

# Wearing the Armor of God

By E. A. Johnston

sermonaudio.com

**Preached on:** Wednesday, January 2, 2013

## **Ambassadors For Christ Intl-USA**

1335 Terrell Mill Road  
Bldg 1462, Suite 100  
Marietta, GA 30067

**Online Sermons:** [www.sermonaudio.com/9225](http://www.sermonaudio.com/9225)

At the Pastor's College in London the great Charles Spurgeon would host a weekly lecture whereby he would call upon one of his students and ask them to preach a message for the entire faculty and student body. On one such occasion, a young student was preaching on the subject of the armor of God from Ephesians chapter 6. The young man's eloquence was such that as he described the Christian's armor you could almost hear the click and the clank as each piece of armor was put on. Then when he had finished his great oratory, with the shield of faith in one hand and the sword of the Spirit in the other, he called out, "Now, where is the devil?" In the back of the room sat the famous Spurgeon who cupped a chubby hand to his face and replied, "He's inside the armor."

Well, friends, today our subject is the armor of God and wearing the armor of God and the strategies of Satan to disarm and thwart the believer. Satan is our great adversary and enemy of our souls. He will use any tactic to disarm us and to get us to take our eyes off of Christ, our Redeemer. The Apostle Peter warns us about this great enemy of the Christian, "Be sober, be vigilant because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour."

My message today is not just an exposition of the passage found in Ephesians chapter 6 on the armor of God, as it is an exhortation for us to be sober, to be vigilant against the wiles of this great deceiver who aims at your very soul. If you are a sincere believer who is washed in the blood and born of the Spirit, then you are a target for the evil one who will stoop at nothing to deceive you if he can, and have you stumble and fall and thereby robbing God of his glory. For when we sin, we rob God of his glory. O friends, how delicate this chapter in Ephesians is to our understanding of our adversary and how to withstand him with the armor of God.

Today, we will examine the passage on the armor of God found in Ephesians chapter 6 where the Apostle Paul describes the reality of the Christian's warfare with the enemy. And in the necessity of being prepared for battle by wearing this protective armor. It is my prayer that you will receive something from this message to enable you to be better prepared and armed against this great adversary and that you will experience victory over him as a Christian in full armor.

Listen to Paul's admonition to the Christian as we read this text beginning in verse 10 as the word of God declares, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the

wiles of the devil. 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. 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. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”

In this passage, the Apostle Paul makes mention of our enemy and the reasons why we need the armor of God to withstand that enemy. But before we continue with this message, there are two books I highly recommend to you in regard to the Christians warfare. One is “The Christian in Complete Armor” by the Puritan, William Gurnall. It is a big book and I advise you that you read a portion of it every day for your benefit. The other book is also by a Puritan writer, Thomas Brooks, and it is a shorter book. It is entitled “Precious Remedies Against Satan’s Devices.” Get that book at all costs, friends, and study it for to have knowledge of how Satan comes against us is one of our best defenses against him. When you are engaged in a battle, you must know your enemy’s strategies to withstand and defeat him.

One of Satan’s greatest weapons against the Christian is discouragement, particularly a Christian minister. He will attempt to discourage you, friend, to get you to take your eyes off of God and onto yourself, to focus on your discouraging situation and through that get you into despondency. We must be on the watch against this enemy of our soul and be wise to his stratagems. If Adam and Eve fell into sin in a perfect environment without having a depraved nature, how easy a target we are who live in a fallen world and who have an Adamic nature within.

Our reliance upon God, our faith in the scriptures and our submission to the Holy Spirit is our only hope. Those are the three keys to victory, friends, reliance upon God, faith in the word of God and submission to the Holy Spirit of God. For if Satan can get us to be self-reliant we will be indifferent to the things of God. If Satan can get us to doubt God’s word then we lose our sure foundation. If he can get us to grieve or quench the Holy Spirit with sin then that affects our walk with God.

If I could open a portal of hell and let you peer into the shadows of the sufferings of the damned, it would shock you to realize just how much Satan hates mankind and how much malice he has towards any man who follows Christ, how desperate he is to ruin your testimony and rob God of the glory due him. Satan wants to ruin you, destroy you, devour you.

O friends, how we must stay in an unbroken fellowship with the lover of our soul, the Lord Jesus Christ. How badly we need to stay in a moment-by-moment sensitivity to the Holy Spirit in us. As believers, we are called to lives of holiness unto the Lord.

Robert Murray M'Cheyne, the greatly used Scottish pastor would cry out to the Lord, "O Lord, make me as holy as a saved sinner can be." This should be our heart cry as well. "That's what I am, a saved sinner. I do not profess any doctrine of perfection. The only perfect whoever lived was Jesus Christ. I do know that as a redeemed sinner, although I may make imperfect tracks along the way, bless God, I am on the way. I am kept by a holy God." I do not believe in Antinomianism. We should endeavor to live holy lives unto God in obedience to his commands and under the lordship of Jesus Christ.

I remember a story I read about John Sung, the God-owned Chinese evangelist. One John Sung was preaching in a province in China and an American missionary heard Sung say in his message, "I sin every day." That evening, this American missionary approached John Sung and rebuked him. He said, "Dr. Sung, you erred in your comments today. You told your hearers that you sin every day. My dear brother, Jesus never preached a sinning religion. Please, don't ever say that again." John Sung took that man's advice. And it's true, friends, God is holy, he calls us to be holy. Satan hates a holy God and his enmity is raised against any follower of Christ who endeavors to live a holy life unto God.

This is why the armor of God is so critically important to the Christian. We will now look at each piece of the armor and how to put it on and wear this armor of God. We are to take the whole armor of God and wear it so that it is vitally important that we know what each piece is and what its provision is for us so we will withstand in the evil day. Resist him and he will flee from you. We are told to be strong in the Lord and the power of his might. The battle is the Lord's, we are to turn to Jesus for help in this military engagement where we wrestle, not against flesh and blood, but with principalities, powers, rulers of darkness. When Jesus was tempted of Satan in the wilderness, he answered Satan with the word of God. We should immerse ourselves with the word of God daily, saturate ourselves with it as a weapon and defense against the evil one. Jesus kept pointing Satan to the word of God. We should point Satan to Jesus through the word of God.

The first part of the armor spoken of is the girdle, or belt, of truth. This speaks of the word of God being wrapped around us securely. We are to garrison in ourselves with the truth of God's word. In China, the believers there are walking Bibles. They have memorized so much scripture that they can recite entire books of the Bible. We in the West have many more rich resources to study God's word at our disposal than many other nations, but many believers are bankrupt with their knowledge of the word of God because they spend such little time in it. Scripture memory should be a priority with us each day. Set a goal to memorize parts of your Bible. This will enable you to have a strong belt of truth firmly around you to stand against Satan and his devices against you. Jesus should be our example, here, in how he withstood the attacks of Satan in the wilderness with the sure word of God. Remember the word to the Psalmist who said, "I rejoice at thy word as one that findeth great spoil."

The next piece of armor is the breastplate of righteousness. The breastplate secure the heart. We are told in the book of Proverbs, "Keep thy heart with all diligence for out of it

are the issues of life.” We must guard the inward man, keep a strict watch over the defilement of sin. We must be a clear unobstructed mountain stream. Just like a mountain stream runs down to the valley with clean water, we must remain unobstructed vessels so that the Holy Spirit can flow through us with no impediment or hindrance. The heart, friend, is deceitful above all things. How easily it is for our heart to be swayed. How easy it was for the Israelites to forsake God and turn to other gods as they turned their backside to him.

O friends, our hearts should be guarded, guarded from the lusts of the flesh, the world and the devil. It is so important to put on this breastplate of righteousness as the breastplate secure the heart. It is the righteousness of Christ who is our breastplate. The righteousness of Christ in us is our best weapon against the attacks of the enemy upon us.

The next piece of armor is shoes of the preparation of the gospel of peace. In Old Testament times military armor consisted of shoes of brass so that a soldier would not step on a sharp stick and injure himself and thus be unable to march or fight. Satan lays traps, snares, sharp sticks before us in the hope that we will be in an unguarded moment and injure ourselves and our usefulness to God.

So we must be watchful where we walk and how we walk in the Christian life. Our walk is our testimony to others. Psalm 1 declares, “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.” Because our walk is our testimony to the world, we must walk worthy of the Lord to be witnesses for him with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

The next piece of armor mentioned in our text is the shield of faith. O friends, how mighty is the shield of faith and it is our defense against the enemy. And how much ground the enemy can have against us if our faith is weak. This shield of faith is our best defense against the attacks of Satan. Faith activated with a firm stance on the word of God is a shield of defense against the fiery darts of the wicked one. How wonderfully does the Galatians 2:20 point us to the shield of faith, “I am crucified with Christ nevertheless I live yet not I but Christ liveth in me. And the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved and gave himself for me.” The exchanged life is the Christian armor. Christ in us, the hope of glory.

The next piece of armor for us to wear is the helmet of salvation. The helmet of salvation is to be under the blood of Christ, under the protective blood of Christ. The helmet covers the vulnerable areas of the head and protects it. As we put this helmet of salvation on, we must ask the Lord to guard today our ears - what we hear, our thoughts - what we think. Ask him that all of our thoughts are to be taken into captivity to Christ. To place a guard over our eyes as to what we see throughout the day. That our eyes won't lust after the world or things of the flesh. To put a guard over our lips so we won't speak deceit or be unkind with our words to others, so we won't grumble or complain about our present situation in life. But in all things give thanks to the Lord who saved us.

The last piece of armor is both proactive and defensive which is the sword of the Spirit, the word of God used as a weapon and as a defense. It is the Holy Spirit who renders the word of God effective and powerful as a two-edged sword. How we must hide the word of God in us on a daily basis by the memorization of it and dwelling upon it and meditating upon it.

But the spiritual glue which holds it all together and keeps the armor in force continually, listen to this friends, please don't miss this, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." A person's prayer life in the closet is the best defense against the enemy of our souls. You are only as good as you are on your knees before God in prayer. Constant prayer is both a defensive and offensive posture. Job found relief when he prayed for his friends. Our intercessory prayer life is the buckle that secures the whole armor of God. The importance of a daily quiet time is essential to our walk with God and our best defense against the enemy. For to be in a vital love relationship with Jesus Christ which grows more intimate and more red-hot every day is a high wall and bulwark against sin.

Listen friends, a close walk with God is the best remedy to avoid sin. Having a regular, daily time of prayer every day is essential to keeping a watch over our own deceitful hearts and a look-out against the enemy of our souls. But my, how we fail to emphasize the importance in prayer in our day. The weekly prayer meeting is the spiritual engine of the church but how many churches there are today that are out of gas when it comes to vital prayer. Prayer breaks down spiritual strongholds, delivers the oppressed and sets the captives free.

I am reminded about a painting in a Spanish art gallery. In the painting, there's a farmer who is in the position of prayer. There in the background is a church steeple in the distance and evidently the bell has rung in the village for a time of prayer. This farmer is kneeling in his field, his straw hat lays beside him, he has put down his farm implements to lay hold of God in a time of prayer. If you look carefully at this oil painting in the distance there's an angel who is just taking up the reins to a team of mules and is making a fresh furrow in the soil. And at the bottom of the painting is a brass plate with three words written on it and they read, "No time lost."

Do you see, friends, all of heavens resources are at our disposal when we pray? There is no time lost? Everything is gained when we pray. O, if we would only believe that and make time for prayer it would revive our churches and transform the lives of our congregations in our communities. A praying church is an effective weapon in the hands of God. A prayerless church is a laughing-stock to the world. It is a vital prayer life that girds the armor of God and secures it in the life of a believer. Don't ever forget that, friend. Your walk with God is everything in the Christian life. Ask the Holy Spirit to point out in your life any chinks in your armor. Perhaps you are not spending enough time in the word of God and with the God of the word, you've become lax there, friends, and you're suffering for it. Make sure every piece of armor is secure so you don't step on a sharp stick, stumble and fall.

Lastly, we must remember to keep on the whole armor of God and not get lazy or lax or let our guard down. We must not fail to put on every piece of the armor each and every day. A soldier in battle needs to have all his military gear on and secured. And he also needs to be aware of the tactics of his opponent. Ask the Lord for the necessary grace to succeed in spiritual warfare for our battle will not end until we ourselves finish the race that's set before us. "Wherefore seen we also are encompassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses. Let us lay aside every weight and the sin which does so easily beset us and let us run with patience the race that is set before us looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

May you wear the full armor of God, friend, as you look unto Jesus for the grace to live the Christian life in a way that brings honor to him and glory to the Father. I hope this message has been of some help to you as we keep looking at him.

*We thank you, O God of glory, that you have provided us with the armor of God. We thank you for the Spirit of God who guides us and quickens us to live for thee. And we thank you, Lord God, for your dear Son, Jesus, who gave himself for us as a ransom to reconcile us back to you. Help us to wear the armor securely as we face the battle each day and may we bring you honor and glory with our lives as we serve you today. I pray these things in the strong name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.*