That we may be one Series: Study 6 standing firm together

(ephesians 6:10-18)

## BEFORE THE LESSON

Paul is writing to the Ephesians about their new identity in Christ. Part of taking on that new identity is unity. The passage we’re looking at in this study is the conclusion to Paul’s letter. This could be compared to a general issuing his final instructions before sending soldiers out to battle. Paul is urging the Ephesian Christians to put on the full armor of God in order to be victorious in the battle they find themselves in.

## STARTING THE LESSON

The passage that will be examined in this study is Ephesians 6:10-18. Take note that none of the defensive armor that Paul mentions in these verses protect our backs. We are not to turn and run from our enemy, but to stand firm wearing the full armor God has provided for us.

## starter question

**TIPS TO SHARE WITH LEADERS**

If you are meeting online, your meeting should probably only last an hour. Choose a few questions to ask during your time together and make sure you leave time to pray at the end.

* What is your favorite war movie or other movie that involves battle or struggle? Why?

## Opening PrAyer

May the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our rock and our redeemer. (Psalm 19:14)

## Discussion questions

### Question 1

**BIBLE PASSAGE REFERENCE**

**Ephesians 6:10-18**

**10**Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. **11**Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. (continued on next page)

* In Ephesians 6:10, Paul uses the word “finally”. What does that indicate to you?

“Finally” is a word used to make a last point or to draw a conclusion. Paul is wrapping up his letter to the Ephesians with this picture of going into battle.

### Question 2

**BIBLE PASSAGE REFERENCE**

**Ephesians 6:10-18**

**(Continued)**

**13**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. **14**Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, **15**and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. **16**In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. **17**Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

**18**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 Lord’s people.

* In verse 11, Paul tells us to put on the full armor of God. Why do you think he says “full” armor of God? What happens if we only take to heart one or two of his suggested pieces of armor?

Answers may vary. Paul is saying that these 6 items in the armor of God are all vital to us being victorious. If we only have on part of the armor, we’re not going to be fully protected and “invincible.”

### Question 3

* In verse 12, Paul says that our struggle isn’t against flesh and blood. What does that mean when you see evil in the world? How can this verse change our perspective on our day-to-day interactions?

Answers will vary. Our real struggle is against dark forces that influence us and others. When we are faced with evil, we want to pray against the dark forces at work.

### Question 4

* From verse 13, when we put on the armor of God what are we supposed to be able to do?

Stand firm. We want to be able to stand shoulder to shoulder with our brothers and sisters in Christ and stand against evil in our community and in our nation. This is a much more attainable goal when we do it together. When we’re standing alone, it’s much harder to stand firm.

### Question 5

* In verses 14-17, what are the 6 items we’re supposed to put on to have the full armor of God?

Belt of truth

Breastplate of righteousness

Feet fitted with the readiness of the gospel of peace

Shield of faith

Helmet of salvation

Sword of the Spirit

### Question 6

* How many offensive weapons does Paul give us? What do you think that means?

The sword of the Spirit is the only offensive weapon. The rest are used for defense. Answers will vary about what that means. It may mean nothing, but we do need to be prepared to defend ourselves against the evil one. The only thing we need to use offensively against our enemies is the Word of God.

### Question 7

* Which of these pieces of armor has been most meaningful to your walk with Jesus?

Answers will vary.

### Question 8

* Our church is going through the biggest transition of its 33 year history. How do you think the full armor of God helps us through this transition?

*Answers will vary. The full armor of God helps us stand firm together. We can’t back down or turn our backs when things get hard. We must stand together shoulder to shoulder.*

### Question 9

* In verse 18, Paul talks about praying all kinds of prayers. How might we pray for our church and for one another more effectively in the coming months?

Answers will vary. We need to pray for and with each other. We need to pray for unity as we stand up against dark forces. We need to pray prayers of repentance and confession. We need to simply open ourselves to God’s gaze and to let him search and transform our hearts.

##  Prayer ministry

* If possible, break into smaller groups to share and pray for each other’s requests together.
* Pray together to ask for unity for our country and our church during this time of crisis, then spend a few minutes quietly listening to the Lord. Share any words of encouragement for each other and the church, or anything else you sense God would have you speak in order to strengthen and build up your sisters and brothers.

**Note: This study was prepared as an act of service by Denise Birkhoff.**