

Pleasant Valley
Church of Christ

3317 Amidon
Wichita KS 67204
(316) 838-4195
www.letjesusleadus.org

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Classes 9:30 am
Worship 10:30 am
Evening 6:00 pm

Wednesday

Classes 7:30 pm

The Pleasant Valley Church of Christ is a non-denominational group of believers who are committed to following Jesus in our attitudes, our relationships, and our worship. If you want the same thing in your life, please contact us. We'd like to help.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the New King James Version Bible, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Wings



*"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Isaiah 40:31)*

October 5, 2008

Stand!

by David King

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to **stand** against the wiles of the devil. . . . Take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to **stand**. **Stand** therefore . . ." (Eph. 6:10-14).

During the early days of the Civil War, at the First Battle of Bull Run, a Confederate general stationed his brigade in a strong defensive position to withstand a ferocious Federal assault. Even though other units gave way under the attack, his brigade held firm, and turned a near-defeat into victory. At the height of the battle, a nearby general rallied his own men by shouting, "There stands General Jackson like a stone wall!" From that day forward, Stonewall Jackson became a Southern icon, the epic hero who had the courage to **stand** in the face of overwhelming odds.

That's the image Paul paints in this passage in Ephesians. As children of God, we are surrounded by a hostile world, under constant attack from Satan and his minions. The greatest threat to any military unit is panic in the face of the enemy. When pressed hard, the temptation is to give up, run, quit. Of course, that reaction guarantees defeat. That's why Paul emphasizes that our first duty is to look the enemy in the eye, take the shots, and "having done all, to **stand**."

Paul's use of this military imagery reveals some important lessons about the nature of the battle we are fighting.

First, notice that all but one of the items mentioned here (v. 14-17) are **defensive** in nature: girdle, breastplate, boots, shield, and helmet. (The sole offensive weapon is the sword, v. 17.) Clearly, we are targets in this fight. Satan will do everything he can to hurt us, weaken us, take us down. This armor is essential to protect the Christian against Satan's blows. Before we can even think about mounting any kind of attack of our own, we must be prepared to withstand the shots that will surely come our way. We develop that protection as we deepen our commitment to the fundamental principles that define who we are — truth, righteousness, faith, salvation. That commitment is strengthened only through a steady program of education and training.

Second, we can take comfort in the fact that we are not fighting this battle alone. To be sure, there are companions on either side of us who are standing their ground, too, and that's encouraging. But Paul doesn't mention them. Instead, he points to our Commander: "Be strong **in the Lord** and in the power of **His** might." Unlike mortal commanders, whose tactical judgment may not always result in victory, we have the assurance that we are fighting for a Captain who is destined to win. But we will share in His final victory only if we stand firm where He stations us, and hold our ground against the host that is arrayed against us.

Our battle is not carnal, and we must take care that we not resort to carnal tactics to win it. But it is a battle nevertheless, and will be won only if we refuse to quit, and **stand**.