

# Candlelight Christian Fellowship

## Worksheet Ephesians 6 (NKJV)

Ephesians 6:10–20 (Spiritual Warfare—Part 1)

*“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.*

*14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; 18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—19 and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”*

In his concluding thoughts Paul brings focus to the spirit world and the spiritual warfare of the believer.

As simple as it may seem to some, the Biblical basics of spiritual warfare are missed by many Christians in our time. In fact, the principles of spiritual warfare are discounted as something mystical and therefore avoided. However, the basic principles of spiritual warfare are fundamental, practical, and easy to understand. They are to be employed by every believer. If avoided, trouble will result.

The Bible clearly communicates the existence of the Devil, demons, etc. This fact takes us as far back as the books of Genesis and Job. Both books tell stories of spiritual warfare.

### **Power**

Paul begins with instruction about where the believer’s strength is found: in the Lord. He said, *“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.”* (vs. 10) The believer’s strength is not in self. It is not in willpower, positive mental attitude, or in some sort of spiritually manipulative formula. God is the source of strength for every believer. He is the only source of power able to protect and give victory over the spiritual forces at work in the world.

Those who are genuinely born again are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and are therefore supernaturally prepared to stand in and by the power of God. A believer who knows the true source of spiritual power and has grown to trust the Lord will find peace even during the greatest battles.

Every believer will face spiritual battles. Some face battles that seem greater and more severe than those of others. However, whatever battle one faces, God does and will equip each believer for

that battle and provide all needed for the securing of victory. Satan and this world is no match for the Lord. God has promised every believer an overcoming life by the power of His Spirit Who dwells in us. *“You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.”* (1 John 4:4)

Every believer has the power of God at work *in* them and the God of power at work *for* them. We are in a no-lose situation. Whatever situation or circumstance comes our way, no matter how the battle looks, God will ultimately provide the believer His perfect and eternal victory. Therefore, *“be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.”* The waves may roar, and the boat may fill with water, but God will get us safely ashore.

## **Peace and Confidence in the Time Domain**

The believer’s confidence during times of trial will come to greatest maturity when he or she recognizes that victories may not be given on the timeline of our desire. However, victory is certain in eternity. If we allow ourselves to get too affectionate with the here and now, we can get out of focus and begin to suffer discouragement or sink into depression. Many believers do!

God will allow believers to suffer losses and pain for His own purposes. In these times our trust will grow as we keep our mind on Him. *“You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You. Trust in the LORD forever, for in YAHWEH, the LORD, is everlasting strength.”* (Isaiah 26:3–4) Paul told the Philippians, *“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”* (Philippians 4:6–7)

If we as believers fail to see our trials through the lens of eternity (while trusting the Lord), we will suffer a crisis of faith and face a variety of temptations. We may be tempted to think the Lord does not see or care—and He does. We may begin to doubt He is near—and He is. Some may even be tempted to believe there is no God—but there is; He loves and cares for us, and works all things together for the good of those He loves and who love Him.

*“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.*

*What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: ‘For Your sake we are killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.’ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.*

*For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* (Romans 8:28–39)

Jesus said, *“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”* (John 16:33)

## **The Armor of God and our Adversary the Devil**

*“Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”* (vs. 11)

As we sojourn this life, and as the battles rage, the believer is called to *“put on”* the armor—of God. Just like the power we have in the Lord, the armor is likewise provided us in Christ. The armor is not our own. It is not a natural equipping. The armor is the spiritual equipment God provides every believer. Our God-given ability to stand strong in the days of battle will depend on our equipping and preparedness—a preparedness of supernatural origin and enabling.

There is no question about the fact that we have an enemy. We are told that our, *“adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”* (1 Peter 5:8b)

Many may suggest that the devil is a toothless lion. This is simply untrue. However, his abilities and destructive powers are limited—by the power and sovereignty of God. The believer who goes to battle in the strength of the flesh will certainly fail, but those who battle in the strength of the Lord will stand strong. We stand strong in the armor of the Lord.

## **The Enemy and Field of Battle**

As mentioned above, the battle we face is one of a supernatural nature. *“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.”* (vs.12)

Fundamentally our battles are not with people. Our battles are with the invisible forces at work in the heavenly places. These forces often work through the agency of the natural, and therefore Paul reminds his students to carefully discern the enemy.

This fact does not suggest that every battle or disturbance is the devil at work. At times our battles are quite human. They may be sociological or psychological in nature. However, even still, we are called upon to recognize the spiritual nature and origin of the problems we face, and deal with them by spiritual means—not in the flesh.

There are also supernatural forces at work in the *“heavenly places.”* These *“heavenly places”* are simply the dimension of the invisible spirit world. Therefore, knowing this, we are prepared for the potentials and realities of that invisible spiritual battle. *“We wrestle not with flesh and blood.”*

Believers may face spiritual attack through the agency of the mind, by oppression or assault in the inner man—the spirit, in the physical body, or indirectly through the agencies of men. All forms of spiritual attack must be handled in the spirit—not in the flesh. Human wrath, retaliation, manipulation, stubbornness, bitterness, etc. are not the tools of the believer, but are in fact the tools of the enemy. All who wage war using the enemy’s tools or the enemy’s turf will fail. The believer must wage war

according to the principles of spiritual warfare as described in Scripture—using the weapons of the Lord.

## **The Brain and the Mind**

There is a difference between the brain and the mind. The brain is a physical organ and can malfunction just as any other organ. The brain functions through biological, electrical, and chemical influences. It can be affected through physical interactions and by the introduction of chemical agents. Therefore, brain-altering substances can have serious effects on the brain for good or for bad. There are rare but real occasions wherein a person's brain can malfunction and be assisted through material/chemical means. However, for most people in modern culture, the brain is not what is being referred to when speaking of mental illness. Mental illness is a malfunction of the "mind" not the brain.

The mind is invisible. It is informational. The informational part of each person is stored in the physical brain, and although the two are distinctly different, they are uniquely linked. This is part of the creative work of God. The informational makeup of the mind is like the software in a computer. It can have a virus! If so, it needs renewing and adjusting. In fact, based upon the constant flood of misinformation (and intentionally communicated false information), our minds are in need of continual renewal. The mind is renewed by truth! Therefore, as believers, we are in constant need of the renewal provided by the truth found in the word of God.

Much can be said about the problem of modern day psychology—a so-called science. The development of psychology (the study of the mind) is based upon the spiritually uninformed and anti-Christian humanistic philosophies/philosophers of this world—predating those who are attributed with the formulations of what we know of popular psychology today. Paul addressed this issue during the first century A.D. He said, *"Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ."* (Colossians 2:8)

Most *noticeable* battles the believer will face are battles for the mind. However, Paul makes clear that the real battle originates in the dimension of the spirit. This fact should cause the believer to see that even those things thought natural must be viewed through the lens of the spiritual. Therefore, those who are unregenerated (not born again) are by no means qualified to diagnose or counsel those who have psychological/mental "illness." Moreover, counselors who have been influenced by or embrace the philosophies and so-called sciences of the mind should be avoided. The enemy of our souls traffics in lies. We must know and embrace the truth.

In His high priestly prayer Jesus prayed, *"I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth."* (John 17:14–17)

As we grow in grace and truth, we will become a greater threat to the enemy and therefore a target of his wrath. This means a greater engagement in spiritual warfare.

We should not be surprised by the rejection we may suffer as we move further from the lies of the enemy and closer to the truth. The lies embraced by the world come through the influences of the enemy. The more we know of God's word, the more we will see the enemy's lies. Truly, our battle is

not with flesh and blood but most often the manifestations suffered will be *seen* in the natural. We must carefully guard ourselves from focusing our attention on the persons around us. We must remember that our battle is *“against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places [the dimension of the spirit].”* (vs. 12)

## **Behavioral Modification**

One of the psychological theories being employed by the enemy is the powerful and damaging lie of behavioral modification. Behavior modification can be accomplished in a number of ways: Psychotropic drugs, punitive consequences, self-discipline, etc. However, none of these modifications address the real issue of the spirit.

Psychotropic drugs effect the brain—not the mind. However, we are all aware of the behavioral modifications they can produce. For example, anti-anxiety drugs can cause a person to relax and feel a sense of peace. However, they have not and do not affect the real causes of anxiety—or how to handle it.

The principles of spiritual warfare described in the Bible (when properly employed) will bring real peace. For example, Paul said, *“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”* (Philippians 4:6–7) Herein Paul addresses the issues of the spiritual (in this case the mind), not the issues of the physical: the brain. Our mind is to be renewed by the word of God, as Paul said, *“...be renewed in the spirit of your mind...”* (Ephesians 4:23). Psychotropic drugs do not renew the mind!

Another form of behavioral modification can come through punitive consequences and self-discipline. Punitive consequences can be very simple things like a spanking provided to a child. The consequence may change the behavior but may not change the heart, mind, or spirit. A man may be on felony probation and be disallowed freedoms of choice—but still be in the bondages of sin and error. However, a genuine change of mind by the inner working of the Holy Spirit—through the word of God—will bring the change of behavior God intends.

Sadly, those who see natural behavioral modification as a solution to the spiritual problems all men and women face suffer the deceptions of the enemy. For example, those who go to Alcoholics Anonymous and see their “higher power” as a spouse, a friend, a job, etc. may stop abusing alcohol but remain spiritually unchanged. An unregenerated sober sinner is a sinner nonetheless—destined for hell! However, those who are born again and learn “temperance” through the power of the Holy Spirit—having God Himself as their “higher power”—will ultimately gain victory in the spiritual war.

Those who trust in themselves and the devices of the world are being deceived by the enemy of our souls—and lose in the spiritual battle. *“For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”* (Romans 8:13) Those who are unregenerated are those who live according to the flesh. Those who are born again live in and by the Spirit. Jesus Christ our Lord is the one Who, with patience, grows us in grace and changes us from within—day by day—through the power of His Spirit. *“A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking*

*flax He will not quench, till He sends forth justice to victory.” (Matthew 12:20) We who are in Christ attain the victory. “And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.” (1 John 5:4b)*

### **Principalities, Powers, and the Rulers of the Dark**

The identification of principalities, powers, rulers and spiritual hosts of wickedness may indicate a rank or authority in the dimension of evil. However, this is not the primary issue Paul is addressing. He is making certain that we all know exactly what we are dealing with: spiritual entities and activities in the dimension of the spirit. The Bible does suggest rank and authority in both the righteous and rebellious spiritual world. We are familiar with Gabriel, Michael, and Lucifer. All three are created beings who rank above other angels in the spiritual world. We also understand that Lucifer, once an angel in submission to God, has rebelled and has thus been cast down to rule in the dimension of “darkness.” He is the highest ranking official in the world of the demonic. Michael and Gabriel remain in humble submission to the Lord.

### **Heavenly Places, Heaven and Hell**

The spiritual world, to which Paul refers to as the “*heavenly places*”, is just as real as the natural world. It is not a place far away but is a dimension right here—in and around us. This fact does not suggest a localized and limited environment. The “heavenly places” God inhabits are infinite. This is the place we refer to as Heaven. However, the dimension of the spirit includes a finite location. This is what we refer to when we speak of “*the darkness*.” This is the location to which the Devil, demons, Hell, and the Lake of Fire are confined. To suggest that “*the darkness*” is a place far away is to deny the very real battle in which we are presently engaged.

All believers need to know that the battle to which we are engaged has a foe bound in darkness. To this end, we who know the Lord are in the light and are therefore at an advantage over the enemy. As we engage in the spiritual battle, we must always walk in the light, live in the light, and engage by exercising the weapons of light. As we do, we obtain the victory. To engage with the enemy by means of the things of darkness will certainly disappoint. For example, one who thinks to deal with a demon by means of a medium or occultist is deceived. No victory will be achieved. One who believes a lie will suffer its consequence. The weapons of our warfare are mighty—through God. Paul said, “*For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.*” (2 Corinthians 10:4–5) When we engage in battle, we do so in the “light.” As we do, we have no enemy to fear. Our victory is in the Lord!

### **The Evil Day—Your Evil Day**

*“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.” (vs. 13)*

The evil day Paul referred to may have been a particular time he had in view when writing to the Ephesians. He may have had in mind their temptation to trust in self, good works, etc. (See

Revelation 2:1-7) For this reason Paul communicated the truths found in the earlier chapters of this book. In order to rest in their “*first love*,” they were to remember their calling and election in the Lord.

It is certain that the Ephesians would need this command when they faced the wolves Paul told them would surface in their immediate future. Paul addressed this attack when meeting with the Ephesian elders. He said, “*And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.*” (Acts 20:25–31)

We will all face a day of battle—most many times. Whatever that day looks like to us, we are, like the Ephesians, called to stand and withstand the enemy and his attack. As we do, we will obtain the victory.

Note: ultimately all believers will obtain victory. However, in order to live in that victory *today*, we must take up the armor of the Lord and wage the battle—as instructed.

**True or False:** The basic principles of spiritual warfare are fundamental, practical, and easy to understand.

**True or False:** Every believer will face some form of spiritual warfare.

**True or False:** Our strength to overcome the enemy is in a determined self-will.

**True or False:** God will always deliver us from the enemy—when we ask. If there is a delay in our deliverance, it is our fault. (Think about Job!)

**True or False:** The armor we need for the spiritual battle is provided to every born again believer.

**True or False:** Even though our primary battle is not with flesh and blood, there is need of discernment when dealing with people and socioeconomic issues.

**True or False:** There is no difference between the brain and the mind.

**True or False:** Behavioral modification is the same thing as victory in the spiritual war.

**True or False:** There are various levels of spiritual authority granted to both angels and demons.

**True or False:** The expression “heavenly places” is a term used to describe the dimension of the spirit.

**True or False:** When we face our “evil day,” whatever that day may be, God will be our source of strength and victory.