

Soldiers not Knights

When you read of helmet, shield, sword, armour, boots, belt... it's easy to picture yourself as a knight in shining armour. A paladin of God. Personally taking on the devil and his minions and holding them at bay, invulnerable in your faith.

In the bigger battles of the church you stand between the enemy and them, protecting the weak, a super hero, The Defender.

And as much as some Christians do “stand in the gap” in prayer, that's not what this chapter is about. All the “you”s in this chapter are plural. (As they are in pretty much all of Ephesians). This is a letter to a team of people. Not to individuals.

Just as in Ephesians 1, where the definition of Christian maturity is living in unity. You can't do that by yourself. You need the rest of the team, and you all need to work together.

If you read the armour again, it's not knight's armour. No lance, no horse, no “full body armour”, just a breastplate. This is the armour of a soldier. And it's armour that we all have. Every Christian. We are meant to fight these spiritual battles as an army. Working together. Standing side by side. Like a Roman legion.

And the battle here is not a personal attack on you. It's the spiritual attack on us, the church. This is not a way to solve your own issues. It's a way for the church to work together and overcome the forces working against it, trying to destroy the church. The powers and authorities of this world. Political, social, and of course spiritual.

Modern thinking, and a peculiarity of the English word “you”, lead us to believe that a lot of the Bible is written to you, singular, when it's actually written to you, plural. To us, not to me.

It's not just Ephesians 6. The whole New Testament is written to us, not to you. Christians are part of a body. There has never been a Christian individual, there never will be.

Put on your armour. Help the rest of your church put on theirs. Fight together.
Win.

Train with your team. Fight the big battles, together.

We are meant to fight these spiritual battles as an army. Working together. Standing side by side. Like a Roman legion.