

EPHESIANS

(Study10) Ephesians 6:10-24: Week beginning 2nd June 2008

DYKTAWO?

The acronym was used in the Second World War to spell out "Don't You Know There's A War On?" At such a time, we need our wits about us and to accept the discipline and sometimes hardship that will be necessary if we are to beat the enemy.

Here Paul tells his readers they're involved in a war. It is *not against flesh and blood* - i.e. not against other people. Instead, it's against the formidable spiritual hosts of wickedness: the devil and his cohorts.

Bryson Smith, writing in a Bible study guide to Ephesians, makes these points about the devil:

At one extreme, some people don't take Satan seriously enough; at the other, many Christians take him far too seriously. Many churches become too preoccupied with Satan and mistakenly believe that he has more power than he does.

For the Christian, Satan has been stripped of his power. All we have to do against the devil is to stand! Don't go looking for him... Simply be strong in the Lord, have confidence in what God has done for us and stand firm. As James says, resist the devil and he will flee (James 4:7). In other words, forget the movies about objects being thrown about the room and heads spinning round. The only power the devil has is the power we give him when we believe his lies. Just resist him. Be strong and you will triumph. That's because God's children are protected by the armour of God.

(*Walk this Way*: Good Book Co, 1996, p58)

The fight we're in: 10-12

* Revision: what has Paul already told us the devil is up to?

- 2:1-2:

- 4:27:

* What does the language Paul uses about the devil in vv 11-12 suggest about this opponent of ours?

* In view of the strength of the devil's power, how can we have any chance at all against him?

The armour God provides: 13-18

* What is it that Paul repeatedly emphasises he wants his readers to be able to do? (11, 13, 14)

* What, then, does this suggest that the devil is wanting us to do?

* Paul tells us what the armour of God is in verses 14-17. Looking at the individual bits, what do they mean? Consider their opposites, and what each will be fighting against. It can be helpful to make a table to fill in. For instance:

Item	What we will be fighting against	How this might happen in practice
<i>Belt of truth</i>	Lies, half-truths	e.g. lying to each other; absorbing wrong ideas about God...
<i>Breastplate of righteousness</i>	moral failure, impurity	
<i>Shoes</i>		
<i>Shield</i>		
<i>Helmet</i>		
<i>Sword</i>		

The secret weapon: 18-20

Note: *pray in the Spirit* means pray with the Spirit's help. He is given to all Christians, and He helps us to pray.

Note: *the mystery of the gospel* means, as usual in Paul, the ex-mystery of the gospel: this great truth has been made known by God, and needs to be told to those for whom it remains a mystery.

* What are we specifically commanded to do here?

* *With this in mind...* In view of what he's just said, **why** does Paul encourage his readers to do this?

🔗 Will we do this for one another over the weeks ahead?

* vv19-20: What temptation is Paul particularly conscious of in his own life?

Signing off: 21-24

* What is Paul's concern for his readers and how does he intend to achieve it?