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**E MAIL**

[PKBedwell@hotmail.com](mailto:PKBedwell@hotmail.com)

**WEB PAGE**

[Bedwellglobalministries.com](http://Bedwellglobalministries.com)

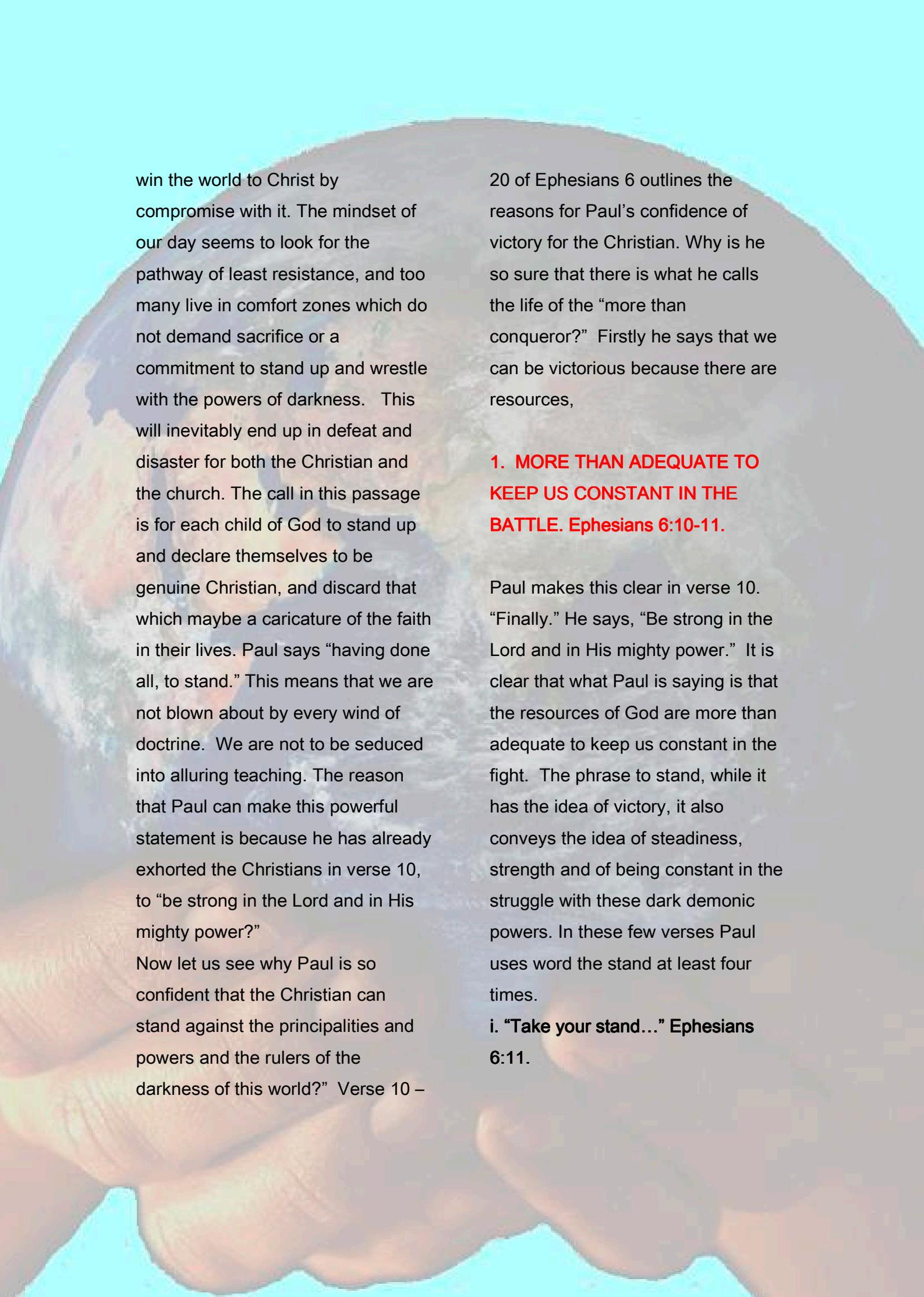
**“HAVING DONE ALL, TO STAND!”**

**Scripture Reading - Ephesians 6:10-20.**

**Introduction**

“.....Having done all, to stand.” In these words we feel the pulse of Paul’s passion for the people he pastored. He is concerned that they realize the possibilities of living in victory over what he calls the “rulers, the authorities, the powers of this dark world and the spiritual forces of evil in heavenly realms.” V.12. The words of Paul convey a sense of power even by themselves. “Having done all, to stand.” They indicate that Paul is not playing at warfare, nor is he planning war games. He is extremely serious about what the

Christian has face in the struggle of life. The life of the Christian is not one of delicate softness. It is one of stern conflict and intense struggle against the evil forces of our world. The genuine Christian is not only committed to the person of Jesus, but also to the ethic of Jesus as expounded on the Sermon on the Mount. Dr. John Stott has correctly pointed out that the teaching of Jesus in this great sermon is countercultural. We are not called to accommodate the pop culture and conform to the world system. The modern problem is that there are those in the church who are in trying to be all things to all men and in doing so have lowered the bar. Jon Johnson commented that the world has taken one step toward the church, and the church has run to towards the world with open arms. The result is that today, so often, the demarcation lines between the world and the church are not easy to find. Both history and experience reveal that the church will never win its battle against the evil in the world by accommodation to it; neither will it



win the world to Christ by compromise with it. The mindset of our day seems to look for the pathway of least resistance, and too many live in comfort zones which do not demand sacrifice or a commitment to stand up and wrestle with the powers of darkness. This will inevitably end up in defeat and disaster for both the Christian and the church. The call in this passage is for each child of God to stand up and declare themselves to be genuine Christian, and discard that which maybe a caricature of the faith in their lives. Paul says “having done all, to stand.” This means that we are not blown about by every wind of doctrine. We are not to be seduced into alluring teaching. The reason that Paul can make this powerful statement is because he has already exhorted the Christians in verse 10, to “be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power?”

Now let us see why Paul is so confident that the Christian can stand against the principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this world?” Verse 10 –

20 of Ephesians 6 outlines the reasons for Paul’s confidence of victory for the Christian. Why is he so sure that there is what he calls the life of the “more than conqueror?” Firstly he says that we can be victorious because there are resources,

**1. MORE THAN ADEQUATE TO KEEP US CONSTANT IN THE BATTLE. Ephesians 6:10-11.**

Paul makes this clear in verse 10. “Finally.” He says, “Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power.” It is clear that what Paul is saying is that the resources of God are more than adequate to keep us constant in the fight. The phrase to stand, while it has the idea of victory, it also conveys the idea of steadiness, strength and of being constant in the struggle with these dark demonic powers. In these few verses Paul uses word the stand at least four times.

**i. “Take your stand...” Ephesians 6:11.**

ii. **“Stand your ground....” Ephesians 6: 13.**

iii. **“After you have done everything, to stand.” Ephesians 6:13.**

iv. **“Stand firm...” Ephesians 6:14.**

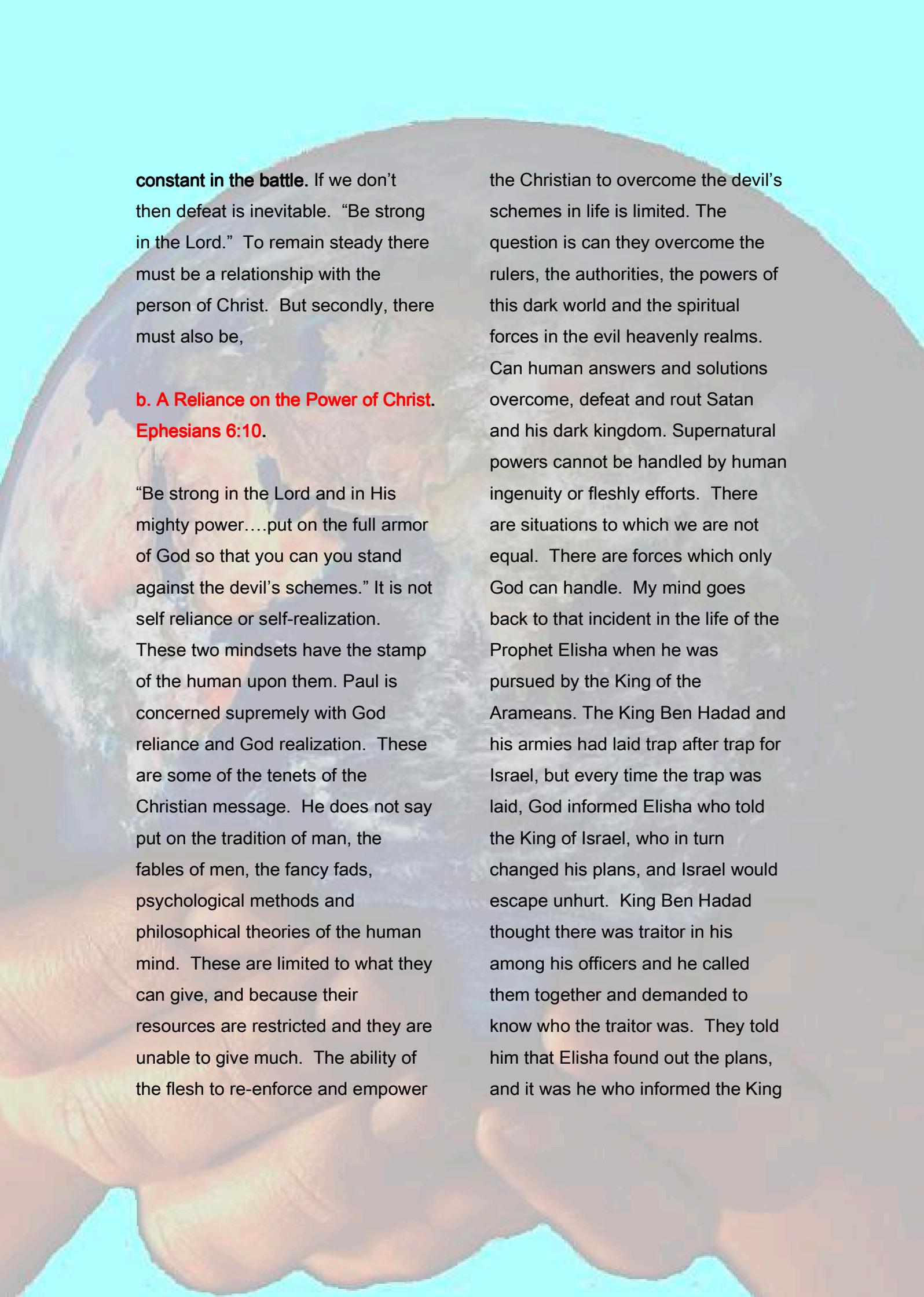
Paul then, is no doubt of the ability of the Child of God to stand in the face of the forces of darkness. This God given ability has foundations in which it is grounded. Paul affirms this is the words “Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power.” This is the open secret of remaining steady in the conflict with the forces of evil.

Looking at what Paul says note that he basically touches on two vital truths. First, for the Christian to remain steady there must be,

**a. A Relationship with the Person of Christ. Ephesians 6:10.**

**“Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power.” A relationship with God is not option, if we are to remain steady and strong and constant in the faith.** There are two statements that give force to this truth are firstly. “Be strong in the Lord.” And secondly “Be strong in His Mighty

power.” These statements describe this personal relationship, and it may seem to be elementary, but we must not assume the every one has learned the elementary principles of the gospel. We will never win spiritual battles if we are not in a relationship with God. This is of first importance. This is where we begin on our journey as a Christian. We must not ignore it or minimize or depreciate it. Our relationship with the Lord must be settled, before we can fight our spiritual battles victoriously. John MacArthur points out that throughout the letter to the Ephesians we are told that we are “In Christ.” His life is your life, His power is your power, His truth is your truth.” In Christ we are strong. All that He is, all His resources are available to us. That is why we are urged to “put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand.” In the paraphrase of J.B. Phillips, Jesus said “the plain fact is that apart from me you can do nothing.” **If we have a relationship with Christ, then we have resources more than adequate to keep us**



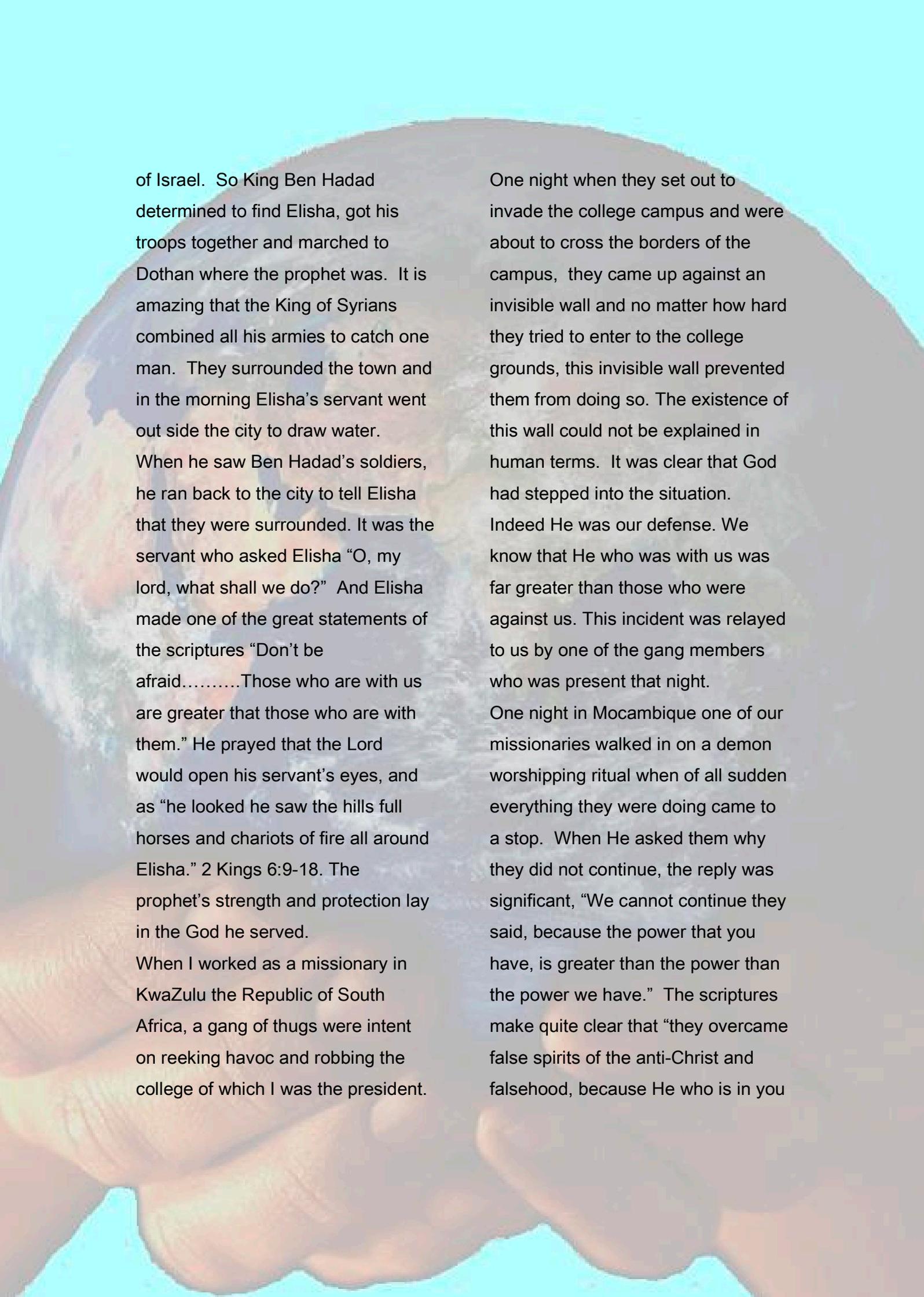
**constant in the battle.** If we don't then defeat is inevitable. "Be strong in the Lord." To remain steady there must be a relationship with the person of Christ. But secondly, there must also be,

**b. A Reliance on the Power of Christ.  
Ephesians 6:10.**

"Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power....put on the full armor of God so that you can stand against the devil's schemes." It is not self reliance or self-realization.

These two mindsets have the stamp of the human upon them. Paul is concerned supremely with God reliance and God realization. These are some of the tenets of the Christian message. He does not say put on the tradition of man, the fables of men, the fancy fads, psychological methods and philosophical theories of the human mind. These are limited to what they can give, and because their resources are restricted and they are unable to give much. The ability of the flesh to re-enforce and empower

the Christian to overcome the devil's schemes in life is limited. The question is can they overcome the rulers, the authorities, the powers of this dark world and the spiritual forces in the evil heavenly realms. Can human answers and solutions overcome, defeat and rout Satan and his dark kingdom. Supernatural powers cannot be handled by human ingenuity or fleshly efforts. There are situations to which we are not equal. There are forces which only God can handle. My mind goes back to that incident in the life of the Prophet Elisha when he was pursued by the King of the Arameans. The King Ben Hadad and his armies had laid trap after trap for Israel, but every time the trap was laid, God informed Elisha who told the King of Israel, who in turn changed his plans, and Israel would escape unhurt. King Ben Hadad thought there was traitor in his among his officers and he called them together and demanded to know who the traitor was. They told him that Elisha found out the plans, and it was he who informed the King



of Israel. So King Ben Hadad determined to find Elisha, got his troops together and marched to Dothan where the prophet was. It is amazing that the King of Syrians combined all his armies to catch one man. They surrounded the town and in the morning Elisha's servant went out side the city to draw water. When he saw Ben Hadad's soldiers, he ran back to the city to tell Elisha that they were surrounded. It was the servant who asked Elisha "O, my lord, what shall we do?" And Elisha made one of the great statements of the scriptures "Don't be afraid.....Those who are with us are greater that those who are with them." He prayed that the Lord would open his servant's eyes, and as "he looked he saw the hills full horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha." 2 Kings 6:9-18. The prophet's strength and protection lay in the God he served.

When I worked as a missionary in KwaZulu the Republic of South Africa, a gang of thugs were intent on reeking havoc and robbing the college of which I was the president.

One night when they set out to invade the college campus and were about to cross the borders of the campus, they came up against an invisible wall and no matter how hard they tried to enter to the college grounds, this invisible wall prevented them from doing so. The existence of this wall could not be explained in human terms. It was clear that God had stepped into the situation. Indeed He was our defense. We know that He who was with us was far greater than those who were against us. This incident was relayed to us by one of the gang members who was present that night.

One night in Mocambique one of our missionaries walked in on a demon worshipping ritual when of all sudden everything they were doing came to a stop. When He asked them why they did not continue, the reply was significant, "We cannot continue they said, because the power that you have, is greater than the power than the power we have." The scriptures make quite clear that "they overcame false spirits of the anti-Christ and falsehood, because He who is in you

is greater than he who is in the world.” And Paul in this letter prays in Ephesians 3:16 “I pray that out of His glorious riches He may strengthen you with power through the Spirit in your inner being.” Paul urges the Ephesians “Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power.” Ephesians 6:10. The supernatural forces of darkness we face on a daily basis are greater than even the enemy we see. We do not fully realize the might of the invincible powers that surround us seeking to destroy us. If we did, our prayer meetings would be full and there would be volunteers to join the intercessory prayer groups, and our personal devotional life would last more than three minutes. Certainly there would more victories in our church, and greater healthy growth. “Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. We conquer only when we rely on the power of God. The only true strength we possess is found in God and God alone. There are resources which are more than adequate to keep us constant in the

battle. But there are also resources that are,

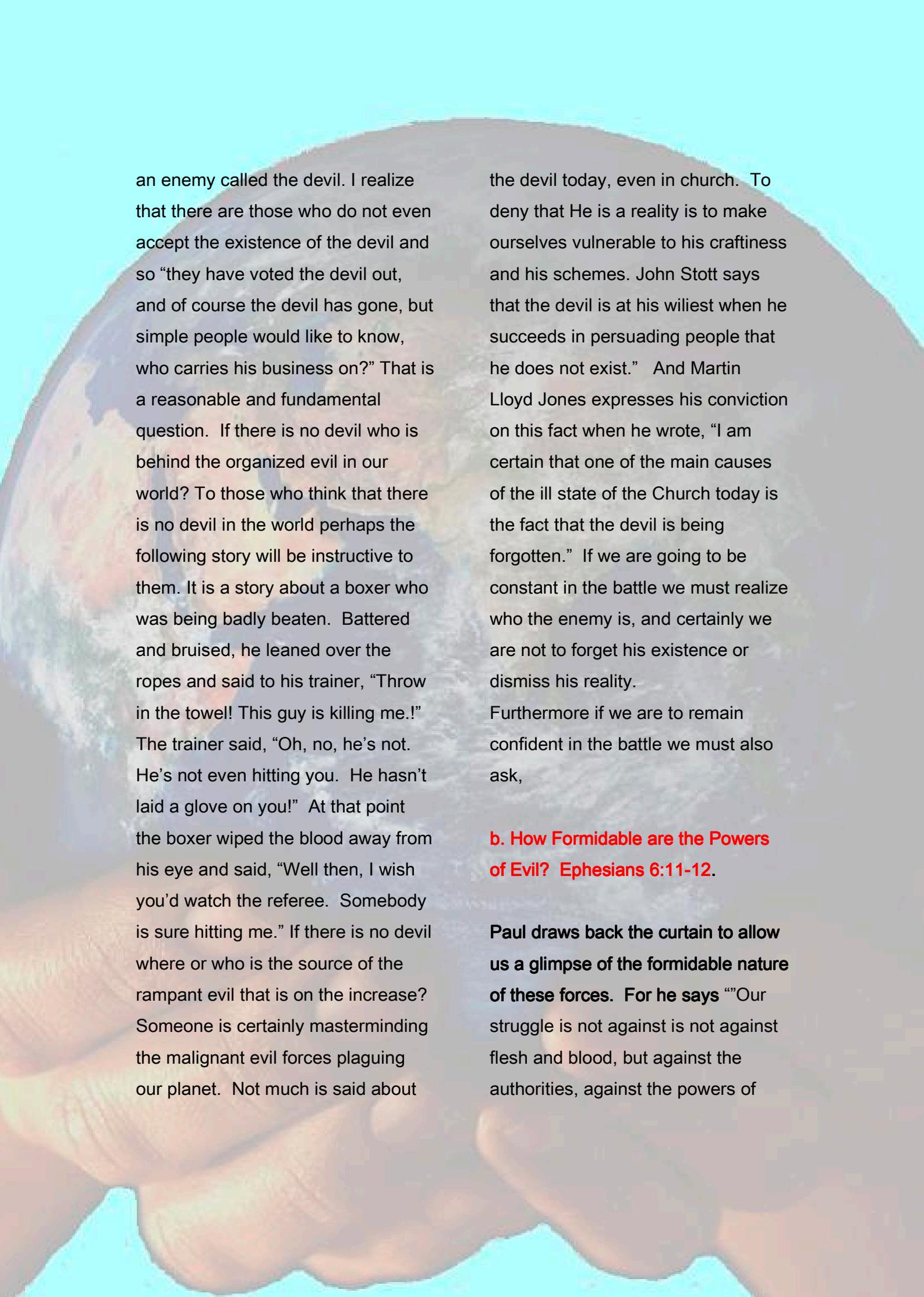
**2. MORE THAN ADEQUATE TO KEEP US CONFIDENT IN THE BATTLE. Ephesians 6:11-12. Ephesians 6:11-12.**

**Is this possible? When we realize the vast multitude of malignantly evil forces arrayed against us, can we be confident in the battle with them? We have already seen that we can because it is not the confidence born of self reliance but God reliance.**

Now to fight the enemy confidently we must recognize,

**a. Who the Source of Evil is. Ephesians 6:11. Ephesians 6:11. Ephesians 6:11.**

**Paul says “take your stand against the Devil’s schemes.”** There is in Paul the fundamental recognition as to who the enemy is. Already in this letter, in chapter 2:2 and in 4:27 he introduces the devil. In doing so he reminds us of the opposition that faces us. He recognizes that there is



an enemy called the devil. I realize that there are those who do not even accept the existence of the devil and so “they have voted the devil out, and of course the devil has gone, but simple people would like to know, who carries his business on?” That is a reasonable and fundamental question. If there is no devil who is behind the organized evil in our world? To those who think that there is no devil in the world perhaps the following story will be instructive to them. It is a story about a boxer who was being badly beaten. Battered and bruised, he leaned over the ropes and said to his trainer, “Throw in the towel! This guy is killing me.!” The trainer said, “Oh, no, he’s not. He’s not even hitting you. He hasn’t laid a glove on you!” At that point the boxer wiped the blood away from his eye and said, “Well then, I wish you’d watch the referee. Somebody is sure hitting me.” If there is no devil where or who is the source of the rampant evil that is on the increase? Someone is certainly masterminding the malignant evil forces plaguing our planet. Not much is said about

the devil today, even in church. To deny that He is a reality is to make ourselves vulnerable to his craftiness and his schemes. John Stott says that the devil is at his wiliest when he succeeds in persuading people that he does not exist.” And Martin Lloyd Jones expresses his conviction on this fact when he wrote, “I am certain that one of the main causes of the ill state of the Church today is the fact that the devil is being forgotten.” If we are going to be constant in the battle we must realize who the enemy is, and certainly we are not to forget his existence or dismiss his reality.

Furthermore if we are to remain confident in the battle we must also ask,

#### **b. How Formidable are the Powers of Evil? Ephesians 6:11-12.**

**Paul draws back the curtain to allow us a glimpse of the formidable nature of these forces. For he says “Our struggle is not against is not against flesh and blood, but against the authorities, against the powers of**



this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” The word struggle in these verses occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. The scriptures urge us to struggle or wrestle against the evil about us. We are called upon to resist and fight against the devil. The reason is clear. We “can drift into sin but we cannot drift into righteousness or holiness.” (Morris). So how formidable are the powers of evil? First they are,

**i. Powerful. Ephesians 6:12.**

They are the spiritual powers of darkness. Our warfare is not against “flesh and blood.” We face powers more formidable than the natural forces surrounding us. They are supernatural demonic powers and there is nothing in the realm of the natural that can fight and defeat them. We are not facing flesh and blood. We are confronted by “Rulers! “Authorities! “Against the powers of this dark world!” “Against the spiritual forces of evil in heavenly realms!”

and they are formidable. Second they are,

**ii. Evil. Ephesians 6:12.**

**Paul refers to these forces as dark and evil.** John Stott points out that “power by itself is neutral; it can be well used or misused.” The enemies of Christ and His followers use their power to destroy and for evil rather than for good. He makes clear that the “rulers of this dark world or present darkness...hate light, and shrink from it. Darkness is their natural habitat, the darkness of falsehood and sin.” These powers are evil but the Devil is

**iii. Subtle. Ephesians 6:11.**

**The words of Paul make this fact clear in verse 11. “Put on the full armor of God so that you can take our stand against the Devil’ schemes.”** The important phrase here is the “Devil’s schemes.” This makes the schemes dangerous. The word schemes are better translated as stratagems. It is a word from

which we get method and Morris continues “one of the devil’s approaches is to get believers so to trust in the methodical way they follow Christian principles, they come to trust their methods rather than the Christ who saves. It is also true that his purpose is to seduce the church to trust methods of church growth, rather than to trust the power and wisdom of God.” The devil does not fear a church that is run by and trusts in mechanical principles, and why should he be concerned about ministries that are run by the arm of flesh. You may get the crowds but the question is, “where is the glory and the power of God?” The church, the Christian needs Divine authority and power to drive back the forces of hell. This does not come from human genius and human antidotes. It is said that the devil trembles when he sees the weakest saint on his knees. The forces of darkness retreat before a church that marches on its knees. If the devil can get the Christian or the church to divert their faith from Christ to focus on methods

and principles he has won the victory.

Stratagems also **have the idea of tricky, crafty and cunning.** It conveys the truth that the devil is tactically shrewd and ingenious in his deception. John Stott maintains that this shrewdness and ingenious deception is because the devil seldom attacks openly, preferring darkness to light and that when he transforms himself into an angel of light, we are caught unsuspecting.” In one of John Bunyan’s books “Holy War” E.K. Simpson says that the devil develops “a twofold policy.” He plays both the bully and the arch deceiver. His attack on the Christian is either by force or fraud. He is crafty and subtle, and the scriptures warn us, not to give a foothold to Satan.” But Paul says there are resources that are more than adequate to keep us confident in the battle. Furthermore there are resources that are,

**3. MORE THAN ADEQUATE TO KEEP US CONQUERING IN THE BATTLE. Ephesians 6:1.**

**This victory in this battle is assured because of the inexhaustible resources available to us.** No matter how crafty or powerful and methodical or brilliant the devil maybe, there are adequate resources available to the child of God for any circumstance. There are two important actions needed to win the battle. First there has to be,

**a. Readiness for the Battle.**  
**Ephesians 6:11-13.**

**Paul's directive is clear and fully understood.** In verse 11 he writes, "Put on the full armor of God." And he repeats it in verse 13. He lists the pieces of armor that the Christian has to put on, and after having done all of this we are to stand. I am not going to expound on them at this time, suffice it to say that two dynamic truths need to be highlighted. First.

**i. This armor is the armor of God.**  
**Ephesians 6:11.**

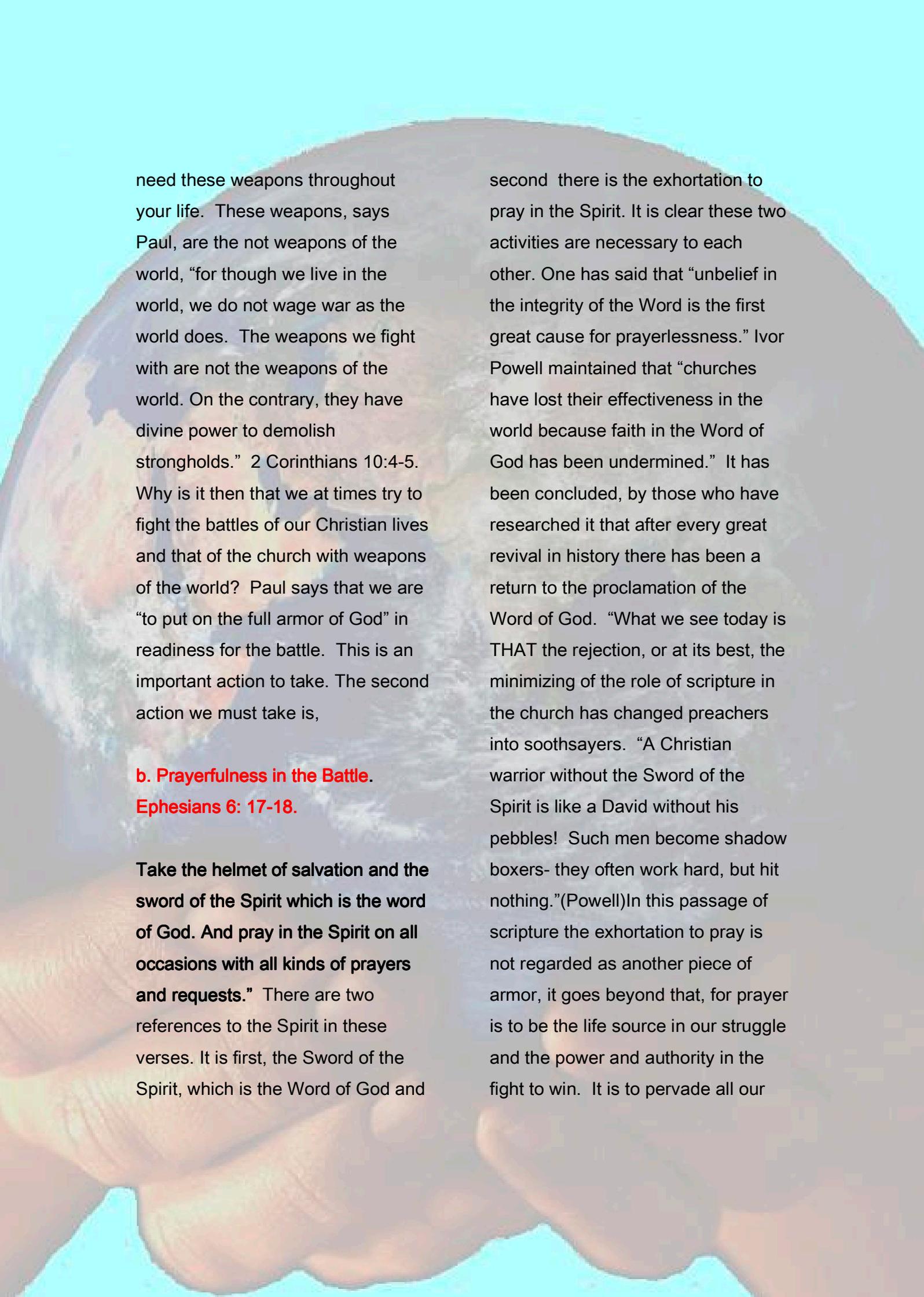
**They are not weapons of the flesh, nor are they the instruments of the**

**world.** The armor to be worn is the armor of God and each piece is from Him. Second

**ii. The Weapons are Spiritual.**  
**Ephesians 6:11-18.**

To struggle with the forces of darkness and evil with weapons of the flesh will not be sufficient to win the battle. The result will inevitably end in defeat. The weapons of the flesh do not cause the devil to be concerned that is why Paul urges us to put on the full Armor of God.

**Every piece of the armor must be worn if there is going to be victory. One translation puts it this.** "Be prepared. You're up against far more than you can handle on your own. Take all the help you can get, every weapon God has issued, so that when its' all over but the shouting you'll still be on your feet." The armor of the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith and the helmet of salvation are more than words. Learn how to apply them. You'll

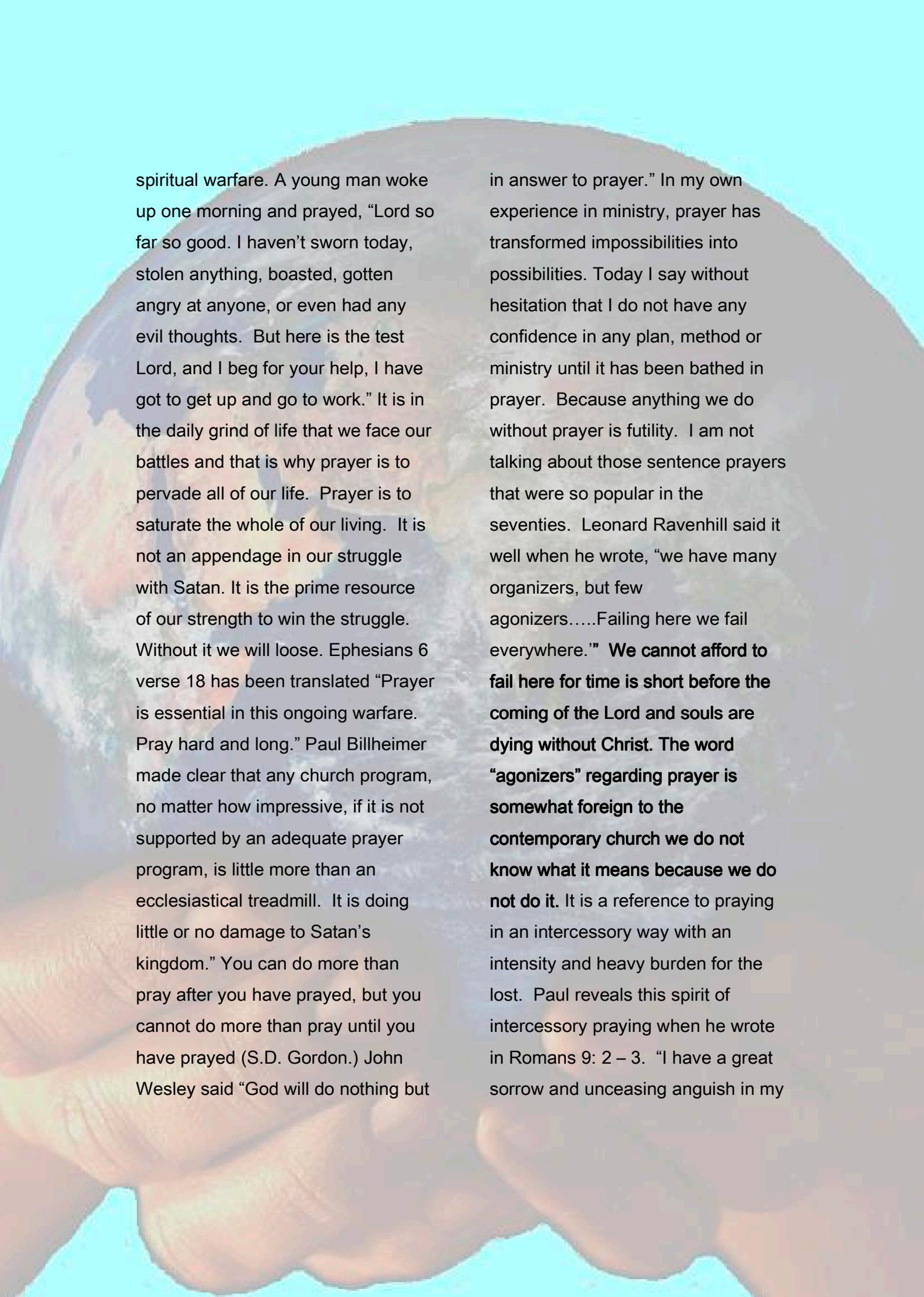


need these weapons throughout your life. These weapons, says Paul, are the not weapons of the world, “for though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.” 2 Corinthians 10:4-5. Why is it then that we at times try to fight the battles of our Christian lives and that of the church with weapons of the world? Paul says that we are “to put on the full armor of God” in readiness for the battle. This is an important action to take. The second action we must take is,

**b. Prayerfulness in the Battle.**  
**Ephesians 6: 17-18.**

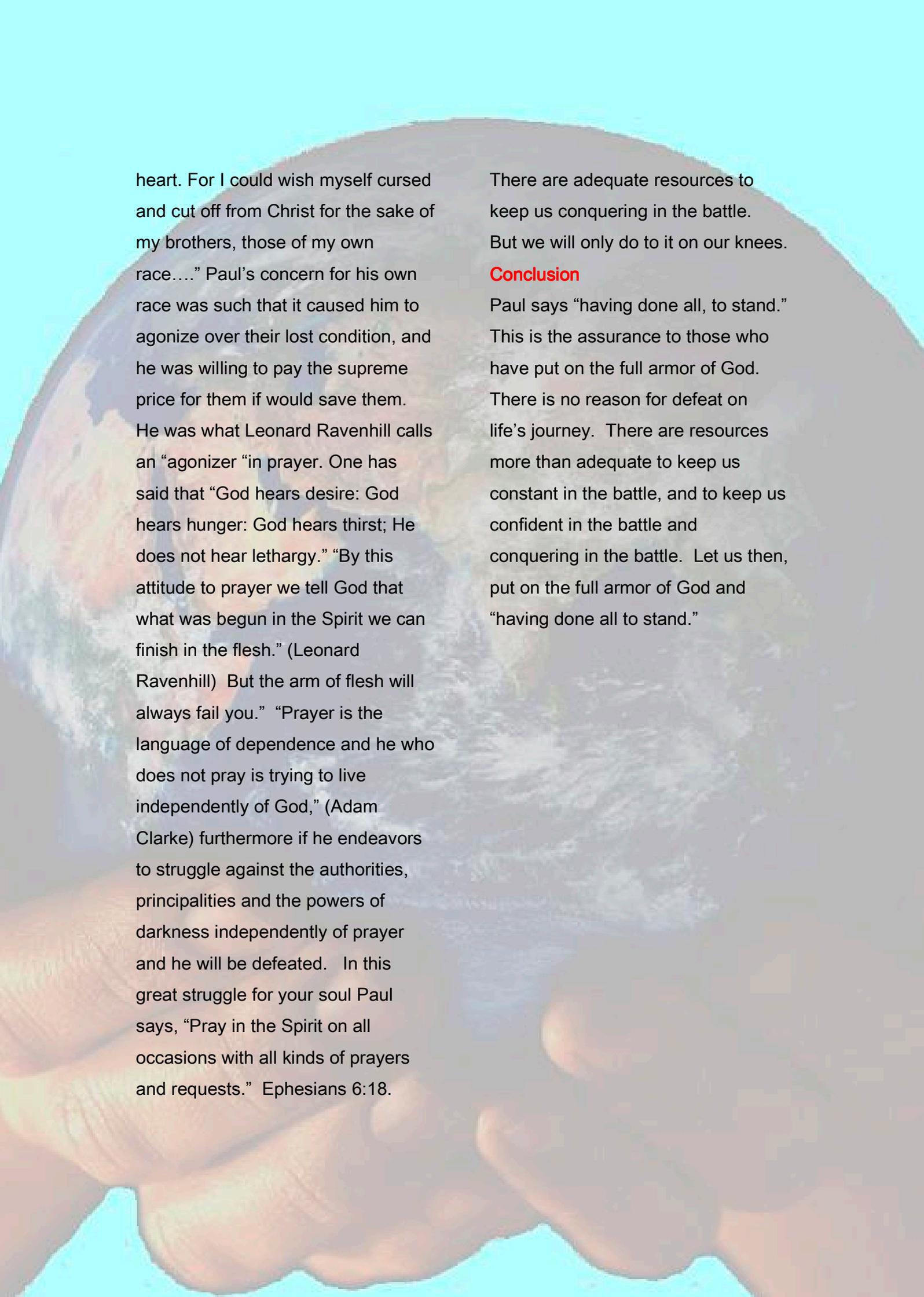
**Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.”** There are two references to the Spirit in these verses. It is first, the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God and

second there is the exhortation to pray in the Spirit. It is clear these two activities are necessary to each other. One has said that “unbelief in the integrity of the Word is the first great cause for prayerlessness.” Ivor Powell maintained that “churches have lost their effectiveness in the world because faith in the Word of God has been undermined.” It has been concluded, by those who have researched it that after every great revival in history there has been a return to the proclamation of the Word of God. “What we see today is THAT the rejection, or at its best, the minimizing of the role of scripture in the church has changed preachers into soothsayers. “A Christian warrior without the Sword of the Spirit is like a David without his pebbles! Such men become shadow boxers- they often work hard, but hit nothing.”(Powell)In this passage of scripture the exhortation to pray is not regarded as another piece of armor, it goes beyond that, for prayer is to be the life source in our struggle and the power and authority in the fight to win. It is to pervade all our



spiritual warfare. A young man woke up one morning and prayed, "Lord so far so good. I haven't sworn today, stolen anything, boasted, gotten angry at anyone, or even had any evil thoughts. But here is the test Lord, and I beg for your help, I have got to get up and go to work." It is in the daily grind of life that we face our battles and that is why prayer is to pervade all of our life. Prayer is to saturate the whole of our living. It is not an appendage in our struggle with Satan. It is the prime resource of our strength to win the struggle. Without it we will loose. Ephesians 6 verse 18 has been translated "Prayer is essential in this ongoing warfare. Pray hard and long." Paul Billheimer made clear that any church program, no matter how impressive, if it is not supported by an adequate prayer program, is little more than an ecclesiastical treadmill. It is doing little or no damage to Satan's kingdom." You can do more than pray after you have prayed, but you cannot do more than pray until you have prayed (S.D. Gordon.) John Wesley said "God will do nothing but

in answer to prayer." In my own experience in ministry, prayer has transformed impossibilities into possibilities. Today I say without hesitation that I do not have any confidence in any plan, method or ministry until it has been bathed in prayer. Because anything we do without prayer is futility. I am not talking about those sentence prayers that were so popular in the seventies. Leonard Ravenhill said it well when he wrote, "we have many organizers, but few agonizers....Failing here we fail everywhere." **We cannot afford to fail here for time is short before the coming of the Lord and souls are dying without Christ. The word "agonizers" regarding prayer is somewhat foreign to the contemporary church we do not know what it means because we do not do it.** It is a reference to praying in an intercessory way with an intensity and heavy burden for the lost. Paul reveals this spirit of intercessory praying when he wrote in Romans 9: 2 – 3. "I have a great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my



heart. For I could wish myself cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race....” Paul’s concern for his own race was such that it caused him to agonize over their lost condition, and he was willing to pay the supreme price for them if would save them. He was what Leonard Ravenhill calls an “agonizer “in prayer. One has said that “God hears desire: God hears hunger: God hears thirst; He does not hear lethargy.” “By this attitude to prayer we tell God that what was begun in the Spirit we can finish in the flesh.” (Leonard Ravenhill) But the arm of flesh will always fail you.” “Prayer is the language of dependence and he who does not pray is trying to live independently of God,” (Adam Clarke) furthermore if he endeavors to struggle against the authorities, principalities and the powers of darkness independently of prayer and he will be defeated. In this great struggle for your soul Paul says, “Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.” Ephesians 6:18.

There are adequate resources to keep us conquering in the battle. But we will only do to it on our knees.

### **Conclusion**

Paul says “having done all, to stand.” This is the assurance to those who have put on the full armor of God. There is no reason for defeat on life’s journey. There are resources more than adequate to keep us constant in the battle, and to keep us confident in the battle and conquering in the battle. Let us then, put on the full armor of God and “having done all to stand.”