

WWWN

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SERIES DEVOTIONAL
STAND FIRM | JUNE 14, 2020

GRACE
FELLOWSHIP

Discussion Starter #1: Why do you think the Bible uses images of soldiers and war to depict the Christian life?

Discussion Starter #2: What are some common misperceptions people have about Satan? Where do you think they get these unbiblical ideas?

Key Passage: “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹² 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. 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 firm.” (Ephesians 6:10-13)

TEACHING POINT

#1

Satan is real and powerful, but God’s power is greater.

The Bible clearly informs us that Satan really exists and how he operates. Satan is described as the enemy of man (Genesis 3:15), the father of lies (Jn.8:44), and the accuser (Rev.12:10), among other things. The name “Satan” means “adversary.”

Isaiah 14:12–17 explains that Satan is an angelic being who decided he wanted the honor and worship due only to God; thus, Satan was thrown out of heaven (also see Ez.28:11–17). Ever since he was cast out of heaven (along with the angels who chose to rebel with him), Satan has made it his purpose to oppose God and lead humans to rebel and act independently of God. Satan is called “*the god of this age*” (2 Cor.4:4) and “*the prince of the power of the air*” (Eph.2:2), indicating that he does have some authority in the world.

But Jesus stripped Satan of his authority: “*Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out*” (Jn.12:31). “*The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work*” (1 Jn.3:8). Satan has no authority over those who are in Christ, except when they give it to him by believing his lies. Satan’s power is infinitely inferior to God’s power (1 Jn.4:4), so we Christians do not need to be intimidated by Satan, but the Bible says we must not be naïve about him (Eph.6:10–18). We are to submit to God and resist the devil (Jms.4:7), knowing that Christ has defeated him for good—Satan’s end and eternal judgment is guaranteed (Rev.19:20).

TALK ABOUT IT:

- What are some lies Satan tells us about God? About us? About the Bible?
- How would you instruct a new believer to go to battle against the devil?
- Why do you think Paul emphasized twice in Ephesians 6:11 and 13 (see above) that we should put on the *whole armor of God*?

TEACHING POINT

#2

Until God ultimately defeats Satan by casting him and the demons into the Lake of Fire, God is using Satan to accomplish His sovereign will.

Many people mistakenly think that Satan is currently in Hell, and that his base of operations is there. But Satan is not in Hell yet. Revelation 20:10 assures us that God will one day defeat Satan by throwing him into the Lake of Fire where he will be tormented day and night forever.

Sometimes we may wonder why God didn't just go ahead and destroy the devil immediately after he sinned or destroy him now. But we need to remember that God is absolutely sovereign over all of creation, and this includes Satan. Yes, Satan and his demons wreak havoc in the world, but God has allowed them only a limited amount of freedom. God has planned everything from the beginning of time to the end of time, nothing can deter His plans, and things are proceeding exactly on schedule. Isaiah 14:24 says, "*The LORD of hosts has sworn: 'As I have planned, so shall it be, and as I have purposed, so shall it stand.'*"

God's plan for everything—including His plan to allow Satan to exist—is perfect; the best possible plan. Romans 8:28 says: "*We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.*" One day, God's perfect wrath and justice will be satisfied, and He will be glorified. Since we love God and are committed to His plan and purposes, we patiently wait for His plan to be fulfilled. Furthermore, we are honored to be part of that plan and we praise and glorify God as we see His plan unfold. In the meanwhile, our duty as Christian soldiers is to obey God, to trust Him, and to follow His will.

TALK ABOUT IT:

- Why do you think God didn't destroy Satan immediately after Satan sinned?

- Why do you think Satan thinks he can defeat God?

- In what ways could God use Satan to accomplish His will and to bring glory to Himself?

TEACHING POINT

#3

For every weapon Satan uses against us, God has provided spiritual armor and weaponry that assures us victory over Satan's attacks.

In upcoming lessons, we'll take a closer look at each of the individual pieces of armor God has provided for us to give us victory over Satan. Here is just a sampling of the weapons Satan uses to attack us and the pieces of armor and weaponry God has provided to enable us to be victorious in battle:

1. **Satan's Weapon: Doubt** – Satan shoots the fiery arrows of doubt at us (Jms.1:6). If he can keep us doubting, he can weaken our confidence in our fight against him.

Our Defense: The Shield of Faith – God has provided faith to serve as a shield to ward off Satan's fiery arrows (Eph.6:16). Faith in the Word of God and in the God of the Word will shield us from debilitating doubt and give us victory.

2. **Satan's Weapon: Deception** – As the “father of lies” (Jn.8:44), Satan tries to deceive and distract us with his wicked lies.

Our Defense: The Sword of the Spirit – Just as Jesus used the Word of God to defeat Satan's temptations in the wilderness (Mat.4), we can wield God's Word (Eph.6:17), which is truth (Jn.17:17), to defeat Satan's lies and deceptions.

3. **Satan's Weapon: Discouragement** – Satan assails us with setbacks and frustrations until we are ready to quit (2 Cor.4:8-9). Satan knows that when a soldier loses hope, he has lost the battle.

Our Defense: The Helmet of Salvation – Salvation brings hope to all believers (Eph.6:17). 1 Thessalonians 5:8 speaks of the “*helmet of the hope of salvation*.” We have experienced God's salvation, so we have hope to keep us going even in the midst of discouragement. As long as we are thinking about our hope in Jesus, we won't be discouraged or defeated.

TALK ABOUT IT:

- Discuss various ways Satan attacks us (in addition to the three listed above), and then pick out a piece of spiritual armor or weaponry (listed below from Ephesians 6:14-18) that God has provided to ensure our victory over those attacks.
 - The Belt of Truth (v.14)
 - The Breastplate of Righteousness (v.14)
 - Shoes for Spreading the Gospel of Peace (v.15)
 - The Shield of Faith (v.16)
 - The Helmet of Salvation (v.17)
 - The Sword of the Spirit (v.17)
 - Prayer (v.18)