The War

*Ephesians 6:10-24*

*Sang W. Sur*

*Lord’s Day, August 14, 2011*

***Praise the Lord!***

*The Armor of God*

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. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 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. 19 Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

*Final Greetings*

21 Tychicus, the dear brother and faithful servant in the Lord, will tell you everything, so that you also may know how I am and what I am doing. 22 I am sending him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage you.

23 Peace to the brothers and sisters, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Today, we come to the conclusion of Paul’s letter to the Ephesians. It was a wonderful journey through this letter together, as God has been building up our starting ministry. I believe everything that God desires us to seek after are right in this letter – and this was why God had us read this first. It’s about God, it’s about His grace, His selection, His love toward us. We only have gratefulness to return, and out of that thankfulness, we respond by loving our neighbors and no longer living for ourselves.

The letter of Ephesians ends with staying strong in the Lord. What does it mean to stand strong? And why should we stand strong? This is what I want to talk to you about today.

**Pray**

In the NIV, Scripture reads this way:

Ephesians 6:10-12 (NIV)

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Again, I want to emphasize that this is a letter Paul wrote for Christians. If we claim that we have the mighty God on our side, why is he telling the Christians to stand strong? It is because we are in a middle of a war –

Let me ask you – in verse 12, it says “our struggle” – from what do we struggle?

(OOHHH – do you struggle? Note that for non-Christians, there is no struggle, because they, by default, already side with Satan. But for Christians, we are turning from our own ways and heading toward Jesus – that is, we no longer seek our selfish pursuits, but rather live for God and others. However, we still have our flesh, our desire to still be independent and be for ourselves (not “to one another!”) – That’s why v. 11 tells us that we are to struggle against the devil’s schemes. The devil wants us to fall away from God, just as he has fallen away from God.

So, do you struggle? Is there a battle you face on a daily basis? I sure hope so.

Let me ask you – in your life, how do you struggle?

I’m going to show you a video from UFC Championship 2009. XXX is fighting YYY – do you struggle like this?

Or are you more like

Show UFC and Brave Heart

In our modern society, we see struggles as an individual thing. And yes, even Scriptures tell us that Satan attacks us one at a time – Jesus was tempted in the desert for forty days and nights.

But Christian battle is something that occurs individually in a larger scale.

Consider a war, individuals fight, individuals fall, individuals conquer – but in the end, it is the group that conquers together. In view of community, it is like that – it is better for the team to support each other and encourage one another so that they all stand together, instead of each man for themselves.

Imagine a battle where individuals are taught to go out one at a time toward the massive number of enemies. That is in fact what we are doing when we live out our spiritual lives on our own.

As mentioned last week, we are conditioned to be independent individuals – doing good, looking good, and feeling good on our own – but as God has been teaching us through Paul’s letter to the Ephesians, that we are to come to unity and work together.

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