

2 Simple Phrases to Arm Yourself for Spiritual Warfare

We all have battles. They come in the form of inner struggles and outside circumstances, sickness and symptoms, disasters and disabilities. As long as we live in this fallen world, we'll continue to face the consequences of it.

That's just reality.

Be this as it may, we don't have to be defined nor defeated by our battles either. And what makes that possible is entirely dependent upon how we confront them.

I learned this in a profound way some years ago when I first decided to step into ministry. Almost the moment I did, reminders of childhood wounds, past regrets and present problems all resurfaced, causing me to question whether or not I was worthy to do the work of the Lord.

What ensued was a battle in my mind to shut me up and shut me down.

After feeling too disqualified—and nearly walking away—I was led to perhaps the most famous passage of Scripture for how to confront battles: Ephesians 6:10–18, what's commonly called “the armor of God.”

As I opened up my Bible to reread what I thought was familiar, I began to see the text in a fresh way. Since that day, I've spent many hours studying the armor, often encountering new principles and insights that each transform something about me. It's all been so revolutionary, in fact, that I developed an entire online armor of God study to help others experience the same impact.

There's so much to cover. But for the purpose of this article, I want to unpack two small, but critical words that are foundational for understanding how to activate the armor to win your battles.

1. **"Stand" therefore.** Paul begins the passage instructing, "be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might" (Eph. 6:10, ESV). This opening alerts us that victory isn't had through personal willpower or effort. No, we win our battles only from our position "in Christ."

Paul's second instruction continues this theme and contains the first revealing word: "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to *stand* against the schemes of the devil" (v. 11).

The first word we'll focus on is "stand."

What makes this word stand out is that this isn't the only time in the passage that Paul uses it. Count how often "stand" is referenced in the verses that follow.

"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. 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* firm. *Stand* therefore ..." (Eph. 6:12-14).

In all, Paul uses a form of "stand" four times in only four verses.

Why is this significant?

Because "stand" is counter to what most of us think regarding how to use the armor. That is, many were taught to "suit up" in the armor in order to engage in a *fight* with the enemy.

But Paul doesn't say "fight," he says, "stand." And this a

monumental principle: Winning your battles isn't about having a fight with a devil who's defeated, but it's about *standing* in the victory of Jesus, the one who defeated him.

Paul goes on to list everything we are to stand in, represented by six articles of a soldier's armor: truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation and God's Word.

It's important to understand that each of these aren't qualities we strive or fight for. But rather, they are qualities we each *already* possess as ones "in the Lord." They each represent an aspect of our identity in Christ. And as I explore in depth in my e-course, it's simply standing in each of these qualities that wins our battles.

2) "Put on" the whole armor of God. Perhaps this begs the question: "How do you actually *stand* in these qualities?"

The second critical word provides the answer. It's "put on," which is Paul's first instruction for what to do with the armor: "*Put on* the whole armor of God, that you may be able to *stand* ..." (v. 11).

The significance of this gets somewhat lost in translation. "Put on" is translated from a single Greek word, *enduo*, which has a meaning far deeper than what meets the eye.

The ancient Greek idea of *enduo* actually means "to be saturated into" or "to take on the character of."

To understand this in a modern sense, I often liken it to what an actor does to get into a character. They literally have to take on the character's qualities—their thinking, speaking, walking and so on. Through these disciplines, over time, the actor "becomes" the character.

Of course, God isn't asking us to put on an act. But to "put on" the armor means that we think and speak about ourselves and our situations according to who we are and what we have in

Him. It's all about identifying with Jesus and His finished work!

Keeping God's Word on your mind and mouth is a great way to do this, which is precisely why the final article of the armor is "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (v. 17). Using God's Word like a sword activates all the other articles. But that's another lesson.

Giving Up the Fight

What we've uncovered through these two words is that winning our battles isn't about a fight with the enemy. No, our battles are won by standing in the truths about who we are and what we have in Christ—especially when everything feels or seems the opposite.

Of course, the armor of God doesn't keep the enemy from trying to attack, but it's designed so that his attacks don't affect you. As a Christian, you're clothed in the character of Christ, after all. When you stand in the confidence of what Christ's identity means for you, then no person, no past and no devil can shake you from your position. And that's victory.

Want more? Join me for an illustrated journey through the armor of God in my six-session e-course. Begin today at .

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