

Ephesians 6:10-20
Trinity Baptist Church

November 9th, 2025
AM Services

An Encouraging Word From Dr. Tim Watson
Two Part Series On Spiritual Warfare- (Part 1)
Armed For Battle: **“The Sword Of The Spirit: The Word Of God”**

On a regular basis we observe holidays that recognize and memorialize our veterans: Veterans Day, Memorial Day, and 4th of July. We thank God for those who have fought to preserve our freedoms. Although many of us have not had the privilege of serving in the U.S. Military, whether we realize it or not, all of us are in a spiritual army. For those of us who profess to be followers of Jesus, we are in a spiritual army that is engaging in a war that has far greater ramifications than what is taking place in Ukraine or Israel. The war that we are in as believers in Jesus is a spiritual war. A battle that is being waged against the greatest war strategist of all times: **Satan**.

The good news is this: God has entrusted to us as believers military weapons and spiritual resources to be victorious over Satan. Whether you have been a Christian for 50 years or 5 weeks, you need: (A) to understand the battle in which you are engaged, and (B) to be aware of the spiritual tools that are available to you in this battle. *John 10:10* says, “*The thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy, but I [Jesus] have come that you might have life and life abundantly.*” In this context, the thief is Satan. His plan is to steal, kill, and destroy you and anything that is precious to God. This morning, we are going to look at one of the greatest offensive spiritual weapons God has given to each of us as Christ-followers. **Look in your Bible to *Ephesians 6:10-20*.** This morning we are going to look at one of the greatest offensive weapons we have for waging spiritual battles: **“The Sword of the Spirit: The Word of God.”**

In *Ephesians 6:10-20* Paul writes to the believers in Ephesus and says:

- 10 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.*
- 12 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.*
- 13 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.*
- 14 Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place,*
- 15 and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.*
- 16 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. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.*
- 19 Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel,*
- 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.*

The context and the historical setting for *Ephesians 6* is Paul's imprisonment in Rome. The Apostle Paul was imprisoned in Rome for preaching and telling people about Jesus, which was a threat to the Roman government. Different Christian historians through the years have written that it was the tradition of that day to have a prisoner like the Apostle Paul guarded closely by a Roman soldier. Some historians have even said that Paul may have spent a large portion of his time in jail chained to a Roman guard. Picture in your

mind Paul sitting in jail hour after hour, day after day. We know that while in jail, Paul wrote several of his letters to the various churches where he had preached and even started some of the churches—one of them being the church at Ephesus.

As Paul sits there in that jail cell, he observes firsthand the equipment and the uniform the Roman soldiers were given to fight against their enemies. In *verses 10-20*, Paul begins to describe the Roman armor that each soldier is given to fight their enemies.

Verse 13 – “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.”

Paul begins here by instructing the Ephesian Christians to put on and use the equipment that will help them in the spiritual battle. It is interesting to note that most pieces of the Roman armor were **defensive**, not **offensive** in nature. Most of the pieces of the Roman armor were to protect the soldier from injury.

Let’s look at some of the Roman armor / Believer’s armor:

Verse 14 – “Gird your loins with truth.”

The Roman soldier wore a small belt around his waist to bind his tunic and to hold small equipment in place. The belt held everything together.

Verse 14 – “the breastplate of righteousness.”

The breastplate was designed to protect the body’s vital organs: heart, lungs, lower abdomen.

Verse 16 – “shield of faith.”

While some of the Roman shields were made of metal, some shields were made of wood, soaked in water, and covered with hide. Some of Rome’s enemies would have their

soldiers dip their arrows in a flammable liquid and ignite them and fire them upon the Romans. Isn't it interesting in *verse 16* that Paul refers to the fiery darts (the flaming arrows / missiles) of the evil one and how the shield of faith is there to extinguish the arrows of Satan. Paul was very familiar with Roman battles and how enemies would attack.

Verse 17 – “helmet of salvation”

The helmet protects the head of the soldier and Paul reminds the people of Ephesus how they must always protect their minds by daily putting on the helmet of salvation.

If you will notice, all of the pieces of armor Paul describes up to this point are defensive in nature; their purpose is to protect and guard the soldiers as they engage in battle.

In *verse 17*, Paul lists one of the main offensive weapons created as a tool to attack the enemy. In *verse 17*, Paul says, “*And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.*” In the Roman army, the sword is the only offensive weapon in the soldier's armor. The sword is used to attack.

We are in a spiritual battle. Satan wants to destroy you. He wants to destroy your marriage, your family, and our church. We are fighting a spiritual warfare. Paul reminds us in *verse 12*, “*For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*” We may think other people are our enemies. Satan is our enemy!

We are in a spiritual battle of complacency and apathy. But the good news is, God has entrusted to us as Christ-followers spiritual resources and spiritual weapons to help us be victorious in our battles against Satan.

The main offensive weapon I want to focus on is in *verse 17*: “*The sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.*”

All of us need to understand that we have two of the most powerful resources available to us as we face daily battles. We have **prayer** (*v. 18*) and **God’s Word** (*v. 17*).

I want to cover two key concepts—two key foundational principles—about God’s Word and how you can stake your life on it, and how you can have it as your main offensive weapon to stand strong against Satan.

First, I want to share with you about the reliability of the Bible, the sword of the Spirit. In other words, is the Bible, the sword of the Spirit credible? Is it trustworthy? Or, is it as Bill Maher recently said on his daily television show (a comedian-agnostic) (movie-religiosity), “The Bible is nothing but myths and fairy tales.” If the Bible is nothing but myths and fairy tales, we don’t have much of a weapon in a spiritual battle. I want to talk about the reliability of Scripture.

Second, I want to share with you about the spirituality of the Bible, the sword of the Spirit—how the Bible impacts us and gives us power to fight against the schemes of Satan.

First Foundational Principle:

I. The Reliability of the Bible, the Sword of the Spirit.

How can we know that this sword that we hold in our hands is more than adequate for battle? How can we be sure of its reliability?

To understand the confidence we have in the Bible, we have to go back and review the history of how we got our Bible. Have you ever wondered how we got our Bible? Have you ever asked, “How did we get the Bible we hold today in our hands?” You have to go back to what is called the “canon” or “canonization” of Scripture. Canon means in Greek, “a rule, stick, a standard of faith and practice.” It also means “boundary.” When we Christians refer to the “canon” of Scripture, we are referring to the books of the Bible we commonly accept as authoritative and from God.

The Old Testament was canonized by two councils, one of which was the Synod or Council of Jamnia in A.D. 90. The Old Testament, with its 39 books, came to an official close in A.D. 90. By the end of the first century A.D. (A.D. 100), all of the material that was to become known as the New Testament had already been written. There are 39 books in the Old Testament and 27 books in the New Testament.

The New Testament canon was compiled by the church in the light of three attributes/essentials:

- 1. Every book in the New Testament had to be written by an eye witness, or it had to be recorded testimony from an eye witness.**

Matthew was an eye witness of Jesus. However, the gospel writer Luke was not an eye witness of Jesus, but he recorded testimonies from actual eyewitnesses of Jesus.

- 2. Every book in the New Testament had to possess intrinsic worth, merit, value.**

For example, there were some books that did not make it into the New Testament canon because they were not consistent with the other New Testament writings

that recorded the character of Jesus. Therefore, many of these manuscripts did not, in the eyes of the early church Fathers who compiled the New Testament, possess intrinsic worth and value.

[EX:] *The First Gospel of the Infancy of Jesus* – This gospel says the infant Jesus changed a man into a mule, and then changed him back into a man. In this gospel, it says the boy Jesus caused clay birds to come to life. He [Jesus] stretched a throne his father [Joseph the Carpenter] had made too narrow. This *First Gospel of the Infancy of Jesus* says when Jesus was young, he killed some boys who opposed Him. Doesn't that sound like our loving Savior? This is just one example of a writing that did not make it into the canon of Scripture.

3. Every book in the New Testament had to be used by the church universal, not just by one local congregation.

For example, many of the books of the New Testament originated as letters from the Apostle Paul to a specific congregation. (Paul's letters to the Roman church, Corinthian church, and so forth.) But eventually, these letters were circulated and used by many, if not by all, of the churches in that region of the world, and these books, because they were applicable and used by all the churches, were eventually officially endorsed by the church.

According to William Austin in his outstanding book, *Austin's Topical History of Christianity* (p. 53): "The New Testament canon was not fixed until the fourth century. By then, the various lists, changes, additions, and deletions had settled into the New Testament as we have it today. In his Easter letter of A.D. 367, Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, named the canon of both the Old and New Testaments as we now know them."

The 27 books of our New Testament were ratified by the Council of Hippo (A.D. 393) and the Third Council of Carthage (A.D. 397) – Erwin Lutzer.

The good news is, we have fragments of the Bible that can be traced to A.D. 130. We have complete copies of *Matthew*, *Mark*, *Luke*, and *John* dating back to the early part of the second century. We have complete copies of the books of *Acts* and *Revelation* dating back from the end of the second century. We can reconstitute 90% of the New Testament in the quoting of the church fathers dating to the first part of the second century.

The fact remains that textual scholars—textual critics—who spend their lives analyzing manuscripts, parchments, papyrus, and ancient writings have over 5,000 Greek New Testament manuscripts from which to reconstruct the New Testament. **You understand that we do not have the original manuscripts / original autographs.** What we have are accurate copies of the original manuscripts. Why don't we have originals? Certainly, one reason the original Old Testament writings have not been preserved is because the rabbis had a practice of burning or destroying worn out copies of the Scriptures. However, copies of the original writings (both Old and New Testaments) began to be made early, and copies of copies, generation after generation, were made as the older ones wore out or were destroyed.

Compelling Evidence

We have over 5,000 Greek New Testament manuscripts from which to reconstruct the New Testament. Textual scholars believe we are 99.2% accurate to the original manuscripts. The other .8% about which any question remains does not affect our doctrine, theology, faith, or practice. The .8% has to do with the spelling of words, punctuation, and sentence structure.

Is the Bible reliable? Can it be trusted? As mentioned earlier, we have quotations from the early church fathers dating back to A.D. 100, we have completed versions of the Bible dating to the 2nd and 3rd century A.D., not to mention the vast data available, 5,000 Greek New Testament manuscripts, and about 20,000 copies of the New Testament manuscripts in other languages (Syriac, Latin, Coptic, Aramaic).

What's important to point out is the **gap** we have between the original and copies is only 30, 50, or 70 years. This is so important!

Chart A: Manuscript Evidence for Superior New Testament Reliability

Author	Date Written	Earliest Copy	Approx. Time Span between original & copy	Number of Copies	Accuracy of Copies
Lucretius	Died 55 or 53 B.C.		1100 years	2	—
Pliny	61-113 A.D.	850 A.D.	750 years	7	—
Plato	427-347 B.C.	900 A.D.	1200 years	7	—
Demosthenes	4 th Century B.C.	1100 A.D.	800 years	8	—
Herodotus	480-425 B.C.	900 A.D.	1300 years	8	—
Suetonius	75-160 A.D.	950 A.D.	800 years	8	—
Thucydides	460-400 B.C.	900 A.D.	1300 years	8	—
Euripides	480-406 B.C.	1100 A.D.	1300 years	9	—
Aristophanes	450-385 B.C.	900 A.D.	1200 years	10	—
Caesar	100-44 B.C.	900 A.D.	1000 years	10	—

Livy	59 B.C. – AD 17	—	???	20	—
Tacitus	Circa 100 A.D.	1100 A.D.	1000 years	20	—
Aristotle	384-322 B.C.	1100 A.D.	1400 years	49	—
Sophocles	496-406 B.C.	1000 A.D.	1400 years	193	—
Homer (Iliad)	900 B.C.	400 B.C.	500 years	643	95%
New Testament	1 st Century A.D. (50-100 A.D.)	2 nd Century A.D. (c. 130 A.D. f.)	Less than 100 years	5600	99.5%

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A. Manuscript Evidence

B. Archaeological Evidence – This is a powerful witness to the accuracy of biblical documents, confirming scores of references.

C. Evidence from Messianic Prophecies – The Bible records predictions of events that could not have been known or predicted by chance or common sense.

Is the Bible reliable? Is that book you are holding in your hand trustworthy? Is the Bible you are holding in your hand adequate to fight daily spiritual battles and to extinguish the fiery darts of Satan? Absolutely! You can trust that what you have in your hands because of internal and external evidence—you have exactly what God wants you to have: **His Perfect Word!**

We have looked at:

I. The Reliability of Scripture – We have explored some external evidence that gives us confidence that the Bible, the Sword of the Spirit, is our best offensive weapon in spiritual warfare.

Now, let's explore:

II. The Spirituality of the Bible.

What is the spiritual nature, the spiritual component of the Word? It's not enough to just have head knowledge of its history and reliability. For us to have it as our main offensive weapon in spiritual warfare, we must know and understand the Bible's spiritual nature and how it gives us daily power to stand strong against the schemes of Satan.

Let's look at the spiritual nature of Scripture:

1. The Word of God is divine in origin.

The thing that makes the Bible different from *Huckleberry Finn*, a Tom Clancy or John Grisham novel, or the writings of J.K. Rowling or Dr. Seuss, is that the Bible is the inspired, written record of God's revelation to men. The Bible is divine in origin. It is different from all other books because it had God as its author.

The Bible speaks for itself concerning its divine origin. The Apostle Paul, again writing from a Roman prison cell, wrote these words to Timothy, a young pastor, in *2 Timothy 3:16-17*: "*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*"

2 Peter 1:21 says, "*For no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.*"

Isn't it encouraging to know that when you sit down to read and study this Book,

you aren't holding just another book that was written by a person with limited knowledge and limited understanding? You are holding in your hands the words, thoughts, and the wisdom of Almighty God, the Creator of the Universe! This Book is more than adequate for spiritual warfare because of its author. **Its author is God!**

Here's another component of the spiritual nature of Scripture:

2. The Word of God is indestructible.

The Bible—that is its eternal truths—cannot be destroyed. Jesus said in *Matthew 24:35*, “*Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will never pass away.*”

The Word of God is indestructible.

Think about it. Through the years, people have burned the Bible. They have burned people who have translated it. People have cut out parts of the Bible they did not like. Nations, rulers, and Communists have tried to eliminate it from their cultures and their people. And yet, the Bible is in almost every home in America. The Bible is in hundreds of languages all over the world. So, we must conclude that the Bible is under God's unique protection. It is indestructible. It cannot be destroyed.

A lot of so-called “smart, brilliant, intellectual” men and women who denied Christianity and the claims of Scripture have passed from the scene. But the Word of God lives on. Francois Voltaire was a French philosopher who lived from 1694—1778. Although he acknowledged the existence of a force greater than man, he didn't believe in Christianity or the teachings of the Bible. Voltaire predicted Christianity would be swept from existence and passed into history within 100 years of his lifetime. Voltaire died in 1778. Fifty years later, in 1828, the Geneva

Bible Society moved into his house and used his printing press to produce thousands of Bibles that were distributed world-wide.

Isaiah 40:8 says, "The grass withers, the flowers fade, but the Word of God stands forever." The Word of God is indestructible. It cannot be destroyed!

Conclusion

The Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, is your offensive weapon as we fight daily against Satan and his schemes. People have come and gone and civilizations have passed from the scene. And yet, the Bible stands stronger today than ever before. The question is: Are you studying, digging deeper, memorizing, and interacting daily with God's Word? We may wonder why we are defeated in spiritual battle. It's because we are not using the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God! There are some of you who came to God's house and you didn't even bring God's Word!

Will you commit yourself to reading and studying God's Word this week? Will you commit yourself to interacting with and memorizing Scripture this week, that you may be able to stand strong in battle?

