

“The Armor We Wear”

Eph. 6:10-18 (pt. 3 of Spiritual Warfare; pt. 33 of Eph. series)

Prayer/offering

Bulletin/cards

Christmas services and New Years: extra flyers at welcome center

Candle

Missions moment: Transburgs ...I thanks for your work for God ... one of the new missionaries we are considering is someone from your school? Faith Promise at \$98,000!

Eph. 6:10-20 (while you are turning to our passage, I want to share an email I got this week that was so encouraging it is the power of the Word that does this, so allow God’s Word to really penetrate your life today: Scripture Reading

Pray (...share the prophetic word

Intro

Our country has been at war now in Iraq for several years. With that war and with any war, there are some things that are very important if you are going to win: knowing who the enemy is, knowing how your enemy works, having an effective strategy for success, and wearing the right equipment. Speaking of wearing the right equipment, that is exactly what we learn today in Ephesians 6 as we wrap up this series on spiritual warfare – the armor we wear.

TS A quick **review** before we get to that armor we are to wear:

1. We are in a battle with Satan and demons.

Eph 6:12

12 For 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.

We have looked at many ways that Satan works, and one thing we did not mention that was actually in the prophetic word today is how Satan often works in very subtle ways to bring division and conflict in the body of Christ. Satan hates unity in the church; he hates to see a church living in harmony and love, so he will seek to get us involved in gossip and back bighting and vain imaginations about what others are thinking of us and inward division such that the unity of the fellowship is broken down. And he loves to get people to leave churches and not have the fellowship and support they need.

Be very aware of this and on guard to this subtle tactic of Satan.

Jn. 17 Jesus prayed 3x for us to be one

Eph. 4:3 says to be diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

We are in a spiritual battle.

TS However, the good news today is that though we are in a battle,

2. We have the victory through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Eph 6:10-11

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

Our passage emphasizes that we are to be strong **in the Lord** and in **His mighty power**. In the Lord and in His mighty power, not our own strength or power. We learned last week that the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is what gives us the victory. Jesus won the victory for us 2000 years ago and we simply enforce that victory today as we submit to God, resist the devil and see him flee.

EX. WW2 Japanese soldier who hid in a cave in fear for 2 years after the war had ended, surviving on roots and plants, until someone finally convinced him the war was over. I wonder how many Christians live in fear and defeat because they are not claiming the truth that Jesus defeated Satan at the cross, and the keys have now been handed to us by Christ!

1 Jn. 4:4 Greater is He....

Ex. Email testimony: last Sun. a woman and her son came up to me ... I asked them to email me the exact account and I got this:

TS Now, in order to walk in that victory, we are told in our passage that we must take up the armor we have been given, and that is our 3rd point today:

3. We must wear the armor in order to enforce our victory over Satan.

Eph 6:11-12

11 Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

(An important part of any war is the armor the soldier wears. Even in modern wars, the clothing and weapons and armor that a soldier has is crucial for how successful that soldier will be: bullet proof vests, types of boots, night vision glasses, backpack, water accessibility, type of machine gun, grenades, etc. are all part of this armor so to speak.

In our battle with Satan and demonic forces the armor we wear is crucial as well. And we are told what that armor is in our passage. Put on the armor. It is there but we must put it on.

Before I explain each piece of the armor, note that the word of God says it is the **armor of God**. Of God. It is God's armor. It is all of God. This armor is made possible because of the work of Christ.

a. The armor is all from God.

Eph 6:11-13

11 Put on the full **armor of God** ... 13 Therefore put on the full **armor of God**...

Two times he says full armor of God. It is God's armor given to us to wear. For example:

1. **Belt of Truth** = God's truth. Truth is from God.
2. **Breastplate of righteousness** = righteousness only come from God. It is not our righteousness. It is God's.
3. **Shoes of the gospel of peace** = Whose gospel: God's. Who gives peace? God. It is the peace that comes from God.
4. **Shield of faith** = faith in whom? Faith in God.
5. **Helmet of salvation** = Whose salvation? God's. the salvation that comes from Jesus
6. **Sword of the Spirit** = of the Spirit. Not our sword.

All of it is from God. Don't forget that. You don't create this armor or come up with it yourself. You and I don't strive to make this armor. It is all from God and you merely put it on.

TS So, how do you put it on? You put it on through prayer.

b. The armor is put on through prayer.

Eph 6:18

18 And **pray** in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of **prayers** and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on **praying** for all the saints.

It is **no accident** that right after Paul describes the armor we are to wear that he then says what we see in **v. 18**: pray! In other words, pray to put the armor on! This is a **spiritual** not physical battle and it is spiritual not literal, physical armor. So you put on the spiritual armor for the spiritual battle by spiritually praying and talking to God!

Ex. Radio: I view prayer as the radio: to keep constant communication with the General in charge: God!

I'm also struck with this little phrase "**all kinds of prayers and petitions.**" This says to me there are different kinds of prayers for different kinds of situations and needs. There are prayers of praise and worship, prayers of confession, prayers of resisting Satan, prayers of renunciations, prayers of asking God for something, prayers of intercession for others, and prayers of putting the armor on, and so let's look at that kind of prayer:

Ex. Dressing: Just as a soldier wouldn't think to go out on a mission without being properly dressed, and just as you wouldn't think to leave the house without physically dressing, more so we shouldn't leave our house without spiritually dressing and here is what to put on and don't leave anything off, because it says to put on the full armor of God. Every day, we need to pray on the armor of God.

So, to pray it on we must know that each piece is about, so let's learn what the armor means (By the way, Paul was probably chained to a Roman soldier when he wrote this.

Prop: Armor

The Armor of God (try to find graphics with each piece of armor. Might need to do a google search for "armor of God")

1. Belt of Truth

The Roman soldier's armor was such that the belt held everything else on, really. It held everything together. These leather strips helped to protect the groin area.

This belt is the truth of God, His Word, the Gospel and everything good. It is crucial because Satan is the father of lies, and one of his tactics is to lie about God, life, sin, and ourselves.

So many today do not believe in absolute truth, and we see today in so many places the negative fruit of that belief system. There is absolute truth and it is found in God, His Word and His Son Jesus who is the way, the truth, and the life.

When we put the belt of truth on, we are saying, "God, I hold to what your Word says about you, life, Satan and myself. I am going to seek to live by your truth, believe your truth and renew my mind with your truth. Put on the belt of truth!

(this piece of armor is so important because without the belt of truth all other pieces of armor will not be what they should be: breastplate will be tarnished, shoes will be untied, helmet will have cracks, sword will be dull and shield will have holes in it.

And the source of truth is God and His Word!

Ps. 119:160 sum of thy word is truth

2 Tim. 2:15 word of truth

TS Now, one important truth that we must hold to if we are going to be victorious is truth about ourselves, and that leads to the next piece of armor:

2. Breastplate of righteousness

The Roman soldier's breastplate was the piece of armor designed to protect the most vital organs – the heart, lungs.....

Prov. 4:23 guard your heart with all diligence for from it flow the springs of life.

This is the righteousness of Christ that is given to us the moment we receive Christ. This is our right standing with God based on the blood of Jesus and our being saved. This is not our own righteousness. This is not our own good works. This is the righteousness we have by faith in Christ alone. It is the forgiveness of our sins we have!

2 Cor. 5:21 God made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf that we might become ...

Phil. 3:7-9 not a righteousness of my own but by faith in Christ

Rev. 12:11 And this piece of armor is what helps to overcome the accusations of satan who accuses us of our worth and says you not worthy, and we are not worthy on our own but in the righteousness we have in Christ we are worthy to come before God boldly, know God, and know that we are accepted by God!

This is not a righteousness of behavior but a righteousness of identity, and our identity comes from our connection with Jesus. The breastplate that we put on is not one of how good we have been but rather the forgiveness and righteousness we have in Jesus.

Eph. 4:24 new self = righteous

Chall. One of the biggest areas I see people struggle is with false guilt for past sins. If you have confessed that sin and repented of it, then it is forgiven and don't let Satan condemn and accuse and beat you up. Put that breastplate on!!!!

3. Shoes of peace

Now this piece of armor is very interesting. The shoes a Roman soldier wore were sandals that strapped up your leg and had studs on the bottom for a firm grip. Like our cleats. This insured that you were ready and could quickly move.

I think these shoes refer to the **peace with God** that we have because we have Christ (**Rom. 5:1**), also the **peace of God** that comes if we are walking in obedience and holiness and if we don't have the peace of God, then there might be things we need to get right with God.

But I also think it has to do with being ready at all times to witness to others, because it mentions the gospel, the good news of peace that people get when they get saved, and it mentions shoes are for walking, and so I think the **primary point** here is that wherever we walk, wherever we go, we are to be ready to share with others the good news of salvation in Jesus – the gospel!!! And that as we do this we are defeating Satan because he wants to keep people lost and without Jesus.

The rest of our text I think supports this:

Eph. 6:19-20 asking for prayer that he might be a faithful and bold witness for Christ. We need to pray for that as well.

As we pray on these shoes we are in a sense saying to God, “Led me and guide me today and lead me to those you want me to witness to.”

TS One thing that will certainly happen is this: as you are walking and taking the gospel to others, Satan does not like this and will not allow that to go on un-opposed, so he will attack, and he will seek to keep you from sharing your faith and he will send flaming arrows at you, and that is why you need this next piece of armor:

4. Shield of faith

A popular method of attack in the 1st century warfare was to shoot flaming arrows. They would dip the arrow in tar and wrap it with a cloth that had flammable substance on it and light the arrow and shoot it at the enemy. Not fun stuff. Ex. Lord of the Rings.

So, having a good shield was very important.

Prop: Shield and arrow

Satan doesn't play games. He shoots flaming arrows at us: arrows of shame, accusations, temptations of all kinds, lies, discouragement....fear... physical sickness ... bitterness.... They are coming at us every day. It is not easy to live for Christ!!!!

A shield is used to block arrows and other attacks that come against you. This shield is a strong and thick shield, because it is the shield of faith. Faith in who? Not self, not formulas, not even in others, but rather faith in God and His Word (we come back to the belt of truth again).

But you must take up that shield and use it. As those attacks and temptations and accusations of Satan get shot at you, those flaming arrows, you hold up that shield and knock them away. They fall to the ground and don't hit you. You stand in faith. You say "NO" to temptations. You replace lies with truth. You. You believe God and His Word.

Rom. 10:17 faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of Christ.

Over 12x God is referred to as our shield:

Ps. 3:3 thou o Lord art a shield about me

Prov. 30:5 God is a shield to those who take refuge in Him

5. Helmet of salvation

Now, helmets protect the head and this is very important. We wear helmets on bikes and motorcycles and skiing and skateboarding. In the 1st century, their helmets were often made of tough metal or steel, quite heavy. Helmets protect the head/mind and we know that we are transformed by the renewing of the mind (**Rom. 12:1**).

We know that spiritual warfare is largely a truth encounter, a battle of the mind. Satan will seek to plant thoughts in our mind. He will seek to get us to believe lies. And so we must take our thoughts captive and make them obey Christ (**2 Cor. 10:3-5** says) and this is where the helmet comes in.

Quo Warner p. 100

Why the helmet **of salvation**? Because what our minds need to dwell on and what we need to think about are those truths that have to do with our relationship with God and everything that we have because we are saved. This helmet has to do with all the benefits we have because we are in Christ and Christ is in us: love and acceptance and a new nature and authority over the enemy and future hope. Keep your head in the battle and keep your head by dwelling on your salvation and all that comes with that.

Col. 3 set your mind on the things above....

Put that helmet on and have your mind dwell on the blessings of your salvation.

TS And last but not least, we are to take up the:

6. Sword of the Spirit

Prop. Sword: there's was even bigger than this one.

A sword can be used defensively and offensively. This sword blocks the attacks of the enemy and this sword can attack those strongholds and help to pull them down.

It is the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. The sword is God's Word.

Hebr. 4:12 the word is living and active and sharper than any 2-edged sword...

I'm immediately reminded of when Jesus was tempted by the Devil himself in **Mt. 4**? How did He respond? In every case He responded "**It is written**" "**It is written**" "**It is written**". He responded to every temptation by quoting the Word of God. Meaning He had to know the Word and He had to know it well, because in some of the temptations Satan was quoting scripture also, but he was twisting it.

The **greek** word here for word is **rhema** vs. **logos** = a specific word for a specific situation! Not the whole bible in general but an individual scripture which the Spirit brings to our remembrance for use in time of need. Sword of the Spirit. Word and Spirit together!

Rev. 12:11 blood and word of their testimony

1 Jn. 2:12-14 young men ... overcome the evil one ... word of God lives in you

For example, defensively:

Tempted to sin: **1 Cor. 10:13** no temptation has overtaken you but such..

Fear: **2 Tim. 1:7**

False guilt: **Ps. 103**

How about offensively?

Praying for a **lost** person: **2 Cor. 4:4**

As you can see, to use the sword well we must know the Word well.

Chall. How sharp is your sword? (*hold up sword and bible*) Are you in the Bible every day? Are you reading it? Studying it? Meditation on it? Living it? Or has your sword gotten dull? For some of you it is time to find your sword, dust it off, polish it up, and sharpen it.

Quo Warner: "your sword is only as sharp as your memory.

Quo Moody: An unused bible is a broken sword

This is the armor. And you know what I see in all of this? **That the entire armor is all about Jesus!** (*prop near cross*)

Belt: Jesus is the way, the truth and the life.

Breastplate: Jesus is the righteousness of God.

Shoes: Jesus is the prince of peace.

Shield: Our faith is in Jesus.

Helmet: Salvation in Jesus.

Sword: And Jesus is the living Word of God.

Perhaps this is why **Ro. 13:14** says:

Rom 13:14

14 But **put on the Lord Jesus Christ**, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.

NASB

(So, all the armor is because of Jesus and what He has done for us. You don't manufacture this armor or come up with it yourself. It is already provided for you in Christ. You merely take it up, put it on, and use it. Like salvation: it is all there for you. You simply have to put it on.

Model praying on the armor from the tract: Lord, I put on the

Now to bring this series full circle, I want you to listen carefully to an experience that P. Sammy had when in Panama and listen for how much of what we just learned comes into play in this situation. Now it is a real direct encounter with a demonic spirit but the power of Christ is very evident. Let's run it:

Video

If Time:

Conclusion:

You know we have seen the weapons in Eph. 6 but there is another weapon Weapon of praise. I want to conclude by having us look at **2 Chron. 20** where we find a great model of warfare for us:

- **V. 1-2** vast army coming against them: you might feel that a vast army is coming against you. If not right now, it will at some point. So, what do you do?
- **V. 5f** go to prayer. Turn to God. First base!
- **V. 12** Humility and dependence on God!
- **V. 15-17** know that the battle belongs to the Lord and you must stand strong in Him.
- **V. 18-19** worshiped God
- **V. 21-23** faith and worship and praise sent the enemy running, and it is the same for us today! So we are going to do that now.

As we go into our response time, let's put this into practice. Let's by faith praise God and declare to the demonic realm that we stand in the victory that Jesus has won for us. Put on the garment of praise!

Prayer/Response time

Benediction:

- **ABFs**
- **Eph. 6:23-24**

(Pers. During seminary I had the privilege of being Dr. Tim Warner's graduate assistant. Dr. Warner has written a book entitled *Spiritual Warfare*. He was a foreign missionary for a number of years, is a very solid and balanced person. He is now with Neil Anderson's ministry. Part of my work for him was doing research, grading papers, and sitting in on some of his prayer and counseling sessions. There was one woman that came to him for prayer that stood out to me. Her parents had spent over \$15,000 on various counselors and psychiatrists for her many issues, including multiple personality disorder. They brought her to Dr. Warner because they wondered if their problem might be demonic. After just 2 hours with Dr. Warner in counseling and prayer, this woman was completely set free and had no more problems with foreign personalities.

(Ex. Dr. Neil Anderson tells the story of a doctor's wife that had spent over \$100,000 on counseling and was up to 17 pills a day for various problems. After a few sessions with Dr. Anderson she was totally delivered of many demons and was set free.