

Ephesians Week 12
6:10-24
Summary

Summary of the Text

Paul has come to the end of his teaching and give one final exhortation which sums up the letter as a whole. Many things he says in this section can be traced back to the beginning of the letter and through out the various sections. He says to the church be strong in the Lord. This verb is in the passive and indicates that we do not make ourselves strong, rather it is the Lord who makes us strong. Further explaining what it means to be strong in the Lord he commands that we put on the whole armour of God. This is God's own armour (c.f. Isaiah 11:5, 52:7, 59:17) and it is necessary because our battle is against Satan and his powers. The battle is real and fierce because these powers are coming in an on-going manner.

In light of the battle and the godly provision we are commanded to stand firm (stand is used 4 times in vs. 11, 13, and 14). This is a command to resist so as to overcome. The appropriate action for us to take in standing is to put on the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the 'shoes' with readiness of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Truth is God's truth which Paul has talked about throughout this letter, particularly the truth of the gospel. Righteousness is an imitation of God's own righteousness and holiness (5:1). We are to be ready with the good news of peace harkening back to Isaiah, but paradoxically in the context of warfare. The shield is our faith in God, trusting that he is our protection and like the Roman water soaked shield our faith will guard us from Satan's fiery arrows. The knowledge of our salvation, particularly that Christ has overcome these powers and has already rescued us from them. The Spirit is what gives the sword it's power, it's effectiveness. Just as Jesus in the wilderness uses the word of God to do battle with Satan.

Paul then moves to his most important section, the necessity of prayer. This especially is what it means to stand and do battle with the powers of darkness. We notice he uses the work all four times in this section. It is important that we are interceding for all the saints. Particularly, Paul seeks prayer for his own witness that he would give the word with power and fearlessness. Knowing that his situation has been upsetting for the church he is sending his helper to be with them and encourage them regarding his situation.

Paul finishes his letter as he began it. Extending the peace, love faith and grace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Application

In truth, this whole section is one big application point. Our faith is not static, it is dynamic. We are in a war with a foe who is cunning and unrelenting. However, we need not fear, because Christ has overcome the powers, God has given us his armour and his strength, so we can stand without fear of being overcome.

Discussion

Our discussion centred around the importance of prayer for the putting on of the armour. We seek God to give us his strength to put his armour on us. And, most importantly we pray that God will do the same for our brothers and sisters.