

**Content**

As we move toward the close of Paul's letter to the Ephesians we come to a passage, which forms the climax of his letter as a whole. This paragraph brings everything Paul has written of to a fitting conclusion. In this climactic passage Paul is encouraging his readers, and us, to put on the whole armor of God as we engage in spiritual battle. C.S. Lewis, in his classic book on the nature of spiritual warfare, *The Screwtape Letters* writes, "There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them." Paul allows us to fall into neither error. This morning we will begin to explore this passage, looking at vv.10-13 and as we ask the question, "Why is life so hard"? How do we live out our being the new humanity in Christ, engaging in spiritual battle? We will see there are two answers to this question. (1) Recognize the Reality. We need to be aware that we are in a spiritual battle. (2) Remember the Resources. We need to remember the power of the armor of God and the Person that the armor points us to.

**Gospel Connections**

The gospel of Jesus Christ gives us both the resources of power and a Person. Paul tells the Ephesians to be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might (v.10). Earlier in his letter Paul reminded the Ephesians that this power is the power of God which raised Jesus from the dead and exalted him and is both at work within us and available to us. The gospel tells us to remember this resource and to appropriate its power. And later Paul tells his readers to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness (Eph. 4:24). To put on the whole armor of God is to put on Christ. So we have the resource of a Person. Life is hard, but we have been given a resource, outside ourselves, external to ourselves that we need to learn to appropriate by faith.

**Application and Discussion Questions**

1. What did you learn from this sermon? Specifically
  - a. What insights did you learn?
  - b. What questions do you have? Are there any areas you don't understand?
  - c. What areas of your life (be specific) do you sense God wants to change as a result of this passage of Scripture?

2. How real does the spiritual battlefield seem to Paul? Why? What does this tell you about the supernatural world?

3. What have you found helpful in your spiritual battles? Where is the battlefield in your life now? How can you put on and take up the whole armor of God right now? How can the church as a whole take up the armor of God?