

No Excuses... Ephesians 6

Intro: Ephesians 6 has been mined for lots of different subjects – children obey your parents, the armor of God, the reality of spiritual warfare. Today, we want to examine something that isn't there.

I. Members to Missionaries

A. There is something missing in the Book of Ephesians – excuses.

B. Chapter review –

- 1.** We have been chosen, marked and given power. No exceptions.
- 2.** You have been brought out of your old life of sin; of slavery to the flesh and the world. Now, you have been brought into fellowship with everyone who is in fellowship with Christ. No exceptions.
- 3.** We are prisoners of Christ. He demands that we exercise our new life through the power of love. No exceptions. No excuses.
- 4.** Now that Christ died to make us unified, we are to make sure we don't divide from each other. We listen to our leaders and we live as lights in the darkness. Our speech is now to be marked by truth, love, and kindness. No exceptions. No excuses.
- 5.** In everything, we are to imitate God. We are to put on the characteristics of the family that adopted us. It will make us seem strange to the world – almost like we're drunk! And so we are – on the Spirit of Christ. Even in the home we are to live out the love of Christ. No excuses.

C. Chapter six – no exceptions.

- 1.** Children, obey your parents. It simply makes your life and theirs much more pleasant. Why listen to the world that demands both of you be in conflict with each other? What will that get you? Instead, as children of God, you honor each other as children of God.
- 2.** Parents, you are to train and instruct your children, but make sure you don't exasperate them.
- 3.** vv.5-9. Some have read this as an endorsement of slavery, but that isn't the case. This is an endorsement of living out our Christian faith regardless of the

situation we find ourselves in. Paul expressly reminds the masters that they are no better than the slaves. Racism is still with us (the Louisiana preacher) but this passage is bigger than that.

4. The armor of God.

II. What Is In Your Hand?

- A.** Our dealings with each other and with those around us are to be fashioned, shaped, and characterized by love. The power we wield is via love. Christ has come to us and the Spirit has confirmed us in love.
- B.** So, while you are reaching others with love and reacting with love, what tools do you have to make sure you can continue for the long journey from here to heaven? (circle the wagons, what is in your hand)
- C.** The armor of God is a list of the personal tools we have to make sure we stay constant – that we can **STAND**.
 - 1.** Remember the truth.
 - 2.** Be righteous – keep your life clean.
 - 3.** Keep excited and in love with Jesus and the gospel. Care enough to keep moving.
 - 4.** Faith.
 - 5.** Salvation – keeps us from mortal blows.
 - 6.** Pray.

III. The Armor of God

- A.** Two aspects of this armor business are important to us: God expects this to be difficult (therefore the warfare motif), and we are to remember that this is a spiritual battle.
- B.** God has never presented himself as the great problem solver for every believer's life. He has been honest and truthful with us, even showing us what happened to Jesus as an example (as well as a sacrifice).
 - 1.** God has called us to a challenging life. This is more than attendance and abstinence – this is purpose, principle, and practice.
 - 2.** The world will continually try to pull you back down where you once lived. Stand.
- C.** The people we meet, even those who fashion themselves as our enemies, are not our enemies. They are prisoners of our enemy.

This is a spiritual war. We don't judge others, mark them, or ignore whole classes of people – we serve God in the midst of them. No excuses. No exceptions.

D.