

A dark, narrow alleyway between tall brick buildings, with a white text box in the center. The alleyway is flanked by dark brick walls and a modern building with many windows in the distance. A person is walking away in the distance. The sky is overcast and grey.

WEEK 9 | **EPHESIANS 6:10-24**

## CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH

A few years ago Frank Peretti wrote an incredibly popular novel called *This Present Darkness*. The title is taken from Ephesians 6:12, and the book gives an imaginary picture of the kind of spiritual battle described in this last section of the letter. It paints the kind of picture a lot of people imagine when they read this passage: nasty looking demons with red eyes and sharp claws, skulking around in dark alleys, waiting to pounce on unsuspecting and defenceless Christians.

But is that really what Paul had in mind when he wrote this passage? Let's take a look and find out.

**Read Ephesians 6:10-12**

1. How does Paul describe the problem back in 2:1-2?
2. As God's "saints", what strength are we to draw on (6:10)?
3. What do we already know about God's might and power (see Eph 1:19)?
4. How does Paul describe a life of following Jesus? Who is the enemy?
5. Look back at Ephesians 1:21 and 3:10. What have we already learnt about our enemies?
6. Do you normally think about living as a Christian as a struggle with spiritual powers? Why or why not?
7. From what we've already learnt in Ephesians, how confident can we be about our struggle with the spiritual powers?

From what Paul has already told the Ephesians, Christians are in a great position when it comes to the battle with spiritual forces. *The same power that raised Jesus to life* and gave him authority over every other spiritual ruler or authority is available to help us stand firm in our own faith. But how?

---

## THE WELL-EQUIPPED CHRISTIANS

### Read Ephesians 6:13-17

To understand more about what Paul means by each piece of armour, we need to look back at the rest of Ephesians, because Paul has already explained most of the equipment he lists here.

EQUIPMENT	WHAT PAUL SAID BEFORE	YOUR SUMMARY
Belt of Truth	Ephesians 1:13	
Breastplate of righteousness	Ephesians 4:24	
Gospel of peace shoes	Ephesians 2:14-16	
Faith shield	Ephesians 2:8	
Spirit/Word sword	Ephesians 1:13	

---

## THINKING IT THROUGH

Novels like *This Present Darkness* can be misleading. Spiritual warfare isn't something spooky reserved for Christian superheroes, it's a normal part of Christian living. Our armour is the basic stuff like holding on to the Gospel, Spirit-empowered righteous living, hanging onto our trust in Jesus, and listening to God's word. These Christian basics will keep us safe and strong as spiritual warriors.

8. Are there any weak spots in your own spiritual armour?

**Read Ephesians 6:18-20**

9. What is Paul's final instruction to the Ephesians?
  
10. How does it relate to the spiritual warfare he's just been talking about?
  
11. What should the Ephesians be praying for?
  
12. How do Paul's instructions encourage you in your praying?
  
13. We can't pray for Paul like the Ephesians did - he's long gone! But what things would Paul want us to pray for today?

---

**REFLECTION**

14. What have you learned about being part of God's church as we've looked at Ephesians?
  
15. Who are you? To what extent does your place in God's church (as someone who has 'joined the saints') now define your identity, attitudes and behaviour?

What has challenged, helped or encouraged you most in Ephesians?



**For an example of what the armour of God can look like in practice, watch 9am member Stan share how Jesus has held him fast at**

**[mpc.org.au/whoareyou](http://mpc.org.au/whoareyou)**