Stand Firm, Stand Strong!
(A Pre-Election Day Message)

Ephesians 6:10-12 NKJV

Please turn with me in your Bibles to **Ephesians the sixth chapter.** And let's read **verses 10-12.**

Ephesians 6:10-13 (NKJV)

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

13 Therefore take up the whole armor of GOD, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

**P R A Y E R**

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**I N T R O D U C T I O N**

**I L L U S T R A T I O N**

How many of you remember those “connect-the-dot” books we used to get when you were a kid. When you looked at the page all you saw was a bunch of random, disconnected dots. But as you took your pencil or crayon and started connecting the dots a clear picture started to emerge.
Once all the dots were connected you would see a picture of a puppy or a butterfly or a bulldog. What once was invisible, was now visible.

In this morning’s message, I would like to “connect some dots” for you. I think many of us look at the world and world events as a bunch of random, disconnected dots. But when you look at the world and world events through the lens of scripture, and start connecting the dots, a very clear picture begins to emerge.

When we look at what has been happening here in America over the past few decades we may see a bunch of random, disconnected dots. But when you start connecting the dots and look at our nation’s decline through the lens of scripture, a very clear picture starts to emerge.

In Revelation 13, the apostle John reveals that before the end of time the world will come under the rule of A ONE-WORLD GOVERNMENT, and the head of this one-world government will be an evil dictator the scriptures call “The Antichrist.

Just as Jesus Christ was “God-in-the-flesh” when He came into this world over 2,000 years ago, the Antichrist will be “Satan-In-the-flesh.” He will be the embodiment of all the diabolical evil of Satan himself.

Now in order for there to be a ONE-WORLD GOVERNMENT there must be a collapse of the governments of individual nations. There must be a financial and economic collapse. There must be the loss of exceptionalism on the part of any one nation. No nation must stand out as a “super power” in the world. Every nation must become part of the greater “global community.”

When you “connect-the-dots” a very clear picture begins to emerge. The opening of our borders to illegal aliens........the total ineptness of our government leaders........the weakening of our military presence in the world........the legalization and acceptance of same-sex relationships........the legalization of mind-altering drugs such as marijuana......the legal attacks against Christianity......the media’s attempts to create public distrust of law enforcement officers........the weakening of the American dollar in the world market place........ all of these “dots” when connected means that America, as well as every other nation on earth is steadily marching towards THE ONE-WORLD GOVERNMENT that John writes about in the Book of Revelation.
Brothers and Sisters, DON'T MISS “THE BIG PICTURE” HERE! Behind all this madness, and chaos, and confusion, and destruction, there is an “invisible spiritual battle” going on all around us every single day.

Paul makes this perfectly clear in our scripture text.

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First of all, let's consider.........

I. Our **POWER** For The Battle (v.10)

**EPHESIANS 6:10 (NKJV)** Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

1. Paul is issuing “a call to battle” to every Christian soldier. You see, whether we like it or not, you and I are “smack dab in the middle” of this spiritual battle that is going on all around us every day.

   And not only is this invisible battle going on all around us, it is going on inside of us, and inside the minds and hearts of every man, woman and child on earth.

2. It is a battle of **GOOD VS. EVIL**........a battle of **RIGHT VS. WRONG**....a battle of **RIGHTHEOUSNESS VS. UNRIGHTHEOUSNESS**...a battle of **HOLINESS VS. UNHOLINESS**.

3. If we are going to be victorious in these daily battles we must NOT rely upon our own human power, but rather we must rely upon our spiritual power.

   Humanly speaking we are NO MATCH for the enemy. We are weak......we are frail.......we are fallible......and yes, at times we are very foolish. If we rely upon our human strength to win our spiritual battles we will lose every time.

4. The LORD knows that about us and that is why He supplies us with His strength for the battle.
"Be strong in the LORD." (v. 10a) Paul is saying, “Don’t rely on your own strength, BE STRONG IN THE LORD!”

That means all the spiritual strength, all the spiritual wisdom, all the spiritual power we need to fight this daily battle in life comes from Jesus Christ.

THE LORD has an “endless supply” of strength that you and I don’t have physically, but through prayer and trusting in the LORD for everything, we can “tap” into His inexhaustible strength to fight our daily spiritual battles.

“Be strong in the LORD,” then Paul goes on to say........

"And in the power of His might." (v. 10b)

We needed the power of His blood to save us and we need the power of His might to defeat Satan.

You see, when Jesus died on the cross and rose again from the dead, He defeated Satan. That means the war is already over! Jesus has already won the victory! And so you and I are NOT fighting “for” victory, we are fighting “from” victory! We are fighting “from” the victory Christ has already won for us on Calvary!

And so OUR POWER for our daily spiritual battles comes from THE STRENGTH OF THE LORD AND THE POWER OF HIS MIGHT!
Secondly, let's consider.....

II. Our **POSITION** In The Battle (v.11,13)

**EPHESIANS 6:11 (NKJV)** Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

**EPHESIANS 6:13 (NKJV)** Therefore take up the whole armor of GOD, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

1. I want you to notice that three times Paul commands us “to stand.”

   v. 11 “that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

   v. 13 “that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”

2. Christians are NOT to run......we aren't to retreat........we're not to cower to the enemy.......we're not to roll over and play dead. **WE ARE TO STAND!**

3. Satan, and all his “godless” cronies in our society would love nothing more than for all of us who are Bible believing, Bible practicing Christians to “drop off the face of the earth” and never be heard from again!

   They want us to keep our Christian values and beliefs to ourselves. They want to shut us up and silence our voices.

4. But that is NOT what the LORD commands us to do! He commands us **TO STAND!** Stand up! Stand tall! Stand strong!**

5. I've told you before that the idea of taking “our stand” here comes from a practice of the ancient Roman soldiers on the battlefield. The Roman soldiers wore “cleated sandals” into battle. And when they prepared to engage the enemy in battle the Roman soldiers would “stomp their feet” and dig those cleats into the ground so they could “stand firm.”
6. That is what you and I must do every single day. We must “dig our spiritual cleats” into the ground and prepare to go nose to nose with the enemy.

   James 4:7 (NKJV) “Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”

7. How do we STAND FIRM against the enemy? Paul tells us, we do it by “putting on the whole armor of GOD.” Jesus Christ is our armor! “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.” (Galatians 3:27 NKJV)

*IN CHRIST we have “the belt of truth” to protect us from Satan’s lies.

*IN CHRIST we have “the breastplate of righteousness” to protect our hearts from the lust of the flesh.

*IN CHRIST we have “the shoes of the gospel” to help us to stand firm in the battle.

*IN CHRIST we have “the shield of faith” to deflect the deceptive lies of the enemy.

*IN CHRIST we have “the helmet of salvation” to protect our minds from Satan’s delusions.

*IN CHRIST we have “the sword of the Spirit,” the Word of God, which Satan is powerless against.

*AND IN CHRIST we have “the power of prayer” to stay continually connected to the power of GOD.

OUR POWER FOR THE BATTLE is “the strength of the LORD and the power of His might.”

OUR POSITION IN THE BATTLE is “to stand firm” and resist the devil by “putting on the whole armor of GOD.”
And thirdly, let's consider......

III. Our **POWERFUL ENEMY** In The Battle (v.12)

**EPHESIANS 6:12 (NKJV)** For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

1. The source of all our struggles in this life is Satan himself. Remember back in **verse 11** Paul said, “Put on the whole armor of GOD, “that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

2. What does Paul mean by, **“the wiles of the devil?”** Wiles refers to Satan’s “methods”………Satan’s “schemes”…..Satan’s “traps”………Satan’s “tactics.”

3. You see, Satan already knows he has been defeated. He already knows that he will spend all eternity in the hell prepared for him. But until that day when he is cast into hell forever, he is going to do everything within his power to hinder the work of GOD.

   Brothers and sisters, make no mistake! Satan hates you with a passion! He wants to rob you of joy and peace! He wants to steal from you the abundant life the LORD wants you to have. He wants to destroy your marriage! He wants to destroy your children! He wants to destroy our Churches! He wants to destroy our nation. He wants to ruin your reputation and destroy your Christian witness.

   And he will use every “wile,” every “trick,” and every “scheme” possible to accomplish his mission!

4. And you must realize Satan has lots of help. You see, Satan is **NOT omnipotent** or all-powerful like GOD. And Satan is **NOT omnipresent** or able to be present everywhere, like God. And Satan is **NOT omniscient** or all-knowing like GOD.
5. To make up for his limitations, Satan employs a demonic army that Paul refers to as principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this age, and the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

While Satan is NOT omnipotent, omnipresent, or omniscient, he is highly organized!

Just as GOD has archangels, the heavenly hosts of angels, the cherubim and seraphim under His authority to do His will, Satan has various ranks of demonic forces to do his bidding on earth.

6. And make no mistake, these demonic forces have a tremendous power and influence over people in “high places” such as government officials, and rulers, and judges, and entertainers, and professors, and teachers.

7. I came across some very alarming quotes from some of our former presidents who seemed to have a “keen” sense of awareness of invisible forces at work within the government.

**THEODORE ROOSEVELT:** “Behind the ostensible government sits enthroned an invisible government owing no allegiance and acknowledging no responsibility to the people.”

**WOODROW WILSON:** “There is a power somewhere so organized, so subtle, so watchful, so interlocked, so pervasive that they better not speak above their breath when they speak in condemnation of it.”

**FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT:** “In politics, nothing happens by accident. If it happens, you can bet it was planned that way.”

**JAMES MADISON:** “I believe there are more instances of the abridgements of freedom of the people by gradual and silent encroachments of those in power than by violent and sudden usurpations. This danger ought to be wisely guarded against.

And former U.S. Supreme Court Justice **FELIX FRANKFURTER** once said, “The real rulers in Washington are invisible and exercise power from behind the scenes.”
8. All these men, who once held very high positions within our government evidently felt the manipulation of an invisible force behind the government that was very real and yet very hard to explain.

9. Why is there so much confusion and chaos and total ineptness in our government? Why is our government doing something so stupid and idiotic as to allow thousands upon thousands of illegal immigrants into our country? Why are so many pompous, arrogant judges striking down the bans on same-sex marriages in so many states? Why is our government passing out condoms in schools and yet taking away french fries and pizza from the school cafeterias? **CONNECT THE DOTS!**

    Behind all of this madness and insanity there is an evil, diabolical force at work!

10. "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places."

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CONCLUSION

Brothers and sisters, I know it gets very discouraging and disheartening at times, but as soldiers in the LORD’S army we must not give up the fight or surrender to the enemy!

As a Christian American, I want to encourage each of you to go vote this Tuesday if you haven’t already done so. Right now we still have the freedom to vote and let our voice be heard. We don’t know how much longer we will be able to enjoy this freedom. Hundreds of thousands of American soldiers gave their lives so you and I could have this freedom. Let’s not let their sacrifices be in vain.

And I also want to encourage you to vote for people who will uphold godly principles and values. If you vote for someone who opposes godly principles and values you are playing right into the devil’s hands! **Vote for those who champion the cause of FAITH, FAMILY, and FREEDOM!**

    **Christian Soldiers, let us STAND FIRM and STAND STRONG!**