

The Armor of God

Ephesians 6:10-12 (KJV)

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. **12** For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

The Christian life is a battlefield, not a playground!

Paul used military images because the first century Christians understood them; he is chained to a Roman soldier as he is writing Ephesians (6:20 – an ambassador in bonds).

2 Corinthians 10:4 (KJV) (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

1 Timothy 6:12 (KJV) Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

2 Timothy 2:3 (KJV) Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

2 Timothy 4:7 (KJV) I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

There are no recorded cases of demon possession in the Old Testament, but you will find it's rampant in the New Testament. This is because the war that's being waged between God and the devil is a spiritual conflict for men's souls. Israel had a physical covenant; we have a spiritual one. We enter its spiritual blessing, but also into its spiritual battles. That warfare moved from heaven to earth at the incarnation, and we are still fighting ground warfare even today.

Satan has many tactics that he uses on the church to try to defeat us: he accuses (Revelation 12:10), he condemns (1 Timothy 3:6), he devours (1 Peter 5:8), he imprisons (Revelation 2:10), he ensnares (2 Timothy 2:26), he takes advantage (2 Corinthians 2:11), he even tries to steal the Word away (Mark 4:15).

Satan is not eternal like God (he's created), so he's limited. He's not all powerful, all knowing, or everywhere present. So how does he accomplish so much evil simultaneously throughout the world? Through his organized kingdom of darkness: principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world, spiritual wickedness in high places.

No matter how our circumstance may look on the outside, our battle is not against human beings. We're wasting our time fighting people when we ought to be fighting the devil who seeks to control people and make them oppose the work of God.

That's why the Devil loves religious people who attend church; he uses them "on the inside" to bring wrong attitudes and actions into the Body of Christ. The bad news is that the Devil is formidable opponent, and you cannot defeat him by human strength or religious resolutions. The good news is that you can defeat him; if you do it God's way.

Ephesians 6:12-18 (KJV)

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. **13** Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. **14** Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; **15** And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; **16** Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. **17** And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: **18** Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

Did you get dressed before you came to church today?

Since we're fighting against enemies in the spirit world, we need special equipment both for defense and for offense. God has provided the "whole armor" for use, and we dare not omit any part. Satan is always looking for an unguarded area where he can get a beachhead in our lives from which to launch an attack.

Ephesians 4:27 (KJV) Neither give place to the devil.

The Girdle of Truth

Satan is a liar, but the believer whose life is controlled by truth will defeat him. The girdle was a belt that held the other parts of the armor together, and it also held the sword. Unless we live the truth, we have no right (and no confidence) to use the Word of truth!

John 8:44 (KJV) Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

John 8:32 (KJV) And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

The loins encircled by the girdle are the central point of the physical system, and in Scripture are described as the seat of power. "To smite through the loins" is to strike a fatal blow. "To lay affliction upon the loins" is to afflict heavily.

To be truthful with God, with yourself, and with others is crucial! Once a lie gets into the life of a believer, everything begins to fall apart. For over a year, King David lied about his sin with Bathsheba, and nothing in his kingdom went right. Psalm 32 and 51 tells the terrible price he paid.

The Breastplate of Righteousness

A breastplate is made of metal plates and covers the upper body in front and back. Satan is the accuser, but he cannot accuse the believer who is living a godly life by the power of the Spirit.

The life we live either fortifies us against Satan's attacks or makes it easier for him to defeat us. Yes, it is God's righteousness lived through us, but we must allow it to work in our everyday lives.

Ephesians 4:24 (KJV) And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

The Sandals of The Gospel

The leather sandals worn by Roman soldiers were bound around the ankle and studded with hobnails so his feet wouldn't slip in battle. If we're going to be secure in our relationship with God, we need to stand on the gospel.

It's not the gospel of peace when you just hear and understand it; it becomes the gospel of peace when you obey it.

Romans 5:1 (KJV) Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Colossians 1:20 (KJV) And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

1 Corinthians 15:1-4 (KJV)

1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; **2** By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. **3** For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; **4** And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

Acts 2:38 (KJV) Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

I can stand firm against the attacks of the Devil, because I know that I have obeyed the gospel; I am a child of God!

The Shield of Faith

A Roman soldier's shield was large, usually four feet by two feet, made of wood and covered with tough leather. It protected the soldier from burning arrows. The edges of these shields were constructed so that a line of soldiers could interlock them and march into the enemy's forces like a solid wall.

If your faith is weak, stand beside me! Sometimes we just have to push through the enemy ranks!

1 Corinthians 2:5 (KJV) That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

2 Corinthians 5:7 (KJV) (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

Hebrews 10:38 (KJV) Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

James 5:15 (KJV) And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

The Helmet of Salvation

The helmet was originally made of skin, strengthened with bronze and other metals, furnished with a visor to protect the face. It refers to the mind that is controlled by God's spirit, someone who doesn't live for God just by feelings, but by their choices. We must have God's protection over our minds!

Romans 12:2 (KJV) And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Philippians 2:5 (KJV) Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

Romans 15:6 (KJV) That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Timothy 1:7 (KJV) For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

The Sword of The Spirit

The sword is the only offensive weapon provided in a Christian's armor, but it's enough, because it's the Word of God!

Hebrews 4:12 (KJV) For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Pray Always!

Prayer is the energy that we take into battle. We can't fight against the devil in our own strength. "Praying always" doesn't mean "always saying prayers;" it means "always stay in communion with God!" That way you'll be ready for any surprise attack from the devil.

Don't just focus on yourself and your needs. Prayer for others can bring victory into your life!

Job 42:10 (KJV) And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.

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