



Rev Dave Brown  
Rector of St Nicholas Stevenage & St Mary Graveley  
2a North Road, Stevenage. Herts. SG1 4AT  
Tel: 01438 213587  
Email: [revdmbrown@gmail.com](mailto:revdmbrown@gmail.com)



Briefing 66: Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2021.

Dear Friends,

**The weapons and armour of the Christian – an introduction.**

Last week I wrote about the Christian life being a battle which needs to be fought. But of course, this is not a call to conventional warfare. Guns and tanks, ships and fighter jets will not help us in this fight. The battles Christians face are spiritual, and so over the next weeks we're going to take a brief look at some of the weapons and armour that we must take up if we are to stand firm against the world, the flesh and the devil and his evil schemes.

Galatians 6:14-18a puts it this way: *"Stand firm then, with the belt of truth around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 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."*

But before we get to our 'kit', we need to pay heed to Paul's words in verse 10. *"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power."* Talk of spiritual warfare may seem frightening. Hearing that we battle *"against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms"* may leave us running for cover, instead of heading towards the battle lines. And if we were to face this spiritual battle in our own strength, we would be right to run and hide. 1 Peter 5 verse 8 describes the devil as a *'roaring lion, walking about, seeking whom he may devour.'* I don't know about you, but I don't fancy my chances fighting off a hungry lion! But we do not face our enemy alone. Neither do we face him in our own strength.

There is, of course, a wonderful encouragement to be taken from being part of the church family. We can encourage one another, stand alongside each other, carry each other's burdens, and pray for one another. That is absolutely vital. We cannot live the Christian life or fight the Christian fight on our own. It simply does not work.

But we are not told to be strong in the church and in the encouragement of fellow believers. Paul tells us to be ***'strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.'*** In our battles against sin, temptation, fear, doubt and whatever foes assail us, our help is in the Lord. He is our strength. He is our defender. And it is he who wins the battles for us. Our foe may be fierce, but our hope is in the strength of the Lord, and he is undefeated and undefeatable!

This is something we see through the history of God's Old Testament people. As they were reminded again and again, every battle won, every city conquered, was because God was with them and fought for them. In fact, when they tried to fight battles on their own strength, they were defeated every time. The same will be true for us. Is there a temptation which you fall for regularly, a task which you fail in time after time? Self-discipline is great- but only by standing in the strength of the Lord will you stand firm.

And should you doubt that you can have the strength to stand firm in your faith, and witness boldly, give and serve graciously, forgive generously, even suffer cheerfully... then look to the example of Jesus, and hear the words of the apostle Paul in Ephesians 1 where he wrote that the same power that raised Christ from the dead is now at work in Christians to equip them for the fight. And with Christ in us by the Holy Spirit, "How can we fear the battle when you are by our side? Nor wander from the pathway if you will be our guide?"

*So be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power... and put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand!* (Ephesians 6: 10 + 13)

Grace and peace...

*Dave*

*Ps: If would like to up your training regime and improve your spiritual fitness, do consider joining the **discipleship course**.*

## IMPORTANT STUFF – DON'T JUST GLANCE- TAKE IT ALL IN!

**GOVERNOR VACANCY:** St Nicholas Primary School is looking for a foundation governor (someone who is a member of a local church with a strong Christian faith) Is God calling you to serve this way? Please see Dave **ASAP** for details.

**CONFIRMATION SERVICE:** On Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June at 7:30pm, St Nicholas is hosting a confirmation service for the deanery where 2 of our young people (Isaac Amuzu and Lauren Kaahwa) will be confirmed. Do please pray for them (and 3 candidates from St Mary's Shephall) as they make this public confession of faith in Jesus. **Please note... We still need a ppt/sound engineer and (if the weather is ok) someone to make refreshments afterwards.** If you can help please speak to me or Mike or Karen asap.

**LITTLE LAMBS** – The St Nicholas mums and toddlers' group, meeting Friday mornings from 9am-10:30am, will be restarting on **Friday 11<sup>th</sup> June** under the leadership of Jeannette Parker. Might you be keen to come along, or be part of the team? Jeannette would also love to hear from anyone who'd be willing to join a rota to provide refreshments. Could you serve in this way? If so, contact Jeannette on [enquiries@saintnicholaschurch.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@saintnicholaschurch.org.uk).

**Come + pray!**

**Friday night at St Nicks from 8pm-10pm.** Come and join us and pray for God's Holy Spirit to move in us and across this town that we might know more of God's love and power in our lives and see many brought to Jesus.

**Private Prayer in St Nicholas church THIS WEEK.**

Tuesday from 2pm-4pm, Wednesday 12noon-2pm and Thursday 10am – 12 noon.

**Then next Tuesday from 7am-8am.** Our regular early morning prayer meeting. Contact Dave for a link.

**ADVANCED NOTICE: BENEFICE PRAYER GATHERING WEDNESDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> JUNE: 7:45PM-9PM VIA ZOOM. JOIN US AND REP FROM THE BARNABAS FUND WHO SUPPORT PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS AROUND THE WORLD TO PRAY FOR THE CHURCH, THE WORLD, OUR MISSION PARTNERS AND ONE ANOTHER. CONTACT DAVE FOR A LINK.**

### An Invitation to Grow a Good and Beautiful Christian Life

A 30-session course designed to help you grow in knowledge, understanding and practice as a follower of Jesus.

Starting end of June 2021 and running on alternate Wednesday nights (7:30pm-9:30pm), each week will include direct teaching, discussion, prayer, with follow-up exercises and further reading to do before each session.

The course will have 5 elements:

**Bible Teaching. Christian Doctrine. Practical Discipleship. Prayer. Encouragement.**

Speak to Dave for more details or to register your interest.



**A number of people have expressed an interest, but few have made a firm commitment yet.**

**So if you do want to join this course, please let me know as soon as possible so that I can order the books to be here on time.**

**We may also be able to offer online access via Zoom, to run alongside the in-person teaching. Do let me know if you would like to join up on that basis.**



**MORNING COFFEE OR AFTERNOON TEA IN THE VICARAGE:** The Vicarage Garden Café will be open for bookings on **Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June (10:30am-noon)**, **Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> July (3pm-4:30pm)** and **Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> July (10:30am-noon)**. We can take up to 30 people each time, sat at tables of 6 around the garden. If you'd like to join us, please contact Judy on [enquiries@saintnicholaschurch.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@saintnicholaschurch.org.uk) (If you'd like to bring a cake - talk to Judy)

Dates for Church Family BBQs will be announced soon!

### 10 QUESTIONS EVERY TEEN SHOULD ASK (AND ANSWER) ABOUT CHRISTIANITY.

As part of the preparation for their confirmation, I gave Lauren and Isaac a copy of this book, written by Rebecca Mcloughlin. I trained with Rebecca, and she's one of the smartest people I know, but she's written this excellent and accessible book with teenagers in mind to equip them to face the challenges to Christianity that they will hear again and again. If you have kids- read it yourself. If you have teenagers, buy them a copy and read it with them. And if you want an intro to today's big questions yourself... it's a great place to start! Available to buy here: [10 Questions Every Teen Should Ask \(and Answer\) about Christianity](#)

