

“The Believer’s Armor”

October 6, 2024

Ephesians 6:13-17

I. Introduction

Sooner or later every believer discovers that the Christian life is a battle ground and not a playground. Emphasizing this, Paul wrote in Ephesians 6:12, “Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 adds, “For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world.” A Christian cannot fight in the power of his own flesh and blood, he needs special equipment—spiritual equipment—God’s armor.

As he brought the applied Christianity portion of his letter to a close, Paul commanded believers to “put on the full armor God so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground.” God has supplied the armor, but each Christian must “put on the full armor of God.” Since no one knows exactly when or where or how the enemy will attack, he needs to have on all of God’s armor all the time. In today’s Scripture, Paul wrote of six pieces of armor with which God supplies His children to withstand the attacks of Satan and his army. The first piece of armor is the Belt or Girdle of Truth.

II. The Armor of God

1. The Belt or Girdle of Truth The Roman soldier always wore a tunic, an outer garment that served as his primary clothing. It was usually made of a large, square piece of material with holes cut out for the head and arms. Ordinarily, it hung loosely over most of the soldier’s body. But such a loose tunic would be a hindrance and even a danger in hand-to-hand combat, so before a battle, it was carefully pulled up and tucked into the heavy leather belt that surrounded or girded the soldier’s waist.

Just as the Roman soldier used his belt to prepare for battle, the victorious Christian uses the belt of truth to prepare for battle. In 2 Timothy 2:15, God’s Word is called the Word of Truth. Knowing God’s truth is essential for the believer in his battle against the schemes of Satan. Then as Eph. 4:14 says, “We will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching

and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.” As Jesus said in John 8:32, “Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

The Belt of Truth also refers to an attitude of truthfulness. This is the mark of a sincere believer who is neither a hypocrite nor a deceiver. In Matthew 5:37 Jesus said, “Simply let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.” A believer of integrity—of truthfulness, with a clear conscience, is ready to face the enemy without fear. In John 8:44 Jesus said that Satan is the father of lies but the believer whose life is controlled by truth will defeat him. Christians must live a life of truth before they can be ready for their “struggle.” Once a lie gets into the life of a believer, all is lost.

2. The Breastplate of Righteousness The second piece of armor is the Breastplate of Righteousness. No Roman soldier would go into battle without his breastplate, a tough, sleeveless piece of armor that covered his body from the neck to the waist, both front and back. Its purpose was to protect the vital organs like the heart and the lungs.

Believers have 2 types of righteousness. When one makes Jesus his Lord and Savior, he is made righteous in God’s eyes; 2 Corinthians 5:21 says, “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” This is called imputed or accredited righteousness. The instant a person believes in Christ, Christ’s righteousness makes the believer *right in God’s eyes*. Every Christian has this righteousness from God; it doesn’t have to be “put on.” This is **NOT** the breastplate of righteousness.

1 Peter 1:15 says, “But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do.” This is the righteousness a Christian must “put on.” To have “the breastplate of righteousness in place” means to live in daily, moment-by-moment obedience to our heavenly Father—to “be holy in all you do.” This part of God’s armor—the breastplate of righteousness—is holy living; righteous living. God supplies the standard and the power, but each Christian must supply the willingness. One must put on this practical or “*daily living*” righteousness through his day-to-day thoughts and actions. Every believer must live a righteous life.

Satan is the accuser, but he cannot accuse the believer who is living a godly life in the power of the Holy Spirit. The life one lives either strengthens him against Satan’s attacks or makes it easier for the devil

to attack and defeat him. When Satan accuses the Christian, it is the righteousness of Christ that assures the believer of his salvation. As [Ephesians 2:8-9](#) say, a person isn't saved by works but by faith. But if we lack righteousness in our daily life, we give Satan opportunities to attack us and hurt us and our witness to others. [Turn to 2 Corinthians 6:3-10](#). Unholy—unrighteous—living doesn't rob one of salvation, but it robs him of salvation's joys including the ability to witness to others. For that reason, Peter wrote in [1 Peter 2:11](#): “Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.”

3. The Shoes of the Gospel of Peace The 3rd piece of armor is the Shoes of the Gospel of Peace. The Roman soldier wore sandals with bits of metal or nails in the soles to give him greater traction in a variety of situations. If a Christian is going to “stand” and “withstand” the enemy, then he needs the shoes of the Gospel of peace. [Romans 5:1](#) says, “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Believers are at peace with God, but the unsaved person is helpless, ungodly, sinful—an enemy of God. We must be prepared every day to share the Gospel of peace with a lost world. [1 Peter 3:15](#) says, “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.” A victorious Christian is a witnessing Christian. If we wear the shoes of the Gospel, then as [Isa. 52:7](#) says, we have “beautiful feet.” Satan has declared war, but we are ambassadors of peace ([2 Cor. 5:18-21](#)). We are to take the Gospel of peace wherever we go—in [Acts 1:8](#) Jesus said to go “to the ends of the earth.”

4. The Shield of Faith The 4th piece of armor is the Shield of Faith. The shield Paul was visualizing was a rather large shield. It was about 2 ½ feet wide and 4 ½ feet high. It was designed to protect the whole body of the soldier, who was smaller than the average man today. The shield was made of a solid piece of wood and was covered with metal or oiled leather. As the soldier held it in front of his body, it protected him from spears, arrows, and fiery darts.

The Shield of Faith isn't saving faith, but rather living faith—a trust in the promises and power of God; promises like [Phil. 4:7](#) that says, “And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.” Or [James 1:17](#): “Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father

of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.” Or Eph. 1:3 :“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.” All of God’s promises are the Christian’s shield of faith.

Faith is a defensive weapon which protects us from Satan’s fiery arrows/darts. In Paul’s day, arrows or darts were dipped into some inflammable substance and ignited, and then were shot at the enemy. The metal or the leather covering was unable to ignite. Satan shoots “fiery arrows/darts” at our hearts and minds—lies, hateful thoughts about others, doubts, burning desires to sin, pride, fear, distrust, and so on. Faith in God and His promises will extinguish thoughts of doubt or fear or any other “dart” Satan sends. The only way to put out those darts is to trust God. Turn to Psalm 18:1-3. 1 John 5:4 says, “For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.” Not knowing when Satan will shoot a dart, if we are continually walking by faith, the darts will be harmless.

5. The Helmet of Salvation Then there is the Helmet of Salvation. Satan often attacks the mind like he did to Eve. In 2 Corinthians 11:3 Paul wrote, “I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.” To deceive us—to attack our minds, Satan’s points at our failures, our sins, our unresolved problems, our poor health, or whatever else seems negative in our lives in order to make us lose confidence in the love and care of our heavenly Father. Satan will try every means possible to discourage and deter us, reminding us of defeats and dangers and setting every possible object in our way to destroy our assurance in Christ.

The helmet of salvation is the guarantee of divine protection and ultimate deliverance. The future of the Christian’s life is secure because salvation in the past and in the future has been given by God. Salvation isn’t only forgiveness of past sins, it is the strength to overcome, even conquer, present and future sins.

1 John 1:9 promises, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” As we read last week in Romans 8:37-39, we have confidence that absolutely nothing can separate us from the love of God. If God be for us, it does not matter who is against us.

6. The Sword of the Spirit Finally, there is the Sword of the Spirit. This sword pictures the offensive weapon God provides every Christian. Hebrews 4:12 describes the Sword of Spirit which is the Word of

God this way: “For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints, and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”

When He was tempted by Satan in the wilderness, Jesus used the sword of the Spirit and defeated the enemy. Three times in [Luke 4:1-13](#) Jesus said, “It is written.” Satan also quoted Scripture, but he misquoted it. Satan tries to use the Word of God to confuse us, so it is important that we know every word that God has given us. *Someone has said, “You can prove anything by the Bible.”* This is true if you take verses out of context, leave out words, or inappropriately apply Scripture. The better one knows and understands Scripture, the easier it will be to detect Satan’s lies and reject his offers. [2 Timothy 2:15](#) says, “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.” To handle a sword, one needs to practice daily with it; similarly, to handle the word of truth—the Bible, one must spend time with it daily.

III. Conclusion

Throughout his letters, Paul wrote a great deal about fighting, commitment, and disciplined living, but he said nothing about surrender. Christians are in a battle to the end. We are never out of reach of Satan’s attacks, so we must never be without the whole armor of God. But armor doesn’t do any good if it isn’t on or you don’t know how to use it. Every day take time to put on the armor of God; the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of the Gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit. And then learn how to use each piece. Paul’s challenge to the Romans is appropriate to Christians today, [turn to Romans 13:11-14](#). By faith, put on the armor of God, walk as God would have you walk, and trust Him for the victory. In [Revelation 3:21](#) Jesus promised, “To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.” So, “Put on the full armor of God...so that you may be able to stand ~~on~~ your ground.”

Communion Devotion – October, 2024

1 Corinthians 11:23-31

Jesus came to earth to fight our battle—a spiritual battle—against the devil and his evil spiritual forces. Since it was a spiritual battle, to those on earth, it didn't look like Jesus was winning. The leadership of Israel wanted nothing to do with Him. It appeared that Jesus was “forced” to spend time with the more earthy elements of humanity. When Jesus was arrested and crucified, His followers, including His disciples, all felt that Jesus had lost the battle—Satan and evil had won. But we know that Jesus did win. He didn't remain in the grave—through the power of the triune God, He rose from the dead 3 days later.

If you believe that Jesus lived and died and rose again from the dead to pay the penalty for your sins, Jesus' victory has become your victory. Sin and Satan cannot have their way with you. You are free from the dominion of sin. You are saved. That's why we celebrate the Lord's Table—it's a type of Memorial Day and Independence Day rolled together. We are remembering what Jesus did and what that accomplished for us. Whether or not you are a member of TBC, if Jesus is your Lord and Savior, we invite you to join us in this celebration.

Although Satan has lost the war, he isn't going to go away quietly. Like a snake in its death throes, Satan is still active trying to get in his last sucker punch on those who have been freed from his control. He is sneaky, so Paul wrote “**let a man examine himself.**” Has Satan managed to infiltrate into your life? Has he or his demons managed to get you to go where you shouldn't be? The Lord's Table is a time to thank God for what He has done for you. It is also a time to take inventory of your life; your actions, your thoughts. Are there things there that shouldn't be there? During the quiet time as the elements are being passed, check yourself out and then with the power of God, cleanse your heart and mind of those things that should NOT be there. If God can create this world, if He can raise Jesus from the dead, He can give you victory over the temptations that come your way.