

THE Way



Jesus-centred, *Spirit-led*
hope revealed



**SPIRITUAL WARFARE
BIBLE STUDY GUIDE**

*In this series, we are exploring how we can live more deeply in **The Way** of Jesus.*

This week we seek to increase our understanding of spiritual warfare. Today's Scripture passage gives us advice on how to fight against darkness with the weapons and armour that the Holy Spirit provides.



Share

When you hear the words
'spiritual warfare', what comes to mind?

Can you think of a time when you felt like something more was going on beneath the surface – a spiritual battle you couldn't see but could sense?



Pray

Before we read the Scripture, let's pray together.

Pray that the Holy Spirit would speak through God's Word.



Read

Read Ephesians 6:10-18. You might like to read it in a couple of different translations.

A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

¹¹ Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. ¹² For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm.

¹⁴ Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God's righteousness. ¹⁵

For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared. ¹⁶ In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil. ¹⁷ Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸ Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.

(New Living Translation)

Finally, let the mighty strength of the Lord make you strong. ¹¹ Put on all the armor that God gives, so you can defend yourself against the devil's tricks. ¹² We are not fighting against humans. We are fighting against forces and authorities and against rulers of darkness and powers in the spiritual world. ¹³ So put on all the armor that God gives. Then when that evil day comes, you will be able to defend yourself. And when the battle is over, you will still be standing firm. ¹⁴ Be ready! Let the truth be like a belt around your waist, and let God's justice protect you like armor. ¹⁵ Your desire to tell the good news about peace should be like shoes on your feet. ¹⁶ Let your faith be like a shield, and you will be able to stop all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Let God's saving power be like a helmet, and for a sword use God's message that comes from the Spirit. ¹⁸ Never stop praying, especially for others. Always pray by the power of the Spirit. Stay alert and keep praying for God's people.

(Contemporary English Version)



- Paul begins by telling us to let the Lord's mighty strength make us strong. How can we do this? What kind of strength can we draw from God?
- He tells us to put on the full 'armour of God' – to use all the defences and tools that God has provided us with. Why do people usually put on armour or special protective clothing? What does this tell us about the challenges we can expect to face as Christians?
- What do you think Paul means when he tells us to "stand firm" against the devil? What are some of the ways that the devil tries to persuade, distract, weaken or tempt you?
- In Verse 12, Paul says we are "not fighting against humans". Why do you think he reminds us of this?
- If you feel comfortable, share about a time when you felt like you were under significant spiritual attack. How did you know you were under spiritual attack? What helped you to remain standing firm at the end of the battle?
- The belt is the foundation garment for the armour. When we are confident of God's truths, they become a basis for us to fight lies and deception. What is one truth that helps you to fight doubt? Can anyone share about a time when "the belt of truth" helped them?
- The righteousness of God is described as the "breastplate" in some translations¹. A soldier's

1 New King James Version (NKJV) and New International Version (NIV)

breastplate protects his heart and vital organs in battle. How do you think the righteousness of God (secured only through Jesus' sacrifice) protects our heart and soul?

- A soldier's shoes provide stability, mobility and readiness in battle. In the same way, the Gospel of Peace gives us the firm footing we need to stand strong in spiritual battles. This peace doesn't depend on circumstances – it comes from knowing and trusting the Good News of Jesus. When have you experienced that kind of peace in a spiritual struggle?
- The Roman shield was large enough to cover the whole body. When dipped in water it could extinguish flaming arrows. Faith is the shield that protects us in spiritual warfare. Can anyone share about a time when their faith helped them during a time of opposition, trials or attack?
- The helmet of salvation protects us against discouragement and doubt. Through the sacrifice of Jesus, we are assured of salvation. We find hope in the knowledge that God is triumphant. How does this impact the way that you fight against discouragement?
- The first doctrine (i.e. core belief) of The Salvation Army declares that the words in the Bible were inspired by God and help us to understand how to live as Christians.² Here, Paul calls the Bible "the sword of the Spirit". In what ways can the Bible be like a sword? Share about a time when the Holy Spirit helped you use Scripture like a sword.

² We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and that they only constitute the Divine rule of Christian faith and practice."

- As we step into battle, Paul says we should pray and never stop praying! How easy do you find it to pray throughout your day? What helps you pray regularly? Are there types of prayer you find especially helpful? (For example, praying with others, meditation, journalling, walking, silent prayer, etc.)
- Paul emphasises that we should put on every piece of the armour God provides. Is there a piece you feel is lacking in your life? How could you make better use of that piece of armour?
- Read Verse 11 again. What is this verse speaking into your personal situation today? How have you felt challenged to apply this passage in your life?



Pray

Spend some time listening to the Holy Spirit in silence and then spend some time encouraging and praying for each other about the things you have shared.

