

# TENACITY

## In This Corner . . .

### [Ephesians 6:10-12]

#### [1] The Armor [11a]

#### [1a] The Challenge: Stand Firm [11b]

#### [2] The Enemy - Not Flesh and Blood [12]

*A Spiritual army that is organized and led by Satan*

#### [2a] The Goal: Destruction - schemes [11c]

#### [3] The Tale of the Tape

- [a] Satan and his forces have already been defeated and disarmed by Christ [Col. 2:13-15]
- [b] Access to spiritual authority, knowledge, and power is found in Christ [Col. 2:9-10]
- [c] Christ-followers do not need to fear God's enemies — spiritual or physical. [Eph. 1:18–21]
- [d] Satan may still have limited freedom to harass us, but he has no direct authority over us. [Eph. 6:11b]

### Discussion Questions

1. Read Ephesians 6:10-11 and 4:21-24. As we study these two verses, we see that to “put on the new self” is the same as “putting on the armor of God.” The contexts suggest that both are a daily process. This daily process is driven by knowing the truth of who we are in Christ, cultivating the fruit of this new identity as we live by the Spirit, and utilizing the armor of God as we engage the battle. Do you feel like you are putting on the new self/armor and getting ready for the battle each day? How?
2. Do you believe there are supernatural forces that influence our world? Why or why not? [LCBS]
3. Read Colossians 2:13-15. Who disarmed the rulers and authorities, and how does this give us confidence when Satan starts the “scheming” that is intended to disrupt our lives in Christ?
4. Pray asking God for confidence to stand firm in the spiritual battle and the discipline to put on the armor of God every day.

**Ephesians 6:10-12** <sup>10</sup> Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. [[the battle cry](#)] <sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to **stand** against the schemes of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For we do not wrestle 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.

**Ephesians 4:21-24** . . . assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, <sup>22</sup> to [put off your old self](#), which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, <sup>23</sup> and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, <sup>24</sup> and to [put on the new self](#), created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

**1 Timothy 3:7** Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, [into a snare of the devil](#).

**Ephesians 4:11-12a,14** And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of the ministry . . . <sup>14</sup> so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by [craftiness in deceitful schemes](#).

**Romans 8:38-39** For I am sure that neither death nor life, [nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers](#), . . . will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Ephesians 1:18-21** . . . having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might <sup>20</sup> that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, <sup>21</sup> [far above all rule and authority and power and dominion](#), and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.

**Colossians 1:16** For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, [whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities](#) —all things were created through him and for him.

**Colossians 2:9-10** For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, <sup>10</sup> and you have been filled in him, who is the [head of all rule and authority](#).

**1 Corinthians 15:24** Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after [destroying every rule and every authority and power](#).

**Colossians 2:13-15** And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, <sup>14</sup> by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. <sup>15</sup> He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

**Ephesians 6:10-12** <sup>10</sup> Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. [Eph. 1:19] <sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For we do not wrestle 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.

**Ephesians 6:11** Put on [endou - ongoing process] the whole [panoplia - complete - everything we need] armor of God, that you may be able to stand [stenai - prolonged standing] against the schemes [methodeia - a way of searching after something with an agenda - lying in wait] of the devil [diablos - the slanderer and accuser].

1746 [e]	3588 [e]	3833 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]	4314 [e]	3588 [e]	1410 [e]	4771 [e]	2476 [e]	4314 [e]	3588 [e]
endysasthe	tēn	panoplian	tou	Theou	pros	to	dynasthai	hymas	stēnai	pros	tas
11 ἐνδύσασθε	τὴν	πανοπλίαν	τοῦ	Θεοῦ	, πρὸς	τὸ	δύνασθαι	ὑμᾶς	στῆναι	πρὸς	τὰς
Put on	the	complete armor	-	of God	for	-	to be able	you	to stand	against	the
V-AMM-2P	Art-AFS	N-AFS	Art-GMS	N-GMS	Prep	Art-ANS	V-PNM/P	PPro-A2P	V-ANA	Prep	Art-AFP

3180 [e]	3588 [e]	1228 [e]
methodeias	tou	diabolou
μεθοδείας	τοῦ	διαβόλου
schemes	of the	devil
N-AFP	Art-GMS	Adj-GMS

**Ephesians 6:11a** Put on [endou- ongoing process] the whole [panoplia - complete - everything we need] armor of God,

Put on. “As O’Brien has said [in his Ephesians commentary], “Essentially, then, to ‘put on the new self’ is the same as donning the armor of God.” In other words, knowing the truth of who we are in union with Christ, cultivating the virtues of this new identity, and using the resources available through this new relationship are at the heart of what it means to put on the armor of God . . . The context suggests that arming should occur on a regular basis.” [ECNT]

An English translation cannot easily show it, but the imperatives throughout this section are plural. We usually interpret them as if they were addressed to individuals, but without denying their relevance for individuals, we should understand them as Paul’s instructions for the church collectively to put on God’s armor and stand as one person. (cf. Phil. 1:27). [NIVAC]

whole armor. What [6:11a] ? whole armor: everything needed to wage successful warfare; (figuratively) the full resources the Lord gives to the believer so we can successfully wage spiritual warfare. In this way we do not fight for victory – but from His victory! - biblehub.com [HELP Word-studies] The battleground for spiritual warfare is in our hearts and minds. The apostle Paul urges us to resist being taken captive by worldly philosophies (Col 2:8). Spiritual battles take place as the enemy attacks our thoughts about the truths of God and our relationship with God (Dt 13:13). . . .This why we need the whole armor of God. [QUEST]

We are encouraged to remember that Satan and his forces have already been defeated and disarmed by Christ ( ). Paul tells believers that they have access to spiritual authority, knowledge and power in the Lord Jesus Christ (Eph 1:18–21). Believers in Christ therefore, need not fear God’s enemies—spiritual or physical. Satan may still have limited freedom to harass followers of Jesus, but he has no direct authority over them.” [QUEST]

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**Ephesians 6:11b** . . . that you may be able [dynasthai] to stand [stenai - prolonged standing] against the schemes [methodeia - a way of searching after something with an agenda - lying in wait] of the devil [diablos - the slanderer and accuser].

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**Why [6:11b]? Believers need God’s empowerment because they will face a variety of well-planned attacks by a supernatural opponent.” [ECNT]**

“In Ephesians, as we will see, believers are summoned to take both defensive and offensive postures against their supernatural enemies. [ECNT]

“The Bible teaches that Satan is

- an angelic creature of God (Ezek. 28:12-16) who can do nothing apart from God’s control or permission (Job 1:6-12; Luke 22:31).
- He’s not the counterpart of God but of the archangel Michael (Jude 1:9; Rev. 12:7).
- Satan is also the enemy and accuser of humans (Zech. 3:1-2; 1 Pet. 5:8).
- While we must not deny that Satan has the power to attack and ensnare us (Eph. 4:27; 6:11; 1 Tim. 3:7), we also must not attribute to Satan more power than he actually has. [Swindoll]

The second verse of Martin Luther’s hymn “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God” powerfully illustrates this truth:

*A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*

*Did we in our own strength confide,  
Our striving would be losing,  
Were not the right man on our side,  
The man of God’s own choosing.*

*Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is He—*

*Lord Sabaoth His name, From age to age the same,  
And He must win the battle.” [Luther]*

to be able [dynasthai]. “Although the verb Paul uses here seems simplistic leaning toward The “I can do it on my own strength” perspective” it is better in this context to understand it as carrying the full sense of enablement, strengthening, or power from God and God alone.” [Wallace]

**Evil rarely looks evil until it accomplishes its goal; it gains entrance by appearing attractive, desirable, and perfectly legitimate. It is a baited and camouflaged trap. [NIVCNT]**

“The idea in Ephesians is that the devil (ὁ διάβολος; see comment on 4:27) is an intelligent being that carefully strategizes plans against the church, God’s plan of redemption, and individual believers.” [ECNT]

“The tactics of intimidation and insinuation alternate in Satan’s plan of campaign. He plays both the bully and the beguiler. Force and fraud form his chief offensive against the camp of the saints.” - Stott [G]

**Ephesians 6:12a** For we do not wrestle [**pale'** - struggle - **word found nowhere else in scripture** ] against flesh and blood, [**type of human enemy** ] ,

3754 [e]	3756 [e]	1510 [e]	1473 [e]	3588 [e]	3823 [e]	4314 [e]	129 [e]	2532 [e]	4561 [e]	235 [e]	4314 [e]	3588 [e]	746 [e]
hoti	ouk	estin	hēmin	hē	palē	pros	haima	kai	sarka	alla	pros	tas	archas
12 ὅτι	οὐκ	ἔστιν	ἡμῖν	ἡ	πάλη	πρὸς	αἷμα	καὶ	σάρκα	, ἀλλὰ	πρὸς	τὰς	ἀρχάς ,
because	not	is	to us	the	wrestling	against	blood	and	flesh	but	against	the	rulers
Conj	Adv	V-PIA-3S	PPro-D1P	Art-NFS	N-NFS	Prep	N-ANS	Conj	N-AFS	Conj	Prep	Art-AFP	N-AFP

4314 [e]	3588 [e]	1849 [e]	4314 [e]	3588 [e]	2888 [e]	3588 [e]	4655 [e]	3778 [e]	4314 [e]	3588 [e]
pros	tas	exousias	pros	tous	kosmokratōras	tu	skotous	toutou	pros	ta
πρὸς	τὰς	ἐξουσίας	, πρὸς	τοὺς	κοσμοκράτορας	τοῦ	σκότους	τούτου	, πρὸς	τὰ
against	the	authorities	, against	the	cosmic powers	of the	darkness	this	, against	the
Prep	Art-AFP	N-AFP	Prep	Art-AMP	N-AMP	Art-GNS	N-GNS	DPro-GNS	Prep	Art-ANP

4152 [e]	3588 [e]	4189 [e]	1722 [e]	3588 [e]	2032 [e]
pneumatika	tēs	ponērias	en	tois	epouraniois
πνευματικὰ	τῆς	πονηρίας	ἐν	τοῖς	ἐπουρανίοις .
spiritual [forces]	-	of evil	in	the	heavenly realms
Adj-ANP	Art-GFS	N-GFS	Prep	Art-DNP	Adj-DNP

**wrestle** - “There was a tradition in the ancient world of the advantage a fully armed soldier had if he was also trained as a wrestler (Plutarch, Mor. 2.5.639F–640A).” [Gudorf -ECNT] If this is what Paul had in mind, then both images combine to express the notion of close, difficult, tiring, hand-to-hand combat.

There was a traditional story about an “Ephesian wrestler who used magic to help him defeat his opponents.” The Suda [10 volumes set of love stories] relates this proverbial story as part of its entry on the “Ephesian Letters”—six magical names laden with spiritual power that were associated with the Ephesian Artemis and the local magical traditions”

And at Olympia when a Milesian and an Ephesian were wrestling, the Milesian was not able to wrestle, because the other was holding the Ephesian letters around his ankle. When it was clear and they were taken off him, the Ephesian failed thirty [times] in a row.”

[1] **not flesh and blood [not an engagement with human enemies]**

**not against flesh and blood.** The Christian life is a spiritual battle in which the ultimate opposition to the gospel stems from evil spiritual powers (cf. 1:21; 3:10 and notes). These powers can operate through humans (4:14, 27) and institutions, but they cannot be reduced solely to these manifestations. [BTSSB]

Not a call to fight against the Roman empire [**flesh and blood**] , but a warning to be aware and the need to be equipped to engage the evil behind the Empire [**spiritual warfare**].

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**Ephesians 6:12b** but [heightens contrast between spiritual and physical realms] against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic [world] powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

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Sources of Spiritual Conflict [each category piles on for more impact:

[2] [world] rulers [principalities] and authorities [powers] [Paul's most common words used for demonic spirits]

If your circumstances are bad, remember that God's immeasurably great power raised Jesus from the dead. And that same resurrection power is available to help you in whatever you face. God can invade the circumstances of your life and demonstrate his sufficiency. [TESB Note - Eph. 1:20]

[3] cosmic [world] powers over this present darkness [Satan and his demons]

"In Jewish folk belief, this term is found twice in the Testament of Solomon, 24 where it is used of demonic spirits associated with the planets (T. Sol. 8:2) and with thirty-six demonic rulers of the heavenly sphere (T. Sol. 18:3). These texts also represent the spirits as directly attacking and influencing people on earth"

"This same term was also used to magnify the omnipotence and universal power of various deities. An inscription found in a bathhouse in Rome reads, "One Zeus, Serapis, Helios, world power (κοσμοκράτωρ), unconquerable."

In pagan folk belief, the word appears seven times in the collection of Greek magical papyri as an epithet for various deities invoked in magical incantations.<sup>23</sup> [ECNT]

[4] spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places [wicked spiritual beings [Ephesians 1:21]

The use of the term spiritual for evil forces is somewhat surprising. This is the only time in the New Testament that this word has a negative connotation, but a negative use is understandable given the frequency with which the word "spirit" is used for evil spirits in the Gospels and Acts or occasionally for a spirit contrary to God's purposes. Paul even used the word "god" in reference to Satan in 2 Corinthians 4:4.

More surprising still is that the struggle takes place "in the heavenly realms." This does not mean a struggle in heaven, even though Job 1 - 2 and Revelation 12:7 - 17 could provide a background for such an idea. Nor should we think of an area lower than heaven but higher than the earth. Rather, as elsewhere in Ephesians, this phrase refers to the reality that encompasses life in relation to God, including both what God has given and what believers are called to do.

Those who live in Christ have been given every spiritual gift and are made alive and enthroned with Christ (1:3; 2:6) in the heavenly reality. His own enthronement in the heavenly reality God's reality includes the subjection of every power (1:20). Believers have the task in this unseen reality to make God's wisdom known to the spiritual powers (3:10) and to stand against them (6:10 - 13). Our enthronement with Christ above the powers determines how we live on earth. Our struggle reflects the heavenly reality, which means we struggle against subjected powers. The powers may rule darkness and evil, but we as Christians no longer live there (5:8, 16). [NICNT]