

“Gearing Up”

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Thirteenth and last in a series on Ephesians

Ephesians 6.10-20

April 27, 2014

Finally, be empowered in the Master and in the strength of his might. Put on God's battle gear, so you can stand against the devil's strategies. For we do not grapple against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up God's battle gear, so you can stand ground in the evil day, and after you have done everything, stand firm.

Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having put on shoes so you are ready to announce the good news of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith (with it you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one). Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and requests. For this purpose, keep alert with all perseverance, making prayer requests for all the saints, and also for me. Pray that words may be given to me as I open my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel. For it, I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

Ephesians 6.10-20

I like the first word there, “finally.” Finally in the sense that we are finally finished working through this letter, something we started in January! Better, finally because it wraps so nicely, bringing together so many threads in a resounding call and encouragement, one I know at least I need to hear.

Paul has given us the broad, expansive picture of what God is doing. From the beginning, God's plan has been to bring all things together, everything! Now it is happening, in Jesus, God's Messiah, crucified and resurrected.

God is unveiling this plan, using Paul so we can see!¹ From the beginning, God has been choosing us, calling us to share in this, and now the Spirit is bringing us in. Even us! We were dead spiritually, but Jesus makes us alive, for God raised him from the dead. We are a resurrection people! We were outsiders of God's work in Israel, but Jesus broke down

¹ Ephesians might have been the last letter Paul wrote. Or maybe it was written by a colleague of Paul, to continue the apostle's ministry. Either way, it is a mature, seasoned, and faithful capstone to Paul's “stewardship of God's grace.” (Ephesians 3.2)