

A Breastplate of Righteousness (Ephesians 6:14)

- I. **Introduction**
 - A. Illustration from street hockey, softball, and Roman warfare
 - B. Our study of the armor of God reviewed
 - C. Outline of today's sermon – tracing the theme of righteousness
- II. **From the belt to the breastplate**
 - A. They are interrelated – Righteousness requires truth (and visa versa)
 - 1. Any good deeds done apart from truth are filthy rags
 - B. The breastplate guards the heart (Pr 4:23, Mt 12:35)
- III. **The Righteousness of God**
 - A. God is righteous (Ex 34:6-7, Dt 32:4, Ps 89:14, Rv 15:3)
 - B. God loves righteousness (Noah – Ge 7:1, Ps 33:5, 45:7)
 - 1. His love for righteousness requires that He deal decisively with evil (Ps 5:4, 11:4-7)
 - C. God's particularly loves righteous people (Ps 34:15, 14:5)
 - 1. Only the righteous can enter God's presence (Ps 15:1-2, 118:19-20, Rev 22:14-15)
 - D. But just how righteous do we need to be?
 - 1. Perfectly so (Ps 106:3, Ja 2:10-11, Heb 12:14, 1Pt 1:15-16)
 - E. In light of God's expectation for righteousness is there any hope?
 - 1. Living under a covenant of works leaves you hopeless (Ro 10:5)
 - 2. God's verdict leaves you helpless – Romans 3:10-12
 - F. How has man dealt with the problem through various religions
 - 1. Judaism (a weighing of good works against sins)
 - 2. Islam (salvation by manners and conduct)
 - 3. Eastern Religions (sowing, reaping, reincarnation, repeat)
 - 4. Roman Catholicism (grace assisted innate righteousness)
 - 5. John Wesley (prevenient grace)
 - 6. The guy on the street's religion (I'm a pretty good person)
 - 7. In all these systems, how can we know we've ever done enough?
 - G. God would be perfectly just to leave us in this condition ... but
- IV. **God's love made a way through Christ's active obedience**
 - A. God's standard did not change, nor does his definition of righteousness (Ro 3:19-25, Genesis 15:6)
 - B. God's answer – an imputed righteousness
 - 1. Attacks against the doctrine of imputation
 - 2. **Imputation in the Bible:** Rom 4:6-8, 11, 5:18-19, Jer 23:5-6, 33:14-16, 1 Cor 1:30-31, 2 Cor 5:21
 - C. How you respond to Satan's accusations determines whether you are relying on your own or an imputed righteousness!
- V. **Practical Righteousness (Eph 4:1, 4:22-24, 5:1)**
 - A. Ten practical manners to take up, put on, and keep on your breastplate from William Gurnall's *"The Christian in Compete Armor"*