

**CAPITAL BIBLE CHURCH
SERMON NOTES**

**August 20, 2023
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**Series: Standing Firm
“Know Your Enemy”
Ephesians 6:12, 13**

Big Idea – The real enemy of all true believers is the devil and his forces.

Review: last message were introduced to this idea of a spiritual battle that every believer fights.

Big Idea – The Christian life is a continuous warfare against our enemy Satan.

1. Preparing for the battle – vs. 10 “Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might...”

God’s power is available to us but we have a commitment as well.
We might call this the “paradox of power”

Vs. 10 tells us to be “strong in the Lord ... in the power of His might.”
Vs. 11 says that we must “put on all the armor of God”. In other words, the strength is God’s but we must appropriate it, grab on to it, avail ourselves of it.

Many paradoxes like this are in Scripture. – Galatians 2:20 says that I am living my life, yet Christ is living it through me.

God wrote the Bible, the Word of God, yet he used human instruments to do it.

You must live the Christian life with diligence and commitment, yet it is God’s power alone living it through you.

2. Putting on the armor – vs. 11 “Put on the whole armor of God”

It comes down then to your choice – you can live a cold, dead, powerless life if you want to...Or you can put on all God’s available armor and live in victory.

3. The Adversary – vs. 11

“...that you may be able to stand against the wiles/the tricks/deceptions of the devil.”

We learned Satan is a real being who got his start as the highest kind of angel next to God's throne yet he was not satisfied with that, but wanted to be his own god. Isaiah 14:12 – 14 talks about his downfall from pride and rebellion against God's authority – 1/3 of angelic hosts chose to go with him.

Satan is a limited being, just like any other created being. He is not everywhere present, all-knowing, or all-powerful. Satan is not God, but he has a whole host of evil angels called demons he can use for spiritual attacks. Anything that hell can bring against you results from satanic activity in the same realm in which God operates, called heavenly places.

4. The Army of the Adversary – vs. 12

Ephesians 6:12a “For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies...”

Identified

We are not in a battle with other human beings but with Satan and his forces. Jesus was able to hate sin and love sinners because He knew the sinner was not the enemy. The real enemy is the one behind the sinner, the “god of this world”

2 Corinthians 4:4 says he blinds the minds/the hearts of those who don't believe so the light of the Gospel won't shine unto them.

We should feel a loving, sympathetic, gracious, merciful pity towards sinners because they are just dupes of Satan. (2 Timothy 2:26)

Paul is making the point here that our enemy and the battle is not a human, physical one – it's a spiritual battle, a supernatural one that takes place in the spirit world.

Defined

vs. 12b “...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.

This tells me Satan is not a solitary enemy, but has a whole army of demon spirits so vast, they are beyond our ability to comprehend

1. Their organization

At Creation God made all the angels at once, some time far back in eternity past. Since angels don't procreate, they have all existed since that time. Different categories of angels (prior to Satan's fall) are, from highest to lowest:

At Creation:

1. Archangels – 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Jude 9
2. Principalities – Ephesians 1:21; Colossians 1:16
3. Powers – Ephesians 1:21; Colossians 1:16
4. Thrones – Colossians 1:16
5. Dominions – Ephesians 1:21; Colossians 1:16
6. Might (strengths) – Ephesians 1:21
7. Cherubim – Genesis 3:24; 2 Kings 19:5; Ezekiel 10:1-22; 28:14-16
8. Seraphim – Isaiah 6:2, 6

Among the fallen angels/evil spirits

1. "Principalities and powers" – involved in high operations
2. "World rulers of darkness" – demons who infiltrate the political structures of the world. Behind the scenes, ruling the world, are demonic forces.
3. "Spiritual wickedness in high places" – (literally wicked spirits). These are the vile, wretched, rotten, evil spirits who do all they can to make society and human life more evil.

Is there a "Demonic conspiracy?" – Absolutely! There is no doubt in my mind that demons are actively working behind the scenes in the governments of nations to accomplish Satan's evil purposes. This has always been true down through the ages of history.

Psalm 96:5 says "...the gods of the nations are idols (literally demons)"

Daniel saw Satan in the King of Tyre (Ezekiel 28) as well as demons behind rulers of other empires (see Daniel 9, 10)

Demons were behind Napoleon, Mussolini, Stalin, Hitler, Khrushchev, and many world leaders of today.

So, we're in a cosmic battle that is supernatural –

Revelation 12:7 depicts a day when the invisible warfare in the heavenly places will break out in a very visible form.

“And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. And the dragon and his angels waged war.”

The archangel Michael and the holy angels are fighting Satan and the angels who rebelled with him. The battle is angelic, but they are fighting over the earth. Thus, the war in heaven directly affects what is happening on earth.

We are in the midst of an angelic conflict, a satanic rebellion, in which Satan is seeking to bring this whole world under his rule. That means when you were born into the kingdom of God, you were born into a war.

You were born a warrior.

You are surrounded by a spiritual enemy, but the battle is not for land or anything physical. **This cosmic battle is for glory.**

The issue is: Who is going to get the glory in this universe? Who is going to be worshiped? Who will have notoriety? Who will get to call the shots?

Satan said to God, “You cannot have all the glory in creation. I want some of the glory for myself.”

God’s response? “My glory I will not give to another” (Isaiah 48:11).

Of course, that answer didn’t sit well with Satan, so he set about to steal what was not rightfully his—glory. **The battle is for glory.**

Understanding that is half the fight. That’s why Paul told us, “Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31; see also Col. 3:23).

5. The Affirmation of Victory – vs. 13

Ephesians 6:13 “Therefore, put on the whole armor of God (every piece of God’s armor) so you will be able to resist the enemy in the evil day. So that after the battle you will have done all and are standing firm.”

1. Wherefore/therefore – our strength is in God’s mighty power, and He has given us all the armor we need

2. We avail ourselves of God’s mighty power by yielding our bodies to Him, putting on all the armor, and using it.

1 Peter 5:8 “Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.

9 Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your Christian brothers and sisters all over the world are going through the same kind of suffering you are.”

Revelation 12:10 “I heard a loud voice in heaven saying: “The salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have now come. The **accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accused them day and night** before our God, has been thrown down.

11 And our brothers and sisters defeated him by the blood of the Lamb’s death and by the message they preached. They did not love their lives so much that they were afraid of death.

3. When is the evil day? From the time the usurper took over until He is cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:10)

4. What all needs to be done to stay standing firm?

James 4:7 word “stand” in vs. 13 is same word as “resist”

1 Peter 5:8, 9 – “resist steadfast in the faith” – “resist” is same word as “stand”

You don’t need to chase him around, he will find you and be constantly attacking you. You just need to stand against him with the armor on.