

Spiritual Armor

Ephesians 6:14-17

6/ 11/ 06

Intro

Last week we were hearing from Paul that we are in spiritual warfare, and we truly are. In fact, we are living in the last days and we will see spiritual warfare be the greatest battle the world will ever face.

In our verses today, Paul is telling the Ephesians that they need to be spiritually ready for spiritual battle. He was writing from prison and the guard standing near him would have given him a perfect illustration of being spiritually prepared.

If we have the full armor of God, then we will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil and grow in maturity in Christ.

This is the full armor we need for spiritual victory.

I. Put on Truth and Righteousness

- Paul begins with an admonition to be strong in the Lord. That is the best place to start because that's what it's all about.

A. It's truth that sets you free

- Lies keep us in tied up, bound up and unable to move.
- Satan is the liar, the father of lies and a liar from the very beginning. He is also the accuser of the brethren. He will keep you bound up with

depressive, oppressive thoughts unless we take up the truth.

Illus – You can't move anywhere without the truth. We need to move the things that entangle us.

Hebrews 12:1, Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

- We need to have the truth in our hearts so we are ready for the lies that the enemy throws at us.

John 8:31-32, So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

B. God's righteousness guards the heart

- The breastplate is important because it guards the heart.
- Paul says we need to put on the breastplate of righteousness – righteousness means "doing what is right;" but the problem is that when it comes to doing what's right, we often fall short.
- That's why we need the right righteousness and the right heart.
- God gives us **His own righteousness** in Jesus, that's what we need to put on

- We also need the right heart. Now, rather than **condemnation, there is conviction.**

Romans 8:1-2, Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.

II. Put on Faith and Peace

- Above all, Paul says, take up the shield of faith.

A. Faith is a shield

- In the Roman era of Paul's day, the soldier's shield was made of wood and leather with metal bands for strength.
- It would be slightly curved to fit the shape of the body, about 4 ½ by 2 ½ in size, strapped to the left arm. The rectangular shape was called "thureos" which is a word similar to "door."
- Groups of soldiers would lock their shields together to form the "tortoise" for great effect.
- Before battle, the leather would be soaked in water so as to extinguish the flaming arrows common in that day.

Illus – Some flaming arrows that the enemy using against us? Temptations, lies, accusations, condemnation...

Examples: 1) In the Garden of Eden; "Did God really say that? He was lying, you won't die. He was afraid that you would be like Him."

2) In the desert with Jesus, "Feed your desires, you don't need God's will in your life," "If God's Word is true, then let's put it to a test," and finally, "You don't need to worship God, I'll give something better."

3) In the Apostle Peter, "Jesus doesn't know what He's talking about, you know better than he does, Peter."

- Our faith quenches the fiery missiles of the enemy.

I Peter 5:8-9, Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, being firm in your faith,

- Run to the tower of the Lord and lock in faith with those standing with you in faith.

Illus – An American missionary family in the Philippines was having a rest day and decided to play croquet...

Illus – Faith is part of everyday life. We have faith in our paycheck, our car, the chair we sit on. It takes faith to believe there is no God.

One man told me that God evolved from the cosmic dust. How do you know this? "I just believe it," he said.

Psalm 56:11, In God I have put my trust, I shall not be afraid. What can man do to me?

- Faith gives us spiritual eyes to see.

B. Prepare your feet with peace

- Peace, Paul writes, is like shoes on our feet.
- Peace allows us to walk in difficult places.

Illus – Growing up, we lived on a gravel road and one day, when we walking to the swimming pond, I decided to walk barefoot! Oh the pain of walking without shoes!

- We become peacemakers when we have peace in our hearts – this is because we have peace with God.

Philippians 4:6-7, Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

III. Take Up Salvation and the Sword

A. Protect your mind with the helmet of salvation

- The helmet is absolutely essential. Without it, a soldier is vulnerable to all kinds of foreign object entering his head.
- Paul says it is the hope of our salvation in I Thessalonians...

I Thessalonians 5:8, But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation.

- It's absolutely vital to protect the mind, because it determines who we become.
- **“As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he,” Proverbs 23:7.**
- The hope of our salvation should guard our mind because the thoughts will determine our victory or defeat.

Psalm 119:11 Your Word have I treasured in my heart, that I might not sin against You.

- What is the nature of the attack?
 - Deception – There is much danger in being deceived.

II Timothy 3:12-17 -- Continue in the things you have learned.

- Doubt – doubting makes us withdraw from God.
- Discouragement – “I’m worthless” is defeating.

B. Take up the sword; the word of God.

- The sword is both for defense as well as offense.
- It counters the direct blows of the enemy.
- It is the only weapon listed by Paul and though there are different words for sword, this one is the short sword – for close in fighting.
- In Greek, the word is **rhema**, the specific Word for your situation as given by the Holy Spirit.

- We need the discernment of how to use the Word of God in situations we may face.

**Illus – The enemy quoted scripture when tempting Christ.
Some people use scripture to get you to trust them.**

“Wasn’t that car salesman nice, Honey? He quoted scripture.”

Hebrews 4:12, For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Conclusion

Paul says that it is only in taking up the full armor of God that we will be able to stand firm in victory. Each one of these is important. We need to grow in spiritual maturity in every area of our lives.