

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 6:10-20

Sermon Title: Still A People: The Fight That Matters

The adversary against us:

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**.

Ephesians 6:10-11

the devil's identity:

You belong to your father, **the devil**, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, **for he is a liar and the father of lies**.

John 8:44

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. **"All this I will give you,"** he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

Matthew 4:8-10

The devil is the most influential & powerful creature in the world.

the devil's strategy:

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, **"Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"** ² The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, ³ but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'" ⁴ **"You will not certainly die,"** the serpent said to the woman. ⁵ **"For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."**

Genesis 3:1-4

The devil's skeleton scheme is deceptive ideas that invite people to replace God & redefine good and evil.

If the devil was going to sabotage your faith, how would he do it?

If you were going to sabotage your life, how would you do it?

If the person you love the most was going to sabotage their life, how would they do it?

If the person you like the least was going to sabotage their life, how would they do it?

The world we live in:

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.

Ephesians 6:12

Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. ¹⁶For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. ¹⁷**The world and its desires** pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever

1 John 2:15-17

The world is “a system of ideas, values, morals, practices, and social norms that are integrated into the mainstream and eventually institutionalized in a culture corrupted by the twin sins of rebellion against God and the redefinition of good and evil.”

-John Mark Comer. Live no Lies.

The world incentivizes/normalizes life apart from & against God.

The armor we live with:

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. ¹⁴Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Ephesians 6:13-17

The armor of God is rooted in Old Testament imagery.

The Lord looked and was displeased that there was no justice. ¹⁶He saw that there was no one, he was appalled that there was no one to intervene; so his own arm achieved salvation for him, and his own righteousness sustained him. ¹⁷**He put on righteousness as his breastplate, and the helmet of salvation on his head;** he put on the garments of vengeance and wrapped himself in zeal as in a cloak.

Isaiah 59:15-17

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, “Your God reigns!”

Isaiah 52:7

The armor of God is more about what the parts together represent than what the individual pieces accomplish.

The emphasis of the armor of God is being clothed with God, having assurance that God Himself protects us and fights for us.

The atmosphere **determines the attire.**

Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when **the day of evil** comes, you may be able to stand your ground,
Ephesians 6:13

Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶making the most of every opportunity, because **the days are evil**.
Ephesians 5:15-16

Put on the armor of God **by becoming like Jesus.**

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, **clothe yourselves** with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.¹³ Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.
Colossians 3:12-14

The armor of God is for **defense & offense:**

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.
Ephesians 6:16-18

And having disarmed the powers and authorities, **he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross**.
Colossians 2:15

My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.
John 17:15-19

Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—**is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us**.
Romans 8:34

Jesus has **fought for us on the cross & is **praying for** us from a throne.**

Put on the armor of God by **digging your heels into the gospel—deepen your understanding of the gospel, preach truth to yourself, be proactive against sin.**

The **Line in the sand**:

and after you have done everything, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand firm then

The struggle is certain, but **defeat is a choice**—defeat isn't a forgone conclusion, **stand firm**.