



Tim Pauley  
PO Box 58403, Charleston, WV 25358  
304.767.8430  
[tim.pauley@capitolcom.org](mailto:tim.pauley@capitolcom.org)

## The Christian's Warfare Ephesians 6:10-20 4. Knowing Our Enemy

***Intelligence gathering and espionage are important to any war effort, and this was certainly true during WWII. A vast network of spies from German occupied Europe immensely aided the Allies. German and Axis codes were broken time and again throughout the conflict. All these efforts helped to gain victories in battles and eventually end the war. The purpose of such operations is to learn the size, strength, plans, and movements of the enemy forces. Such information is vital in the fight to stand against and defeat the enemy.***

***In Ephesians 6:10-20, Paul gives us an "intelligence report" regarding the strength and schemes of our enemy. He also lays out the plans for what we must do to defeat him. In this passage and others we find that God has given us everything we need to defeat our enemy and experience victory in our lives.***

Martin Luther was well aware of the schemes of Satan. He expressed this vividly in his most famous hymn, "A Mighty Fortress":

*...For still our ancient foe  
Doth seek to work his woe;  
His craft and power are great,  
And armed with cruel hate,  
On earth is not his equal.  
Did we in our own strength confide,  
Our striving would be losing...*

In Ephesians 6:10-20 Paul gives us an "intelligence report" regarding the enemy we face as followers of Christ. He tells of his strength, of his schemes, and how he might be defeated. In this passage and others, we learn how we can have victory:

***10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. 14 Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.***

### Our Enemy's Identity

Paul wants to make sure we are fighting the right enemy. In the capitol, our real enemy is not the folks on the other side of the aisle or issue. Our real enemy is spiritual. He identifies this enemy as "the devil". We know from scripture that Satan was the highest of created beings who rebelled against God and took many other angels with him. We know he deceived Adam and Eve leading them to join in rebellion against God, with their fall leading to all the evil we see today.

We must realize how much Satan hates God, His kingdom, and His followers. It is this hatred of God we see at work in the world around us. In many countries, those who profess to follow Christ are tremendously persecuted, some even put to death. In our own country, avowed atheists strenuously strive to remove any mention of God or Christian symbols from the public square. It is the ultimate expression of "I don't believe in God, and I hate Him!" What else can explain such hatred and vitriol toward any Christian expression but the work of our enemy in people's hearts?

Paul describes our conflict as a battle against rulers; powers; world forces of this darkness; and against spiritual forces of wickedness in heavenly places. While this may refer to ranks and organization of Satan and his host of fallen angels, it likely simply points us to the great scope and influence of Satan over this world.

Earlier in Ephesians Paul identifies Satan as "***the prince of the power of the air***" (2:2). Elsewhere Paul calls him "***the god of this world***" (2 Cor. 4:4). Jesus Himself identified him as "***the ruler of this world***" (John 12:31).

We understand that although Satan is a created being and ultimately under God's authority, God has for a time allowed him to have rule and influence over this world.

We look at history and at the world around us and see the pain, suffering, and havoc he has caused. We can look at our own lives and see how we have fallen to this formidable foe.

Peter gives us a description of our enemy as well as an exhortation to resist him.

***8 Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 9 But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world. (1 Peter 5:8)***

In the words he uses to describe our enemy we gain more insight into his identity and how he fights against us. Peter calls him our “*adversary*”. This refers to an opponent in a lawsuit. Satan’s role is that of a prosecuting attorney, accusing us before God. In Revelation 12:10 he is called “***the accuser of the brethren***”. He tempts us into sin, and then when we fail, he accuses us of doing so before God and in our own hearts.

Peter also calls him “*the devil*”. This name means “slanderer”. Satan slanders God before man. Remember his temptation of Eve: “***Indeed has God said...; “God knows in the day you eat your eyes will be opened...”*** Satan slandered God’s Word and God’s motive to Eve. Satan also slanders man before God. We see this with Job. Satan claimed that Job only worshiped God because of God’s blessings on his life. “***Touch what he has, and he will curse You to Your face...”*** (Job 1:11).

### **Our Enemy’s Strategy**

Paul gives us an intelligence report on our enemy’s strategies. He warns of the devil’s “schemes” – literally “methods”. Paul says our enemy will launch “fiery arrows” which may be quenched with the shield of faith.

Peter says Satan “***prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour***”. He will “roar” to intimidate us. He will seek to “devour” or destroy people any way he can. He would keep those who do not know Christ blind to their lost and sinful condition until they face eternal judgment for their sin. He would destroy the testimonies and joyful victory of those who follow Christ. He seeks to undermine our confidence, silence our testimonies, and destroy our faith.

He is described as “subtle” or “crafty” (Gen. 3:1; 2 Cor. 11:3). We could take much time considering the schemes and methods Satan uses to attack the followers of Christ. He blinds minds. He uses doubts, fear, false teachings, evil thoughts, depression and discouragement. His main scheme or method is deceit. He seeks to deceive us about God and His word.

### **Our Enemy’s Destiny**

When we consider the identity of our enemy and his schemes against us, we could be prone to anxiety and discouragement if we do not contemplate his destiny. The Bible tells us that he is an already defeated enemy. The first prophesy of a Savior spoke of the One who would

come to crush the serpent’s head (Gen. 3:15). Rev. 12:10 tells us: “***Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night.***” The writer of Hebrews made clear our enemy’s destiny, “***He Himself (Christ) likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil...”*** (Heb 2:14).

As we contemplate our enemy’s destiny, we realize that as followers of Christ we have been given victory. When we repent and trust Christ, we are rescued from Satan’s kingdom and placed into God’s. We are no longer children of Satan and children of wrath but become children of God and His blessing. That is our salvation and justification. However, our sanctification – our growth in grace and our Christian lives involves fighting an ongoing battle against the devil along with his allies, the world and our flesh.

### **Our Response**

We have received this “intelligence report” from Paul, Peter, and other Bible writers. What is our response? Be strong. Stand firm. Be serious and alert. Resist.

We need to be committed to the fight – to stand against our enemy. We need to do so in the strength of God’s might. We need to constantly be aware and alert to the dangers of the battle we’re in. We need to know “There’s a war on”. We need to be aware of our won weaknesses and “besetting sins” – the areas where Satan attacks us.

Along with this report on our enemy’s identity and strength, we have been given plans on how to stand against him and gain victory over his schemes. Again, we must go back to the foundation Paul laid for us in Ephesians 1-3. By God’s glorious grace when we trust Christ we are saved from sin and the dominion of Satan. We are adopted and made God’s children. Through Christ we are given every spiritual blessing. Because of this, can have the surety of victory in our lives through Christ and all He’s done for us. This is why Martin Luther continued his hymn:

*Were not the right Man on our side,  
The Man of God's own choosing.  
Dost ask who that may be?  
Christ Jesus, it is he;  
“Lord of Hosts” his name,  
From age to age the same,  
And He must win the battle.*

### **CAPITOL BIBLE STUDIES**

Thursdays,

8:00 AM Government Organization Conference Room

12:00 PM Senate President’s Conference Room