

**EPHESIANS – THE MYSTERY OF GOD’S CHURCH –
OUR IDENTITY, OUR WALK, OUR WARFARE
PROGRAM 60 (#912240)
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P.O. Box 182218, Chattanooga, TN 37422-7218
1-888-734-7707/ www.preceptsforlife.com

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**SERIES: Ephesians – The Mystery Of God’s Church –
Our Identity, Our Walk, Our Warfare
TITLE: Program 60 – Stand Firm In The Midst Of Warfare**

FRIDAY

OPEN

O Beloved, do you find yourself looking at another man, looking at another woman and wishing you were married to that person, wondering what it would be like? Do you find yourself absolutely depressed, overwhelmed? Or do you find yourself in a state where all your mind is doing is replaying the past and replaying your failures. O Precious One, have you considered it might be warfare?

PART ONE

I don’t know about you Beloved, but I know that everything that I said in the opening I have gone through. I have also gone through periods where I thought you know this is too hard. Why should I do this? I don’t have to keep teaching. I don’t have to keep doing this. I could retire. But then I stop

and think, wait a minute, the Bible says that there’s no retirement in the time of war. And you and I are in a warfare. As we have been studying through the book of Ephesians Paul has laid out all these marvelous truths, and then he comes back in Ephesians chapter 6 and says, “Finally brethren” and he wants to talk to us about the subject of warfare. He wants us to understand that we are in a conflict, but we can win. Have you been battling depression dear one? Have you ever seen it as warfare? Have you been feeling so defeated, defeated as a wife, defeated as a mother, defeated as a father, defeated as a husband, defeated in the workplace? All of a sudden there’s just this cloud of depression over you. Maybe it started with disappointment and then it moved to discouragement, and then it moved to the sense of defeat, and now you find yourself in absolute despair. What is going on? Maybe someone has said something to you and that has lodged in your mind and you can’t get rid of that thought, and it’s just rewind rewind rewind and you keep remembering that situation, and it’s defeating you and it’s discouraging you and you’re in a state of despair. Despair is without hope. Beloved, it is warfare. And Paul wants these people in Ephesus to understand hey, God has saved you, but He has not taken you out of the world. He has kept you in the world and the whole world lies under the power of the evil one. And because the whole world lies under the power of the evil one it’s war and it’s going to be war until you and I are absent from this body and we are present with the Lord. So we better learn how to handle this warfare. So I want us to go to Ephesians chapter 6. And in Ephesians chapter 6 I want to read the verses down to verse 14. And I want to just look for a minute at this warfare. I know that I’ve dealt with all the Greek words and everything and the enemies’ intent to slam us to the ground, to pin us to the ground and hold us there. And I know that some of you are on the ground. And I understand. Been there, done that, until I realized hey, I don’t have to be pinned to the ground because I’m a child of God and I don’t have to be down on the ground. I can stand firm. Listen to what he says. **“Finally,**

be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, ...that you [may] be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.” (Ephesians 6:10-11) The devil has a strategy. In war you always have a strategy. Jesus talked about no man going to war without sitting down first and counting the cost. You know your enemy. You learn about your enemy. You learn the conflict that’s going to come and how you’re going to supply your troops and how you’re going to stay in communication with them and how you’re going to take that city or how you’re going to take those people, or how you’re going to capture them, how you’re going to conquer them. He says **“...Our struggle is not against flesh and blood... [it’s] against [principalities,] ...the rulers...the forces of darkness...the spiritual forces of wickedness in...heavenly places.”** (Ephesians 6:12) And then in verse 13 he says, **“Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist....” (6:13a)** And see if you’re going through these things that I have already mentioned in these illustrations what you need to know is hey, it’s warfare. And you need to resist, because your warfare is not just against flesh and blood. It’s not horizontal. It’s vertical. And so he says, **“...Take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able...,”** and you will be able, **“...to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.” (6:13)** As you see **“stand firm”** is used two times already and now he’s about to use it again. He wants you to get the point. You’re not to be down, you’re to be up. And you are not to be wobbly. You are able to stand firm. So how do you stand firm? He says, **“Therefore, [stand firm, put on] the full armor of God....” (6:13a)** So what do you put on? He says, you, **“Stand firm...”** in verse 14, **“...having girded your loins with truth, ...having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ...having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace....” (Ephesians 6:14-15)** Now that’s where I want to stop, because he says, **“having, having, having”** and we’re going to look at those **“having’s”**. It’s something you’ve already done. It’s something that you

have already accomplished. And having accomplished it you are able therefore to stand firm. But you’ve got to **“Put on the whole armor of God...,” (6:11a)** because it’s war. Now what is warfare? If you can understand that then it then it helps you to recognize it. Warfare is a conflict against an enemy. There’s an enemy, there’s an adversary that wants to rule over you. Now because you, as a child of God have moved from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light and you have moved from the power of Satan into the kingdom of God and you now have His resurrection power and His strength, and His might, you say, “Well what’s the big deal?” The big deal is the enemy’s not happy with where you are. So the enemy is going to come against you. He wants to overpower you. Watch. He wants to overcome you. He wants to take you prisoner. He wants to, in a sense, lock you up in a cell and starve you to death and isolate you so that you will become weakened and you will just waste away. This is what warfare is. It is taking advantage of another person so that you can rule over them, so that you can overpower them, so that you can overcome them. So we’re in a warfare and we’ve got to know that that warfare, Beloved, is going to last as long as you last here on this earth. So you better learn what to do so that you can stand firm. Stand firm means this, to hold your position. Remember we saw it was “s-t-e-t-e” and it’s a military term that means you hold your position when the enemy comes to overtake you, you hold, you resist and you are not ignorant of what they are about to do and you know that it’s warfare and you stand firm. And you come out the winner. You are unable to be conquered. Now listen to me very very carefully, Precious One. Yes there are battles, there are skirmishes, but the war has been won and you don’t have to be defeated. You are an overcomer and this is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith, our faith in what God says. So we need to build our faith in what God says. But what I’d like to do is just take you to several passages so that you can see what God says about warfare. And the first one I want to take you to is 1 Thessalonians chapter 2. Now all the T’s

come together. The longest ones are first and they all come after General Electric Power Company: Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians. And if you are somewhere where you are able to open a Bible. It is good for you to open your Bible. So that you can see what side of the page it's on and so that you can mark it. Now remember we're marking every reference to the "devil." We're putting a red pitch fork over that reference to the "devil," to "Satan," to "principalities" or "powers" or "demons" or "evil spirits" or whatever. Anything connected to the devil we're marking it so that we can find out what God tells us. And by the way if you just found this program the purpose of this program is not just to teach you what I believe. But the purpose of this program is to help you discover truth for yourself, to understand God's precepts for life, the way that you are to live. So in the process of teaching you through a book of the Bible, book-by-book is the way I go, chapter-by-chapter and verse-by-verse, what we do here at Precept Ministries International is we give you the opportunity to download a free study guide by going to "preceptsforlife.com". And as you go in that free study guide we talk to you about marking key repeated words. 1 Thessalonians chapter 2 in verse 18 Paul is speaking, that great apostle, and he says, **"...We wanted to come to you—I, Paul, more than once—and yet Satan hindered us."** (1 Thessalonians 2:18) A red pitchfork over "Satan". Satan hindered the great apostle Paul? He was in a warfare? Of course now one of things that you have to understand is this, that if Satan thwarts you as he thwarted Paul, then it's because God has a higher purpose. It says, ["God does according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay God's hand and none can say unto Him, 'What doest Thou?'"] (PARAPHRASE, Daniel 4:35) That's Daniel chapter 4 in the last verses. So you've got to know, yes Satan may thwart you, but if he thwarts you and God allows him to thwart you or hinder you then it's because God has another path and God's purpose will be accomplished. We'll talk about it right after this important announcement.

PART TWO

Welcome back, Valiant Warrior. You say, “I am not a valiant warrior.” Well I want to tell you something. If you listen to the teaching, if you listen to the Word of God and you take it to heart and you act on it you are going to be a valiant warrior. First of all you’re going to understand, hey, this is warfare. Oh, I didn’t know that this was warfare. Oh, I didn’t know that I could stand firm. So you’re finding out what warfare is. And before the break I left you at 1 Thessalonians chapter 2 when Paul said, [“I wanted to come to you. I was trying to get there, but Satan thwarted us.”] (PARAPHRASED, 1 Thessalonians 2:18) I want us to go to Job chapter 1 for just a minute because in the book of Job you have an account of Satan approaching God and God drawing his attention to Job and what an upright man he is and how righteous he is in his generation. And Satan turns around and he says, [“Yes, but if You would touch him then he would turn around and he would curse You to his face. He loves You, God, because everything’s going great. Look at his prosperity. Look at his children. Look at his crops and everything. Look at all that he has, everything is going great for Job. But you take away the hedge and You let me touch him, I’m telling You, he’s going to curse You to Your face.”] (PARAPHRASE, Job 1:10-11) Well when this happens you find God responding and saying to him in verse 12, **“Then the Lord said to Satan, ‘Behold, all that he has [had] is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him....’” (Job 1:12a)** You can touch every one of his possessions, but you can’t touch him. And it says, **“...So Satan departed from the presence of the Lord.” (1:12b)** Satan didn’t say, “Look, I’ll touch him if I want to. I’m Satan and I’m the ruler of this world, and [the whole world lies under my power,]” 1 John chapter 5, verse 19. (PARAPHRASE) “I’ll touch him if I want to.” And he didn’t say that to God. Why? Because Satan’s leash only lets him go so far under the sovereignty of God and if Paul had gotten there as he wanted to, we

wouldn't have 1 Thessalonians, this wonderful, awesome book. But let's go on and see what happens. Paul can't get there. Satan is hindering him. And so he sends Timothy and Timothy goes and he finds out what is going on with the Thessalonians, comes back and tells Paul and this is what we find out. He said, **"For this reason..."** verse 5 of chapter 3 **"...when I could endure it no longer..."** when I had to know what was going on with you, **"...I also sent to find out about your faith, for fear..."** now watch, **"...that the tempter might have tempted you, and our labor would be in vain."** (1 Thessalonians 3:5) So you've got to know although that you've moved into this kingdom of light the tempter is still out to tempt you. The tempter is still out to get you. And you have to recognize this is warfare. When you go to 1 Timothy chapter 3 you find out as he's talking about deacons and bishops or overseers or pastors. And he says this, **"...not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil."** (1 Timothy 3:6) Now what's the condemnation that was incurred by the devil? It's pride, and so he goes on to say, **"And he must have good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil."** (3:7) So here's a man that has come to know Christ, but he's a new convert. You have to be careful because the devil can snare him or trap him with pride. You and I need to know that there is a warfare. In 2 Corinthians chapter 2 Paul is writing and they've had to discipline a person and they've had to discipline this person because he has broken God's precepts, because he has broken God's commandments. He hasn't acted properly. But now the man has confessed. And so Paul says in verse 10, **"But one whom you forgive anything, I forgive also...."** (2 Corinthians 2:10a) He says, **"So that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes."** (2:11) If you are rewinding in your mind and you are rewinding your failures and then Satan can take advantage of that if you don't understand that you have forgiveness. Or if you are mistreating someone or

since they sinned and then they confessed it and you keep holding that sin up against them and mentioning it all the time, then what you’re doing is your playing on the enemy’s side. So God wants you and I to understand this is warfare. You have to understand as it says in James chapter 4 that you have to **“...Resist the devil....” (James 4:7b)** Now we’re going to look at that more in our lessons to come because I want you to understand what the full armor of God is all about. But I want to take just these few minutes and I want to talk to you about the armor that you put on. And why he looks at this Roman soldier and Paul, remember, was a prisoner of Rome, so he was chained to a Roman soldier. So he looks at this Roman soldier standing before him. He looks at his helmet. He looks at his breastplate. He looks at his belt. He looks at that scabbard. He looks at the sword. He looks at the shoes. I mean he starts from the head and he goes right on down and he thinks that’s a perfect illustration. It is a perfect illustration to use in telling people how they win the battle. How do they win the battle? Well for instance, if your mind is in rewind or if you’re looking at another woman or at another man and you’re wondering what it would be like to be married to them instead of the one that you’re married to, that just disappointed you to no end, and you’re beginning to think I made a mistake, I made a mistake. You know, I got to get out of this. What can I do? And you’re in that, you have to understand this is war. Because the design of warfare remember is to overpower you. So how do you keep from being overpowered? Belt of what? It’s truth that keeps you from being overpowered. Breastplate of righteousness. What keeps you from being overpowered? It’s living righteously. Helmet of salvation. What keeps you from having these rewinds? It’s understanding who you are and the fact that you have the mind of Christ. What keeps you from getting in this battle with other people? It’s that you’re **“...shod...with the preparation of the gospel of peace.” (Ephesians 6:15b)** You’ve got peace on your feet. This is what he wants us to see. This is what he wants us to understand. And what we’re going to do

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is we, Precious One, are going to look at each one of these things that he likens to a Roman's armor and we're going to see the practicality of it all. And you're going to understand, you're going to have your eyes opened. You're not going to be ignorant of his schemes. [You're going to know how to resist in the evil day because you know having put on and then taking up, you are able to stand firm.] (Paraphrase, Ephesians 6:13-14) So the power is not in you Beloved. The power is in Christ. And all this time in the book of Ephesians he's been showing you what your position is. Your position is and he tells you right from the get go in Ephesians chapter 1. You are seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. So I just want your eyes opened to the fact that the enemy is after you. He wants to overpower you. He wants to overcome you. He wants to take you captive. He wants to defeat you. He wants to oppress you. He wants to rule over you. He wants to seduce you. He wants to tempt you. But you just have to stand firm. Stand firm in the things that you have learned. So your precept for life is in every situation of conflict that you find yourself in, stop and think, what does the Word tell you to do? Then do it.