

Ephesians 6:10-12 We All Struggle

Paul just gave us a list of do's and don'ts that seems often unachievable. Yet he says them so convincingly. He tells us what we need to do to be successful husbands, wives, fathers, and children. He gave us many pointers on avoiding the difficulties in life. Now he tells us or warns us about the real enemy of all those relationships including our relationship with Christ himself.

1. Be strong – vs. 10 Now we have seen this before. In fact many times in scripture when someone was in a difficult the Bible give encouragement to “Be Strong”. Joshua 1:6 God told Joshua to “be strong and courageous”. God knew that Joshua was going to need His strength to fight the battles before him and now Paul is telling us the same thing. We have battles before us and we need the same strength and courage that Joshua did. These battles are spiritual as well as physical. Three things Paul says here.
 - a. Finally – After all he has told us, and after all the information he has given to us, and after all we have done, this is the most important piece of advice he can give us.
 - b. In the Lord – If we have learned anything, we should have learned that we can do nothing without God. And that everything we have been commanded to do, we are to do it “In the Lord” and as “Unto the Lord”. Without God being involved, we are destined to fail. Maybe not right away, but we will fail.
 - c. In His might – We are never told to do anything in our own strength. We are always told to allow God's might to be our strength.
2. Be prepared – 11 If you are going to battle, you had better be prepared. So how do you get prepared? How do you see to it that you do the things that will get you ready for battle? How do you know what to do so you can defeat the enemy? What is your enemy? How can you get the advantage over the enemy? Paul tells us so much here that it is almost overwhelming.
 - a. Put on – we are commanded to first dress ourselves in protective gear that will allow us to be defensive in our battle with the enemy. Don't just sling it over your shoulder or carry it in the car. We have to have it on at all times. It must cover us to protect us.
 - b. Full armor - We have to ensure that all of the protective gear is in the right place and is properly positioned and in proper working order. We need to be sure that all that gear is the proper fit and protect all the areas we need it to protect.
 - c. Stand firm – In Paul's day, soldiers were lined up face to face and the one who gave up his position first usually lost the battle. We are often told to stand firm, unmovable. This is both physically and spiritually. We are never to give up or give in to the enemy.
 - d. The enemy is tricky – Paul knew that Satan was the master of disguise and lies. It is so easy to be fooled by Satan or one of his workers. Just think how many times we have been fooled by someone we thought was our friend. Or how many times have we believed it was OK to do something because we wanted to believe it was OK, but really knowing it was wrong? If you are not on your guard, you can and will be fooled every time.

3. Be aware of who the enemy is – vs. 12 We think that we know who our enemy is most of the time, but the truth is , we have no clue. Satan is so sneaky and tricky and conniving, that we never see it coming until it is too late. We all have had experiences where we said, “Never saw that coming”! News flash. God has never said, “Never saw that coming”! We get defeated by the enemy because we don’t know who the enemy is and how the enemy attacks us. We are defeated because we think we are prepared because we have done a few things to get ready, but not everything. The “it’s good enough” attitude will kill you. I read about a Police officer who was shot and wounded last week even though he was wearing his bullet proof vest. Satan will find the “holes” in our armor if we are not careful. We must be alert at all times. If we know the enemy, we can be prepared to fight the enemy.
 - a. Not physical – we do not wrestle against flesh and blood. Your brother and sister, mother or father is not your enemy. We so often know how to fight our family members and get real good at it, but the truth is they are not our enemy. They in truth are our support team and on our side against the enemy.
 - b. Satan is our real enemy – Satan is behind all that is evil in this world. Our challenge is to determine what is evil before it trips us up and we fail in our preparation to do battle against it.
 - c. Agents of Satan – Satan will try to use anything and anybody that will allow how to corrupt them and deceive them. The bible says “The Light of the World is Jesus”. But the Bible also says that Satan is an Angel of Light. 2 Cor. 11:14. So we have to be discerning knowing what is truth and what is false.