvation.

8. You must be ready for Satan’s attack and ready to overcome. Ephesians 6:17

- The power of the Word of God enables you to fend off any attack by the enemy (Jesus in the wilderness) and also cuts into the enemy’s strategies and evil purposes.
- Satan is always on the attack. God gives you the perfect weapon to both fend off his Satan’s attacks and go after him with the power to overcome evil.

Conclusion:

- Our enemy is one who relies on lies and deceit, the unholy living of unrighteousness, bad news, temptation, destruction of your assurance, and is always on the attack.
- God gives you Truth, righteousness, good news, saves you from temptation, gives you assurance, gives you the perfect weapon to both fend off his Satan’s attacks and go after him with the power to overcome evil.