

Do You Have the Peace God Offers, That Overwhelms All Anxieties?

Ephesians 6:15¹

The Peace God offers

Peace is Tied to God's Word

Psalm 119:165 (NKJV) Great peace have they

Peace is anchored by a Godward Mind

Isaiah 26:3-4 (NKJV) perfect peace stayed

Peace is Tied to faith in Christ's work on the Cross

Isaiah 32:17 (NKJV) Work of righteousness is peace

Peace is tied to Grace-prompted Responses to God desires for us

Isaiah 48:18 (NKJV) Oh that hearkened

Peace is only for Believers not the Lost

Isaiah 57:20 (NKJV) There is no peace

Peace is a Person We Love & Follow

John 14:27 (NKJV) Peace I leave with you

Peace with God starts at Salvation

Romans 5:1 (NKJV)

Peace of Guards our Minds

Philippians 4:7 (NKJV) Peace of God passes keep

¹ 990103AM Armor-3

Many years ago it was a spiritual highlight of my life to spend some time in the 500 year old home of Martin Luther...on the wall of his study was the faint stain of an inkwell that smashed and spilled ink. God was mightily using Luther was so aware of Satan and his opposition he angrily threw the inkwell at him. A verse of "A Mighty Fortress" captures the moment "the prince of darkness....".

The verse that reminds us of the spiritual dump we live in and walk in each day. Before we ever go out onto the twisted deadly pieces of evil out there to to get us we need to remember the conflict we are in and strap on our SHOES OF PEACE. Listen to Luther and the peace God brings:

A MIGHTY FORTRESS is our God,
A bulwark never failing;
OUR HELPER HE amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing;
For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and pow'r are great,
And armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not His equal

Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing;
Were not THE RIGHT MAN ON OUR SIDE,
The Man of God's own choosing;
Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is He;
Lord Sabboth, His name,
FROM AGE TO AGE THE SAME,
And HE MUST WIN THE BATTLE.

And tho' this world, with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us,
WE WILL NOT FEAR, for God hath willed
His truth to triumph thro' us;
The prince of Darkness grim,
We tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure,
For lo, his doom is sure,
ONE LITTLE WORD SHALL FELL HIM.

That word above all earthly pow'rs,
No thanks to them, abideth;
The Spirit and the gifts are ours Thro'
Him who with us sideth:
Let goods and kindred go,
This mortal life also;
The body they may kill:
GOD'S TRUTH ABIDETH STILL,
His kingdom is forever.

So Luther realized what we also experience so much. Satan, his demons, and the world around us all seek to activate our fallen flesh so that we are robbed of God's peace in our lives. We need to WEAR HIS PEACE because of the enemy we face! Remember – Our enemy Satan opposes everything God does. For example:

JESUS IS TRUTH (John 1:17) John 1:17 For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

SATAN IS LIES (John 8:44; 2 Cor. 4:3,4) 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,⁴ whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

JESUS GIVES LIFE (John 5:24) John 5:24 “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.

SATAN GIVES DEATH (John 8:44; Heb. 2:14) Hebrews 2:14 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,

JESUS PRODUCES SPIRITUAL FRUIT (Gal 5:22,23) Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

SATAN PRODUCES FLESHLY FRUIT (Gal 5:19-21) Galatians 5:19-21 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness,²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,²¹ envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

JESUS MATURES (James 1:2-4) James 1:2-4 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.⁴ But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

SATAN DEVOURS (1 Pet. 5:8) 1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

JESUS LIBERATES (John 8:31) John 8:31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.

SATAN ENSLAVES (2 Tim. 2:26) 2 Timothy 2:26 and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.

JESUS DEFENDS US (1 John 2:1) 1 John 2:1 My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

SATAN ACCUSES US (Rev. 12:10) Revelation 12:10 Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.

Please turn to the Old Testament book of Isaiah chapter 48 for our Scripture reading. Stand as I read just 2 verses:

Isaiah 48:18 O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea: (KJV)

Isaiah 48:22 *There is* no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked. (KJV)

Peace Is A Choice

Now to Ephesians 6. Armor for Paul was more than pictures from daily life of the nearly omnipresent Roman Legionnaires. Very literally, the “whole armor of God” he describes is a picture of Jesus Christ. In verses 14-17 is a list of the combat equipment that the Holy Spirit issues to every believer at the moment of salvation. By faith and obedient experience we find Christ is:

WE WEAR HIS TRUTH that is the belt of truthfulness.

WE WEAR HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS that is the breastplate we wear.

WE WEAR HIS PEACE as the shoes of the gospel of peace.

WE WEAR HIS FAITH as our shield of faith.

WE WEAR HIS SALVATION as our helmet.

WE WEAR HIS WORD as the sword of the Spirit when we are letting His Word dwell in us.

So in the truest way, when we trusted Christ, we received Him as our armor. Paul told the Romans “put on the Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 13:14). By faith, put on the armor and trust God for the victory. Once and for all, we have put on the armor at the moment of salvation. But there must be a daily renewal.

What Are The Shoes Of Peace?

THE WAR AGAINST GOD IS OVER: Before we came to Christ we were at war with God. No matter what we may consciously have thought about God, our hearts were against Him. It was “while we were enemies” of God that “we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son” (Rom. 5:10).

When we received Christ as Savior and He imputed His righteousness to us, our battle with God ended, and our peace with God began. Because he has made peace with God he can enjoy the peace of God (Phil. 4:7; Col. 3:15). And because he has been given God’s peace he is called to share God’s peace. He is to have his very feet shod with “the gospel of peace” (Eph.

6:15).

THE WORK OF GOD BEGINS: PEACE is the internal serenity that only God can give. “Peace is love in repose, with no borrowing of tomorrows troubles today.”² Troubles are not absent. Rather, God is present! “When the Holy Spirit is not grieved the dove of peace is able to alight on the heart.” Has peace become more and more a way of life for you this year?

Are You Wearing Jesus As Your Peace

Jesus was promised as the Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6),

Like our Master, we His disciples are also to be peacemakers (Matthew 5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.) and proclaimers of peace.

When He sent out the seventy He commissioned them: “Whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace be to this house.’ And if a man of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him; but if not, it will return to you” (Luke 10:5–6).

Jesus promised His disciples, “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you” (John 14:27).

Peace flowed during the ministry of Jesus. There was a sweet cloud of peace that continually blessed those who believed in Him. Among His last words to His disciples were, “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace” (John 16:33).

The ministry of the apostles and other preachers of the early church was characterized by “preaching peace through Jesus Christ” (Acts 10:36).

God’s kingdom itself is characterized by “righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 14:17).

The God of peace (1 Cor. 14:33; Heb. 13:20) calls His people to peace (1 Corinthians 7:15 But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases. But God has called us to peace.).

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is characterized by the giving of “love, joy, peace,” and the other spiritual fruit mentioned in Galatians 5:22–23.

God's Word teaches us:

The Father is the source of peace,

The Son is the giver of that peace,

The Holy Spirit is the agent of that peace. One of the most beautiful fruits the Holy Spirit gives to those in whom He resides is the fruit of peace (Gal. 5:22).

The God of peace sent the Prince of Peace who sends the Spirit of peace to give the fruit of peace. No wonder the Trinity is called Yahweh Shalom, “The Lord is Peace” (Judg. 6:24).

The Depths of Peace

Some of the earth’s most violent weather occurs on the seas. But the deeper one goes the more serene and tranquil the water becomes. Oceanographers report that the deepest parts of the sea are absolutely still. When those areas are dredged they produce remnants of plant and animal life that have remained undisturbed for thousands of years.

That is a picture of the Christian's peace. The world around him, including his own circumstances, may be in great turmoil and strife, but in his deepest being he has peace that passes understanding. Those who are in the best of circumstances but without God can never find peace, but those in the worst of circumstances but with God need never lack peace².

How Do We Get This Peace?

JUSTIFICATION : A Sinner stands before God as accused and is declared righteous by His imputed righteousness.

REDEMPTION: A Sinner stands before God as a slave and is granted freedom by His ransom.

FORGIVENESS: A Sinner stands before God as a debtor and is forgotten by His payment.

RECONCILIATION: A Sinner stands before God as an enemy and is made a friend by His peace.

ADOPTION: A Sinner stands before God as a stranger and is called a Son by His choice.

Peace is Adoption into God's family. But where this change of relationship with God—out of hostility into friendship, out of wrath into the fullness of love, out of condemnation into justification—is not set forth, the gospel of peace is not truly set forth either.

The peace *of* God is first and foremost peace *with* God; it is the state of affairs in which God, instead of being *against* us, is *for* us. When Jesus came to his disciples in the upper room at evening on his resurrection day, he said, "Peace be with you"; and when he had said that, "he showed unto them his hands and side" (Jn 20:19–20). Why did he do that? Not just to establish his identity, but to remind them of the propitiatory death on the cross whereby he had made peace with his Father for them. Having suffered in their place, as their substitute, to make peace for them, he now came in his risen power to bring that peace to them.

"Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (Jn 1:29). It is here, in the recognition that, whereas we are by nature at odds with God, and God with us, Jesus has made "peace through his blood, shed on the cross" (Col 1:20), that true knowledge of the peace of God begins³.

Old Testament Promised Peace:

Psalm 119:165 Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them. (KJV)

Isaiah 9:6-7 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order

² John F. MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983).

³ J. I. Packer, *Knowing God—20th Anniversary Edition*, (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press) 1993.

it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this. (KJV)

Isaiah 26:3 Thou wilt keep *him* in perfect peace, *whose mind is stayed on thee*: because he trusteth in thee. (KJV)

Isaiah 26:12 LORD, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us. (KJV)

Isaiah 30:15 For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not. (KJV)

Isaiah 32:17 And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever. (KJV)

Isaiah 45:7 I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these *things*. (KJV)

Isaiah 48:18 O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea: (KJV)

Isaiah 48:22 There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked. (KJV)

Isaiah 53:5 But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. (KJV)

Isaiah 57:21 There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked. (KJV)

Isaiah 59:8 The way of peace they know not; and *there is* no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace. (KJV)

Jeremiah 6:16 Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where *is* the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk *therein*. (KJV)

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. (KJV)

Matthew 11:28-29 Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (KJV) Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (KJV)

Jesus Christ Had Perfect Peace

Mark 4:39 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. (KJV)

Mark 5:34 And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague. (KJV)

Mark 6:31 And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. (KJV)

Mark 9:50 Salt *is* good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another. (KJV)

Jesus Christ Came With Gospel of Peace:

Luke 1:79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and *in* the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. (KJV)

Luke 2:14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. (KJV) [...to men on whom His favor rests. (NIV)]

He Sent His Disciples Out With His Peace:

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. (KJV)

John 16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. (KJV)

John 20:19 Then the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. (KJV)

John 20:21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as *my* Father hath sent me, even so send I you. (KJV)

John 20:26 And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: *then* came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. (KJV)

Apostle Paul Taught the Gosel brings Peace:

Romans 1:7 To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called *to be* saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. (KJV)

Romans 2:10 But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: (KJV)

Romans 3:17 And the way of peace have they not known: (KJV)

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

Romans 8:6 For to be carnally minded *is* death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. (KJV)

Romans 10:15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! (KJV)

Romans 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. (KJV)

Romans 14:19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. (KJV)

Christ's promised peace is visible

Through Jesus this inexhaustible peace:

WEARING HIS PEACE BRINGS ENCOURAGEMENT Romans 15:13 Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (NKJV)

WEARING HIS PEACE BRINGS GUARDS Philippians 4:7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (NKJV)

WEARING HIS PEACE BRINGS RECONCILES Colossians 1:20 and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. (NKJV)

WEARING HIS PEACE BRINGS HIS RULE Colossians 3:15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. (NKJV)

WEARING HIS PEACE BRINGS SANCTIFICATION 1 Thessalonians 5:23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus. (NKJV)

WEARING HIS PEACE BRINGS IDENTIFICATION Hebrews 12:14 Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: (NKJV)

WEARING HIS PEACE BRINGS ADORNMENT James 3:18 Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. (NKJV)

Is Jesus your inexhaustible peace? Are you resting in Him right now? Have you thanked Jesus lately for the serenity He has given us in His Peace? Please quietly stand with me and right there, in your own words, thank Him for His peace.

500“Peace, Peace Wonderful Peace”

The Enablement of God's Grace (Heb. 12:14–29)

As we run the Christian race, what is our goal? The writer explained the goal in Hebrews 12:14: *Peace* with all men, and *holiness* before the Lord. (Remember “the *peaceable* fruit of *righteousness*,” Heb. 12:11.) These two goals remind us of our Lord’s high priestly ministry—King of *peace* and King of *righteousness* (Heb. 7:1–2). It requires diligence to run the race successfully lest we “fail of the grace of God” (Heb. 12:15). God’s grace does not fail, but we can fail to take advantage of His grace. At the end of the chapter, there is another emphasis on grace (Heb. 12:28).

The God of peace (Rom. 15:33; 2 Cor. 13:11; Phil. 4:9) has emphasized that cherished but elusive reality by making peace one of the dominant ideas of His Word. Scripture contains four hundred DIRECT REFERENCES TO PEACE, and many more indirect ones. The Bible opens with peace in the Garden of Eden and closes with peace in eternity. The spiritual history of mankind can be charted based on the theme of peace. Although the peace on earth in the garden was interrupted when man sinned, at the cross Jesus Christ made peace a reality again, and He becomes the peace of all who place their faith in Him. Peace can now reign in the hearts of those who are His. Someday He will come as Prince of Peace and establish a worldwide kingdom of peace, which will eventuate in ultimate peace, the eternal age of peace.

But one of the most obvious facts of history and of human experience is that peace does not characterize man’s earthly existence. There is no peace now for two reasons: the opposition of Satan and the disobedience of man. The fall of the angels and the fall of man established a world without peace. Satan and man are engaged with the God of peace in a battle for sovereignty.

The scarcity of peace has prompted someone to suggest that “peace is that glorious moment in history when everyone stops to reload.” In 1968 a major newspaper reported that there had been to that date 14,553 known wars since thirty-six years before Christ. Since 1945 there have been some seventy or so wars and nearly two hundred internationally significant outbreaks of violence. Since 1958 nearly one hundred nations have been involved in some form of armed conflict.

The Believer's Peace with God

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

The verb translated we have is in the present tense, indicating something that is already possessed. Many of a believer’s blessings must await his resurrection and glorification, but peace with God is established the moment he places his trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Most unsaved people do not think of themselves as enemies of God. Because they have no conscious feelings of hatred for Him and do not actively oppose His work or contradict His Word, they consider themselves, at worst, to be “neutral” about God. But no such neutrality is possible. The mind of every unsaved person is at peace only with the things of the flesh, and therefore by definition is “hostile toward God” and cannot be otherwise (Rom. 8:7).

What was the Good News? Not that God had sent a soldier or a judge or a reformer, but that He had sent a Saviour to meet man’s greatest need. It was a message of peace to a world that had known much war. The famous “Pax Romana” (Roman Peace) had been in effect since 27 B.C. but the absence of war doesn’t guarantee the presence of peace.

The Stoic philosopher Epictetus said, “While the emperor may give peace from war on land and sea, he is unable to give peace from passion, grief, and envy. He cannot give peace of heart for which man yearns more than even for outward peace.”

The Jewish word *shalom* (peace) means much more than a truce in the battles of life. It means well-being, health, prosperity, security, soundness, and completeness. It has to do more with character than circumstances. Life was difficult at that time just as it is today. Taxes were high, unemployment was high, morals were slipping lower, and the military state was in control. Roman law, Greek philosophy, and even Jewish religion could not meet the needs of men’s hearts. Then, God sent His Son⁴!

The Peace of Christ (Col. 3:15)

The word translated “rule” is an athletic term. It means “to preside at the games and distribute the prizes.” Paul used a variation of this word in his Letter to the Colossians: “Let no one declare you unworthy of a prize” (literal translation, Col. 2:18). In the Greek games, there were judges (we would call them *umpires*) who rejected the contestants who were not qualified, and who disqualified those who broke the rules.

The peace of God is the “Umpire” in our believing hearts and our churches. When we obey the will of God, we have His peace within; but when we step out of His will (even unintentionally), we lose His peace.

We must beware, however, of a FALSE PEACE in the heart. Jonah deliberately disobeyed God, yet he was able to go to sleep in the hold of a ship *in a storm!* “I had peace about it!” is not sufficient evidence that we are in the will of God. We must pray, surrender to His will, and seek His guidance in the Scriptures. The peace of heart *alone* is not always the peace of God.

Something else is involved: if we have peace in our hearts, we will be at peace with others in the church. We are called to one body, and our relationship in that body must be one of harmony and peace. If we are out of the will of God, we are certain to bring discord and disharmony to the church. Jonah thought he was at peace, when actually his sins created a storm!

ALL THE WAY MY SAVIOR LEADS ME

Author: Fanny J. Crosby

All the way my savior leads me;
What have I to ask beside?
Can I doubt His tender mercy,
Who thro’ life has been my guide?
heav’nly peace divinest comfort,
Here by faith in Him to dwell!
For I know whate’er befall me,
Jesus doeth all things well;
For I know whate’er befall me,
Jesus doeth all things well;

All the way my Savior leads me;
Cheers each winding path I tread,
Gives me grace for ev’ry trial,
Feeds me with the living bread;
Tho’ my weary steps may falter,

⁴ 4 Wiersbe, Warren W., *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books) 1997.

and my soul athirst may be,
Gushing from the Rock before me,
Lo! a spring of joy I see;
Gushing from the Rock before me,
Lo! a spring of joy I see;

All the way, my Savior leads me;
Oh, the fullness of His love!
Perfect rest to me is promised
In my Father's house above:
When my spirit, clothed immortal,
Wings its flight to realms of day,
This my song thro' endless ages:
Jesus led me all the way;
This my song thro' endless ages:
Jesus led me all the way

LORD, MAKE ME AN INSTRUMENT OF THY PEACE

by St. Francis of Assisi

“Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
Where there is sadness, joy.

O, Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled as to console;
To be understood as to understand;
To be loved as to love;
For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
It is in dying that we are born again to eternal life.”

We must Use our Armor.

1. BELT OF TRUTH. WARNING: *Dishonesty brings defeat!*
 2. BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. WARNING: *Impurity will bring defeat!*
 3. SHOES OF PEACE. The sandal soles of the soldier were impregnated with heavy, spike-like hobnails which gave him a good footing. To the Christian soldier this piece of armor is a call to both "readiness" and "peace of mind." WARNING: *Anxiety brings defeat!*
- ✓ Now, you know, we live in a dump. I guess you have transfer stations here but when I grew up we used to take our trash to the dump. I guess that's not a popular description of it anymore, but it was really the dump. I mean it was smouldering, burning garbage, broken glass, nails everywhere and everytime you drive

in there you were always worried that you would puncture your tires. And we would shovel off all that trash and rotted stuff and you just would look around – it would look terrible. Rusted tin cans - sharp edges - all types of pointed things and flies everywhere. That was the dump. That's what the world is like, spiritually speaking. Would you ever walk through a garbage dump barefooted in the dark? You wouldn't walk through it barefooted in the light. And that's what he's talking about right here with this third piece and we're going to have fun with that. How do you keep from puncturing your feet as we walk through the world? Its having our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

1. PUT ON CHRIST: Romans 13:11-14 And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.¹² The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.¹³ Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy.¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.
2. PUT OFF SIN: 2 Corinthians 7:1—“Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”
3. KILL OLD HABITS: Colossians 3:5 Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.
4. RUN FROM SHADY THINGS: 1 Thessalonians 5:22—“Abstain from all appearance of evil.”
5. LONG FOR HOLINESS: 1 Peter 1:16—“Be ye holy; for I am holy.”

[i]

[ii] J. I. Packer, *Knowing God—20th Anniversary Edition*, (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993).

[iii] Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1997).

- the Belt of Truth (v.14a) Vital to every soldier was this belt from which all tools of battle hung. This belt also held the soldier's robe together. To the Christian soldier a belt of truth means that we are surrounded by “honesty,” “truthfulness,” “integrity,” and “sincerity” that every part of our life is governed by truth. Dishonesty brings defeat! If we are not belted, if our life is not held in by truth, any type of dishonesty will bring defeat to our lives.
- Breastplate of Righteousness (v.14b) The soldier's breastplate was a heavy piece of armor that completely surrounded the body. To the Christian soldier this means a pursuit of personal, daily righteousness. We learn confession and repentance of sin can only maintain this. Impurity will bring defeat, so say no to sin daily.
- the Shoes of Peace (v.15). The sandal soles of the soldier were impregnated with heavy, spike-like hobnails, which gave him a good footing, and also kept him safe from stepping on sharp objects. If you injure a soldier's feet he's out of commission. To the Christian soldier this piece of armor is a call to both “readiness” and “peace of mind.” If our hearts are not kept in peace by Christ, then anxiety will bring us defeat!
- The Shield of Faith (v.16). To a Roman soldier, his shield was a portable metal-banded wall, which he hid behind in battle. It was 5 feet high, 3 feet wide and served as the deflector from the flaming darts of the enemy. Our Shield of faith extinguishes all the flaming missiles of the evil one. But doubt will bring defeat!

- Helmet of Salvation (v.17a). A soldier never was far from his helmet. Nearly any object on the battlefield could immobilize a soldier if his head was unprotected. So to the Christian soldier the meaning of the helmet is assurance of salvation. A Christian who is not assured that he has salvation is just totally immobilized because he's unsure about everything. He's unsure about God's promises, His Word, His protection. He's unsure about his destiny, his purpose in life. Lack of assurance brings defeat!
- Sword of the SPIRIT (v.17b). Quick and deadly was the sword of a soldier. Vital to any victory was the hand-to-hand combat, which ended in the defeat of the enemy. To the Christian soldier this victorious sword comes only through a personal command of the Scriptures. This is essential to effectiveness in battle. Neglecting the Word breeds weakness and will bring defeat in our lives

The Path of Wearing His Righteousness

When Clothed in Christ we bear fruit for Him (warning: lack of righteousness robs us of this!).

John 15:1-5: "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."

When Clothed in Christ we starve our lusts (warning: lack of righteousness feeds our lusts!).

Romans 13:12-14: "The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts."

When Clothed in Christ we are rewarded for daily life during our pilgrimage here on earth (warning: lack of righteousness robs us of this!).

1 Corinthians 3:12-15: "Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire."

When Clothed in Christ our mind gets captivated by Him (warning: lack of righteousness robs us of this!).

2 Corinthians 10:5: "Casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ."

When Clothed in Christ our mind is tuned heavenward more than earthward (warning: lack of righteousness robs us of this!).

Colossians 3:1-2: "If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth." Have you ever noticed how carefully the satellite TV antennas are aimed? If you miss the signal, the picture is either distorted or doesn't even come in! Think of that—if you miss the signal, the Word of God, then the picture, Christlikeness, is either distorted or non-existent.

When Clothed in Christ we reflect our ownership (warning: lack of righteousness robs us of this!).

Titus 2:10 describes the ideal Christian servant as "not pilfering, but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things."

When Clothed in Christ we seek peace for our souls: (warning: lack of righteousness robs

us of this!).

1 Peter 2:11: "Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul." If you have a life threatening medical condition that is seriously aggravated by certain foods, chemicals, activities, what do you wear? One of those medalert bracelets. They read, "Warning: penecillin, milk, etc. are life threatening!" So we are wearing all around us a righteousness bracelet: "Warning: fleshliness is fatal to the soul!"

When Clothed in Christ we live in overflowing joy (warning: lack of righteousness robs us of this!).

1 John 1:4: "And these things we write to you that your joy may be full."

Do Body/Flesh vs Spirit/Mind

Rom 6

Soul/Emotions is the battle ground of attitudes and actions that flow from those attitudes
When HS fills and controls we wear the breastplate and we have the fruit of the HS
growing.

When we walk in the flesh we have the fruit of the flesh

Our protection against such attacks is the breastplate of righteousness. Righteousness is to be taken and wrapped around our whole being, just as ancient soldiers covered themselves with armor breastplates.

Paul here is obviously not speaking of self-righteousness, which is not righteousness at all but the sin of pride. Nor is he speaking of imputed righteousness--the righteousness God applies to the account of every Christian the moment he believes in Christ (Romans 4:6, 11, 22-24). The breastplate of righteousness is the practical righteousness of moment-by-moment obedience to God's Word.

Our armor must include the breastplate of righteousness--the genuine holiness of him or her whose "every thought [is] captive to the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5) and whose mind is set "on the things above, not on the, things that are on earth" (Colossians 3:2).

The Full Armor of God We Are Each to Wear

1. **Belt of Truth** (v.14a) Vital to every soldier was this belt from which all tools of battle hung. This belt also held the soldier's robe together. To the Christian soldier a belt of truth means that we are surrounded by "honesty," "truthfulness," "integrity," and "sincerity" that every part of our life is governed by truth. **Dishonesty brings defeat!** If we are not belted, if our life is not held in by truth, any type of dishonesty will bring defeat to our lives. we wear his Truth as the guide of all our ways. John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me. Christ, saturates us with the Word of God and it becomes part of our very life.
2. **Breastplate of Righteousness** (v.14b) The soldier's breastplate was a heavy piece of armor that completely surrounded the body. To the Christian soldier this means a pursuit of personal, daily righteousness. We learn confession and repentance of sin can only

maintain this. **Impurity will bring defeat**, so say no to sin daily. we wear his RIGHTEOUSNESS as the guardian of our souls. 1 Corinthians 1:30 But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, 2 Corinthians 5:21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. This armor is imputed righteousness. It is Jesus Christ, not ours but His righteousness.

3. **Shoes of Peace** (v.15). The sandal soles of the soldier were impregnated with heavy, spike-like hobnails, which gave him a good footing, and also kept him safe from stepping on sharp objects. If you injure a soldier's feet he's out of commission. To the Christian soldier this piece of armor is a call to both "readiness" and "peace of mind." If our hearts are not kept in peace by Christ, then **anxiety will bring us defeat!** we wear his Peace as the shoes to walk through life. Ephesians 2:14 For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall,
4. **Shield of Faith** (v.16). To a Roman soldier, his shield was a portable metal-banded wall, which he hid behind in battle. It was 5 feet high, 3 feet wide and served as the deflector from the flaming darts of the enemy. Our Shield of faith extinguishes all the flaming missiles of the evil one. But **doubt will bring defeat!** We wear his Faith, as our shield in battle. Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.
5. **Helmet of Salvation** (v.17a). A soldier never was far from his helmet. Nearly any object on the battlefield could immobilize a soldier if his head was unprotected. So to the Christian soldier the meaning of the helmet is assurance of salvation. A Christian who is not assured that he has salvation is just totally immobilized because he's unsure about everything. He's unsure about God's promises, His Word, His protection. He's unsure about his destiny, his purpose in life. **Lack of assurance brings defeat!** we wear his Salvation as our helmet. Philippians 4:7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
6. **Sword of the SPIRIT** (v.17b). Quick and deadly was the sword of a soldier. Vital to any victory was the hand-to-hand combat, which ended in the defeat of the enemy. To the Christian soldier this victorious sword comes only through a personal command of the Scriptures. This is essential to effectiveness in battle. **Neglecting the Word breeds weakness and will bring defeat in our lives.** We wear his Word as the sword of the Spirit when we are letting His Word dwell in us. Colossians 3:16-17 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

So in the truest way, when we trusted Christ, we received Him as our armor. Paul told the Romans “put on the Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 13:14). By faith, put on the armor and trust God for the victory. Once and for all, we have put on the armor at the moment of salvation. But there must be a daily renewal. When King David put off his armor and returned to his palace, he was in greater danger than when he was on the battlefield (2 Sam. 11). We are never out of reach of Satan’s devices, so we must never be without the whole armor of God.

Lets read our text this morning Ephesians 6:10-17

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.¹⁴ Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness,¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;¹⁶ above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;

Pray

The Armor God in Which We Stand

Simply stated, standing in all that Christ offers to us was summarized by Paul in Romans 13, as “putting on Christ” (v. 14) as our “armor of light” (v.12).

What are those six pieces of armor?

1. Buckled up by the Belt of Truth (Eph. 6:14a):

Roman soldier had a thick leather belt that held their gear in place and could cinch up their tunic for battle. Normal dress for a soldier was a large square of material with head and arm holes that draped loosely over the body. In any combat that looseness of the garment ended. No tangles were desired, and the belt held fast the cinched up tunic.

Truth is to hold us up, hold us in, and protect us from falling. This belt of truth is much like the restraints we strap around us when we get into one of those dangerous, high speed twisting, turning rollercoaster rides at some amusement park. The belt and bars that hold us are designed to keep us safe no matter how fast the car spins, twists or drops. We are held in. Truth holds us in.

This word (aletheia) means both the content of truth, and the truthfulness of our life. God wants both. He wants us to know the content of truth and live the integrity of truthfulness. Truth means we have the readiness to obey; we have the integrity of commitment to truth; and we are opposed to all deception, dishonesty. We have no loose ends of our life that dangle and trip us up. We are girded, belted, strapped in by truth.

1. Knowing the truth saves us. (Jn. 8:32; 17:3)
2. Eating the truth sanctifies us, which means it makes us useful to God. (Jn. 17:17)
3. Surrendering to the truth transforms us (Rm. 12:1-2)
4. Obeying the truth stabilizes us (2 Tim. 2:4; Heb. 12:1-2)

Our lives are to be surrounded and held together by truth we know, believe, and practice.

2. Guarded by Breastplate of Righteousness (Eph. 6:14b):

Every Roman soldier wore sleeveless armor that covered him from the neck down, past his waist, protecting his vital organs including his heart, lungs, and intestines. Made of cloth or

leather sewn with pieces of animal hoofs, bones, and metal, it formed a barrier to swords, spears, and arrows.

For us as believers this righteousness is to be consciously put on. So this is not the justifying righteousness of Christ that was imputed to us. We can't put on what God has already imputed to us (Romans 4:5-6; 5:1). This is also not self-righteousness that God hates and sees as filthy rags. This is rather the constant flow of a believer's choices to obey God's Word.

When we wrap our life with righteous choices, like the soldier's armor we protect our lives from Satan's hijacking attacks.

Satan wants to cloud our emotions with anger, impatience, and selfish ambition.

Satan wants to confuse our thinking with error and lies.

Satan wants to desensitize us to sin, so we lose our compassion.

Satan wants to enflame our natural tendencies to hide, rationalize, and blame our sins on others.

We are safe only when we have our thoughts captivated by Christ (2 Cor. 10:5), and when we set our minds on things above (Col. 3:2). Without that righteousness by choice, we are constantly getting not lead poisoning we hear about so much lately, but the deadening mind-poisoning Satan uses to sidetrack and debilitate us each time we allow him to.

3. Firmly Planted in the Shoes of Peace (Eph. 6:15):

Rome's legions marched across the rough, jagged, treacherous paths of the ancient world with a steady cadence. Their feet were protected by specially designed war gear, strapped on reinforced sandals with built in spikes for traction and stability in hand to hand combat.

The Greek word the Spirit guided Paul to choose is *hetoimasia*, and speaks of being ready for action. When a Roman soldier went to war he knew he was ready to march, climb, and grapple and his feet would firmly stay beneath him.

For us as believers the peace we have with God means we have nothing to fear.

- God is no longer our enemy: He is our Father and our Protector.
- God has defeated already our enemies: the devil and death.
- God surrounds us with His Presence and His peace because we trust the goodness, wisdom, power, and presence of our Almighty Father.

When we strap on those truths of our salvation we can walk confidently through life with a boldness prompted by the Spirit of God. When our steps are guided by God; our pathway is illumined by His Spirit; and our Good Shepherd is leading and protecting us: we are firmly planted and wearing our shoes of peace.

The wicked are like the raging sea, restless and tossed, endlessly dashed upon all their rocky circumstances along the shores of life (Isaiah 57:20). The work of God within us is His incomprehensible peace: that keeps His quietness and assurance overflowing each day of our lives (Isaiah 32:17).

4. Shielded by the Missile Defense of Faith (Eph. 6:16):

Paul defines which of the Roman shields he was talking about with the word *thureos*. This

was the battle field, 30-inch-wide and 60-inch-high piece of wood, leather and metal that made a defensive wall that kept arrows, spears, and rocks from harming the soldiers.

Often enemies added a pitch soaked cloth, wrapped around their arrows and ignited as it was shot. Without this shield the impact would not just deeply wound and burn the soldier, but the flaming splatters of fiercely burning pitch would light on fire anything they landed on. The thureos shield deflected or extinguished each arrow. Often at the end of battles the Roman soldier's shields looked like smoking porcupines as their shields bristled with all the extinguished arrows of their enemies.

Each day we walk through life Satan's dark realm has well placed archers, arrows ignited and ready to shoot. Impure thoughts are a flaming arrow that the shield of faith can extinguish. So are the flaming darts of anger, pride, fear, despair, covetousness, jealousy, and every other well aimed fleshly temptation.

If Satan's team lands an arrow (as we saw in his attack on Eve in the Garden) the impact and splatter of his fiercely burning pitch can ignite within our minds doubts about God's goodness, distrust about God's plan, and disobedience to God's Word.

Satan wins if he can make this flaming dart start a wedge between us as believers, or between us, and our Father. Only the shield of faith, (holding onto the truth of God and acting upon it even when it is unseen), can extinguish these flaming arrows. Take up the shield today, because without that shield, it is impossible to please God.

Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV) But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

5. Surrounded by the Assuring Helmet of Salvation (Ephesians 6:17a):

Soldiers couldn't survive long in the dangers of war without that helmet. The waves of enemy missiles flying, and the long battle swords swinging, would soon wound or kill them. Roman helmets were made of metal to protect and leather to cushion. Often the sides extended down for face protection. A head wound took a soldier out of battle.

Paul explains that again Satan's goal is to attack the secure reality of our eternal life. Our assurance of salvation, when shaken, debilitates our trust in God and sidelines us from battle. Much like the 36 to 48-inch-long, double edged battle sword called in Greek the rhomphaia (that word is found in Rev. 1:16, 2:12, 6:8), Satan's realm is swinging the razor sharp doubled edged sword of doubt and discouragement.

Doubting God's goodness often comes when we look at our struggles with our health, finances, and relationships, and question why God isn't doing a better job at helping us. That opens the way for a flood of further doubts leading to discouragement and despair about how we could even be saved as we think of all our sins, failures, weaknesses, and struggles. As the words to that 1863 hymn entitled, In Christ Alone, reminds us:

When Satan tempts me to despair
And tells me of the guilt within,
Upward I look and see Him there
Who made an end of all my sin.
Because the sinless Savior died

My sinful soul is counted free.
For God the just is satisfied
To look on Him and pardon me.

Behold Him there the risen Lamb,
My perfect spotless righteousness,
The great unchangeable I AM,
The King of glory and of grace,
One in Himself I cannot die.
My soul is purchased by His blood,
My life is hid with Christ on high,
With Christ my Savior and my God!

The helmet of salvation is a firm confidence in our Heavenly Father's character and power. This helmet is not getting saved, because Paul is telling believers to put it on. The first element of salvation is defined by doctrine of justification, which is trusting in the finished work of Christ, already accomplished on the cross for us (2 Cor. 5:21). Justification ignites the second element of salvation, which is sanctification.

God wants to make each of His children useful for His plan and uses His Word and trials, under the guidance of Spirit of God to shape us more and more into likeness to Christ (1 Th. 5:23). The final element of salvation is yet future, our conformity to Christ forever is finally accomplished when we are glorified fully like Him forever as 1 John 3:2 reminds us.

So secure assurance is based on a **past event we trust** called justification, a **present work in our lives we see** called sanctification, and a **future completion we hope for** called glorification. Salvation's helmet has three aspects: past, present, and future. We know our sins are forever gone, we see our sinful ways presently being sanctified away, and we await the end of the struggles as we become like Him when we see Him as He is. We know the ultimate victory is ours.

6. Armed by the Ultimate Weapon of God's Sword (Ephesians 6:17b):

The up close war tool of the Roman soldier was not the 3-4 foot battle sword called the rhomphaia, it was the lethal, hand-to-hand sword called in Greek, machaira. Just 16-18 inches long, and always at his side, the sword of the Legionnaire was his supreme battle tool. He could deflect an attacker thrusts, and inflict precise mortal wounds. Romans were unmatched in their skills in hand-to-hand combat.

As believers our sword is "of the Spirit", a weapon originated and energized by the Spirit of God, for us to wield in spiritual warfare. No enemy can stand against the Word of God; and God's Word is the sword. When we hold firm to what God says, He cuts down all our enemies.

Like the Roman sword, this sword of the Spirit is both defensive and offensive. In deflecting an attack it is used in a precise manner, directly meeting the attack with a specific and appropriate Word from God. Our shield of faith makes a wall of protection, but the sword goes directly at the specific attack and defeats it on the spot. Like Jesus demonstrated in His sword

thrust Scriptural responses to each of the Devil's three attacks (Mt. 4:4, 7, 10), we must know and use the Word. Believers who do not know how to deflect a direct attacks with Scripture, are far more likely to be wounded, and devoured by our adversary the devil.

Our sword of the Spirit is also our chief offensive weapon against both the enemy without and the enemy within. The Word of God that defends us also transforms us from the inside out. God's Word of truth can change us from liar-hearted to truth-tellers, from greedy-hearted to givers, from bitter-hearted to tender forgivers, and from fearful-hearted to emboldened soldiers of God.

God's Word in the hands of a skilled Christian soldier can be used by the Spirit of God to turn many captives in Satan's dark prison from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive the forgiveness of all their guilty sins, and go from eternal paupers to the riches of the inheritance of Christ.

That is the amazing evangelistic power of our sword the Spirit gives us. May we use it to quell Satan's attacks, and release many captives by the power of the Gospel unto salvation for all those who believe.

The Five Key Truths of Spiritual Warfare

There are five key passages on spiritual warfare, and each of them has a very specific message for us to apply. As we turn to each one and read the verses, note the lesson and apply it, by the power of God's Spirit, in your life.

JESUS said to resist Satan we must—**USE GOD'S WORD**. In Matthew 4:1-11 we saw that God's Word works, Jesus even used the Old Testament to defeat the Devil!

Matthew 4:4 But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, **but by every word** that proceeds from the mouth of God.' "

PAUL said to resist Satan we must—**USE GOD'S WEAPONS**. In Ephesians 6.10-17 we see that our spiritual weapons are not human inventions or works, as Paul wrote:

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. 4 **For the weapons of our warfare are** not carnal but **mighty in God** for pulling down strongholds,5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,

JAMES said that to resist Satan we must—**LIVE SUBMISSIVELY in God's sight**. In James 4:7-10 we see submission to God precedes any resistance of the Devil.

James 4:7-10 Therefore **submit to God**. [is first and then, and only then can we] Resist the devil and he will flee from you.8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Lament

and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.
10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

PETER said to resist Satan we must—**LIVE HUMBLY in God's sight**. In I Peter 5.5-9 we see that God calls us to clothe ourselves with humility before we resist the prowling Devil.

1 Peter 5:5-9 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.” 6 **Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God**, that He may exalt you in due time, 7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. 8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. 9 **Resist him, steadfast in the faith**, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

JOHN said to resist Satan we must—**LIVE HOLY in God's sight**. In I John 3.7-9 we see how powerful a pure life can be, and how disabling impurity can be.

1 John 3:3, 8 And everyone who has this hope in Him **purifies himself**, just as He is pure. 8 He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might **destroy the works of the devil**.

As we've already seen, our spiritual immune system is laid out in Scripture as having three factors: **spiritual health** (eating and drinking in God's Word, plus exercising each day by walking in the Spirit); **spiritual armor** (understanding and uses the armor Paul commands us to use in Ephesians 6:10-18); and **spiritual warfare** (resisting the devil and his demons). If you neglect any part of your spiritual immune system—Satan and his army have a point to step up their campaign.

God Says Satan is Alive and Well on Planet Earth

Satan is alive and well on planet earth today. As Prince of the power of the air (Ephesians 2:2), his silent army of demon invaders swirl through the air. Around us lurk those infernal warriors of the Kingdom of Darkness. These are not science fiction aliens. Rather as super strong extra-terrestrial intelligent beings their aim is clear. Their shocking strategy is so powerful, normal humans would pale if aware of it. These twisted demon hordes as deadly as a terrorist's bomb, are locked on course. Their target is the human mind, the control center of every human being on the planet.

Like hideous locusts they feed on the filth of spiritual wickedness. They find resistance only from those **armed** with the armor of God, **clothed** with the Spirit of God, and **disciplined** as soldiers of God in the kingdom of light. This morning we are enemies to Satan and his hosts. To even speak of this dark world of evil, invites great and inexplicable difficulties. As this truth from God's Word is taught you may experience strange and powerful turmoil.

Our faith in Christ assures us though that we are "more than conquerors through Christ." As we enter the realm of spiritual warfare, let's pray for peace. As we learn and grow today, we will find Satan is a defeated foe, a weakened adversary, and crushed enemy. We have the victory.

2 Cor. 10:3-5 Use the Weapons of our Warfare

Look at 2 Corinthians chapter 10. Second Corinthians chapter 10, verse 3, Paul says, "For though we walk in the flesh," we're human, physical, "though we walk in the flesh we don't war according to the flesh." There's no physical strategy against Satan. There's no mental strategy against Satan. There's no verbal strategy against Satan. You can't say words and make him run. We don't war according to the flesh. Verse 4, "For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses." The contrast between the flesh and the divine, between the human and God. And we don't battle Satan with human plans, human ingenuity or human words but with a divinely powerful expression of God. What is that? Verse 5, "We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ."

1 Timothy 1:18 Fight the good Fight

There's the key. Everything becomes captive to the truth and obedience to the truth. As I know the truth, as I obey the truth, Satan is resisted. And whatever enemy comes against me becomes captive as I stand on the truth, as I obey the truth. First Timothy chapter 1 verse 18, "This command I entrust to you, Timothy my son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you," now listen to this, "that by them you may fight the good fight," here's how, "keeping the faith and a good conscience." What does that mean? Holding on to the faith

which is the truth, the faith, the Christian faith, the revealed truth and a good conscience means that you've not only believed the truth, you've what? You've obeyed it and your conscience isn't accusing you, same principle.

How do you fight the good fight? How do you keep from the shipwrecking disaster that delivers you over to Satan, as he mentions in verse 20? How do you prevent that? Keeping the faith, holding it, guarding it and having the good conscience that doesn't accuse you because you haven't violated its truth. Beloved, there's only one way to resist the devil and that is to know the truth, to believe the truth, to stand on the truth, to obey the truth. And when you do that, you stand against him and he what? He flees. What you say is immaterial. There's no formula for this.

2 Tim. 2:3-4 Stay Un-Entangled

Second Timothy chapter 2, verse 3: "Suffer hardship along with me as a good soldier of Christ Jesus." We're soldiers in a spiritual warfare. And how are we to fight? Verse 4: "No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier." Two things, if you're going to be a good soldier you know what the commander told you to do and you do it, right? That's how you please him. Same thing, you hold to the faith and you obey it.

Ephesians 6:10-17 Know How to Wear Your Armor

And then that key passage, Ephesians 6, turn there quickly, Ephesians 6, verse 10, "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might." That's that divinely powerful weaponry. "Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil." Here he gives you the details of it, the details. "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenlies" as they come against us as individuals, as families, as leaders, as churches.

Our Powerful Enemy

In describing the spiritual forces of evil against whom we must contend Paul says three important things about the devil. First, he is a great and powerful foe. Paul indicates this by the words used to describe the devil's agents—"rulers," "authorities," "powers," and "forces"—and by the fact that he warns us to take arms against them.⁵

The result is that, although the devil's influence is widespread, it is probably the case that neither you nor anyone you know has ever been tempted by the devil directly. In fact, in all the Bible we know of only six individuals who were tempted by Satan himself: Eve (but not Adam), Job, Jesus Christ, Judas, Peter, and Ananias (but not his wife Sapphira). No doubt there have been many others, but these are the only ones the Bible tells us of specifically.⁶

Satan is subtle in his attacks. But he is not subtle only in the times of his coming. He is also crafty in *how* he attacks. He attacks:

1. *As a roaring lion.* Peter says that the devil comes to us as "a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour" (1 Peter 5:8). I do not think Peter means that Satan always appears as a lion

⁵ Boice, J. M. (1988). *Ephesians: an expositional commentary* (p. 230). Grand Rapids, MI: Ministry Resources Library.

⁶ Boice, J. M. (1988). *Ephesians: an expositional commentary* (p. 231). Grand Rapids, MI: Ministry Resources Library.

to us, but he sometimes appears before us with a frightful roar—to terrify us into forgetting who we are and whom we are to serve.

2. *As a friend.* At other times the devil appears before us as a friend. This is how Satan came to Eve. He did not come threatening. He came with an offer to help out. He would show them what God was really like. He would help them to become “like God, knowing good and evil” (Gen. 3:5). When Satan comes to you like that, remember that it is Jesus and not the devil who is really your friend. Only Jesus sticks closer than a brother.

3. *As an angel of light.* Oh, how Satan loves to bring “enlightenment.” “You don’t mean to tell me that you believe those old-fashioned tales you find in the Bible,” Satan says. “Nobody believes those myths anymore. Scholarship has disproved all that.” I suppose this form of temptation comes from the pulpit more often than from any other place, unless possibly the college or seminary classroom. Martin Luther had it right when he said, “When you look for the devil, don’t forget to look in the pulpit.” Many have fallen because they have followed the prince of darkness’s “light.”⁷

The Belt of Truth

Strictly speaking, the Roman soldier’s belt was more a part of his dress than his armor. It was made of leather and was used to gather his garments together as well as hold his sword. Yet it was part of his war equipment, for it gave him a feeling of inner fortitude and strength when tightened. According to Paul’s teaching, the Christian’s belt is truth. It is to be his inner strength, what gives him confidence.

Commentators have looked at “truth” in two ways since it can have two basic meanings. First, it can mean “the truth of God.” That is, it can refer to Christian doctrine or the specific content of God’s revelation in the Bible. Second, since the article “the” is not present, truth can refer to truthfulness or sincerity of heart. I think John R. W. Stott is right, however, when he suggests that “we do not need to choose between these alternatives.”¹ As the Bible looks at this area, inner truth or truthfulness begins with a knowledge of God, who is truth, and a knowledge of the truth of God (if it really is known) inevitably leads to a life change consistent with God’s character. We must be truthful men and women, of course. But we will become that only as we feast on the revealed truths of God.

It is significant that Paul puts truth first. This suggests that successful spiritual warfare begins with fixing Christianity’s great doctrines firmly in our minds. Or to put it another way: It is dangerous to rush into battle without having the great doctrines of the faith fixed firmly in our understanding. Americans especially should hear this, for we have a tendency to think that activity is the important thing and that convictions or truth do not matter or are at least of secondary importance. That is probably not a good approach in any discipline, and it is certainly not a good approach in Christianity. In Christianity truth comes first, then action follows. Without truth, without the doctrines, without the knowledge of who God is, who we are, what we have become in Christ, and what we have been called to do (precisely the kinds of things Paul has been teaching in the earlier chapters of Ephesians)—without this we really do not know what kind of activity in which to engage, and we will be vulnerable to Satan’s onslaughts and wiles.

⁷ Boice, J. M. (1988). *Ephesians: an expositional commentary* (p. 234). Grand Rapids, MI: Ministry Resources Library.

¹ John R. W. Stott, *God’s New Society: The Message of Ephesians* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1979), 278.

Do you know the great truths of Christianity? Do you study the Bible to apprehend them more deeply?⁸

The Breastplate of Righteousness

The second piece of the Roman soldier's equipment is his breastplate, which Paul compares to righteousness. Like truth, righteousness can be taken in two ways. It can refer to what in theology is called imputed righteousness, the righteousness of Jesus Christ reckoned to a Christian's account that enables him to stand before God. Or it can refer to specific acts of righteousness—personal holiness, as we might say.⁹

The Gospel of Peace

The most awkward phrase in this list of the Christian's armor is the one about feet: "with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace" (v. 15). For one thing, it does not mention the specific piece of armor. We have to assume that Paul means boots or traveling sandals. Again, when he makes the application Paul uses three words ("readiness," "gospel," and "peace"), and it is not immediately clear which one is central. Does Paul want us to be shod with the gospel, with peace, or with the readiness to make the truth known?²

In my judgment the emphasis falls upon readiness to make the gospel known. Any Christian already knows the gospel; he would not be a Christian if he did not. So this must go beyond mere knowledge and appropriation. It must involve readiness to share the good news with others. Moreover, Paul links the gospel to the soldier's boots or sandals. Shoes carry us from place to place, and it is as we go from place to place that we are to be ready to speak about Jesus.

Are you equipped to do that? Do you know how to tell others about the Savior?¹⁰

The Shield of Faith

The Roman soldier had two kinds of shields. There was a small round shield that he would use in hand-to-hand combat when it was important for him to be able to maneuver easily, and there was a large oblong shield that he would use when advancing into battle with other soldiers. This second shield, the one Paul refers to here, was about four or four-and-a-half feet long and about two feet wide, and covered the soldier's body completely. So when the soldiers advanced in rows, as the Romans did, the enemy was faced with a solid wall of shields—row upon row of them. These advancing columns of a Roman army were called phalanxes, and they were the terror of Rome's foes.

Paul is saying that our faith should be like that. It should do three things: (1) it should cover us so that not a portion is exposed, (2) it should link up with the faith of others to prevent a solid wall of defense, and (3) because it covers our entire person and links up with the faith of our fellow soldiers, it should be able to strike down whatever fiery arrows the enemy hurls at us.

You have noticed, I am sure, that when Paul speaks of this item of armor he does not say "the shield of *the* faith" as if he were referring to the specific teachings of Christianity—he has

⁸ Boice, J. M. (1988). *Ephesians: an expositional commentary* (pp. 244–245). Grand Rapids, MI: Ministry Resources Library.

⁹ Boice, J. M. (1988). *Ephesians: an expositional commentary* (p. 245). Grand Rapids, MI: Ministry Resources Library.

² In this case the grammar does not help either. For "of the gospel" can be either an objective or subjective genitive. If objective, the emphasis is on the soldier's readiness to announce the gospel, to make it known. If subjective, the reference is to the firmness or steadiness the gospel gives to those who believe it.

¹⁰ Boice, J. M. (1988). *Ephesians: an expositional commentary* (p. 247). Grand Rapids, MI: Ministry Resources Library.

already included that in his reference to truth as the Christian's belt—but rather to “the shield of faith,” meaning a general confidence in God. Our shield against Satan's arrows is this kind of faith, faith that God can be trusted. It is knowing that when God says that he is able to keep us from falling and present us before his presence with exceeding joy, he means exactly that and will do it. We do not need to fear when we advance into battle. God will go with us and will bring victory.

The Helmet of Salvation

The final item in the Christian's defensive armor is the helmet that Paul likens to salvation. The helmet of salvation could mean merely that we are saved; that would make sense. But in 1 Thessalonians 5:8 Paul speaks of putting on “the *hope* of salvation as a helmet,” and if that is what he is thinking of here, then he is looking to our destiny rather than our present state. He is saying that our anticipation of that end will protect our heads in the heat (and often confusion) of the battle.

It was said of the troops of Lord Cromwell the Protector that they never lost because, being Calvinists, they knew that their destiny was secure and that they were fighting because God had led them to that spot and would prosper them in that work. There is a sense in which that should be true of us. True, we suffer setbacks in our attempts to live the Christian life. Even Paul said that he was sometimes tripped up by Satan's onslaughts: “hard pressed ... perplexed ... persecuted ... struck down” (2 Cor. 4:8–9).

But these momentary setbacks are not the end, nor are they even utter defeats. For Paul said, “We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. ... Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal” (2 Cor. 4:8–9, 16–18).

At times the battle presses around the Christian so furiously that he hardly knows where he is or what is happening. That sometimes happens in purely physical warfare too. But what matters is not always that we know where we are or what is happening, but that our great commander-in-chief, the Lord Jesus Christ, knows and has guaranteed the victory.¹¹

¹¹ Boice, J. M. (1988). *Ephesians: an expositional commentary* (pp. 248–249). Grand Rapids, MI: Ministry Resources Library.

God Summarizes What We Need To Live

“Our Father...” means I need You to Focus Me:

Because we are so weak, fearful, and distracted, we need to pause each day and reorient my life to Who God really is.

We need God to focus our hearts upon His Majesty.

Lord, I want to Worship You, so focus me upon how great You are today.

“Your Kingdom...” means I need God to Control Me:

Because we are so easily wanting our own way.

Like Isaiah 53:6 says, we each turn to our own way by habit.

That’s just how we are wired.

So we need to pause each day to surrender our body back to God’s control, and then reaffirm our trust in His plans.

Lord, I want You to Control me, so I surrender to your control today.

“Your will...” means I need God to Lead Me:

Because we are so easily misled and confused, and needy of help to find our way in life, and we are so unable to know the future that we really need daily guidance.

Lord, I want You to Guide me, so I will seek to follow You today.

“Daily bread...” means I need God to Supply Me:

Because we are so temporary, frail, insufficient and unable to even go without sleep for very long.

I need to pause each day to ask God to give me what I need to not just survive today, but be filled and satisfied.

Lord, I feed me daily bread by Your Word, to supply me so I see Your Hand in my life.

“Forgive us...” means I need God to Cleanse Me:

Because we are so prone to bumps, scrapes, and wounds that easily get infected with bitterness.

So I need to pause and seek the cleansing forgiveness You give for all my sins against You.

Lord, I want to experience the healing that comes through releasing all my hurts and injuries to Your care, and receiving the joy of being completely forgiven and forgiving.

“Deliver us...” means I need God to Protect Me:

Because we are so vulnerable. The spirit-world around us is so filled with enemies and dangers that I need to pause each day and arm myself for survival and victory each day, as I invite You to Deliver me.

Lord, protect me by clothing me with Your armor, I want to put on Christ and allow you to protect me.

“Yours is...” means I need God to Empty Me:

Because we are so prone to pride, self-sufficiency, and self-focus that we need to pause and ask to be emptied of cultivating a self-driven life.

Lord, empty me of pride, and overflow me with Your presence as I clothe my self with humility.

Now, here is the key. How would we start doing this more regularly.

How can we unleash the power God offers into our lives today?

Here is one way. Start with that first petition.

In our daily lives we are by habit conscious of the countless microbes, bacteria, viruses, and malicious pathogens that are so tiny they are invisible but so powerful they can't be ignored.

If you saw someone splashed with some deadly substance, or handling some highly contagious, infected materials wouldn't it strike you with a desire to warn them, and protect yourself?

The final three elements of the Lord's Prayer are repeated through the rest of the New Testament: **keeping clean** “forgiving and forgiven”, **keeping alert** for Him to “deliver us”, and **keeping humble** by the choice that “Yours is the glory”.

See how Jesus ties those three spiritual dimensions together?

These simple elements of worship directed by God's Word, submission, consecration, provision, tenderness, vigilance, and humility fill the pages of Scripture.

Because We are Weak & Fearful: I Need to Focus Back on God

Because we are so weak and often fearful Jesus said we need to focus upon Who our God really is.

This is the area of worship, where we focus upon the person, nature, and attributes of God Almighty.

The first petition of the Lord's Prayer is all that.

It is a cry to Focus my life on Who You are as my God.

It is a call to worship God, and allow Him to dispel our fears with His Omnipresence.

It is an invitation to allow Him to overwhelm our weaknesses with Him Omnipotence.

Each time we say that first petition, we are to surround these words with a longing for God Almighty, to Whom we are speaking to dispel our fears with His Presence, and overwhelm all our weaknesses with His strength.

Ready to practice that? Speak the first petition to Him:

Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name...

Our Father: we are so weak, fearful, and distracted, we need to pause each day and reorient my life to Who God really is.

Lord, I want to Worship You, so focus me upon how great You are today.

Next time you feel fearfully alone and helplessly weak, us that as a moment to flee back to the powerful position of repeating who you are by talking to your Father.

Where is He? Your Father is in Heaven.

What does He want us to do? Hallow, reverence, worship, and focus upon His Great Name.

How would we apply that truth so it isn't just a fact that we know at a distance, but never experience?

One way to do this at times is to hallow God's Name using the words of an old and familiar hymn. Here is a great hymn about the Great name of our Great God:

Secondly:

Because We want Our Way: I Need You To Control Me

We were born wanting our own way. Each day like Isaiah 53:6 says, we each turn to our own way by habit. That's just how we are wired.

Jesus expressed that in the last verse of this chapter where we find the Lord's Prayer. Look at Mat. 6:33:

But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

So we need to pause each day to surrender our body back to God's control, and then reaffirm our trust in His plans.

Lord, I want You to Control me, so I surrender to your control today.

How Are You Dressed Spiritually: Clothed With Christ's Compassion & Rid of Any Bitterness?

"Christians *ought* to be the most forgiving people on earth, because they have been forgiven as no one else has.

Therefore, those who refuse to forgive are worthy of the most severe kind of discipline from the hand of a loving Father.

I am convinced that multitudes of Christians who suffer from stress, depression, discouragement, relationship problems, and all sorts of other hardships experience these things because of a refusal to forgive.

Forgiveness from the heart would liberate the person immediately from such

“torturers”—and glorify God in the process”.¹²

Because we are so prone to bumps, scrapes, and wounds that easily get infected with bitterness: I need God’s Cleansing

Because we are so prone to bumps, scrapes, and wounds that easily get infected with bitterness.

So I need to pause and seek the cleansing forgiveness You give for all my sins against You.

Lord, I want to experience the healing that comes through releasing all my hurts and injuries to Your care, and receiving the joy of being completely forgiven and forgiving.

That is why Jesus says we are to ask God to forgive us, because forgiveness is at the heart of who we are. We are forgiven by God for all our sins. Therefore, we can never stop forgiving others.

Believers have experienced once-for-all God’s judicial forgiveness, which they received the moment Christ was trusted as Savior. We are no longer condemned, no longer under judgment, no longer destined for hell (Rom. 8:1). The eternal Judge has declared us pardoned, justified,

¹² MacArthur, J. F. (1998). *The freedom and power of forgiveness* (electronic ed., pp. 111–112). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

Satan and his demons

In Action? A. Power over nations 1:13-15,17

Yes Power over nature 1:16,18-19

Power over natural man 2:7

Really Exist? B. Yes

- ✓ Is. 14 / Ez. 28 – Devil created Lucifer, highest of God’s creation, anointed, sparkled with jewels of heaven – proud (like God), thrown down, 1/3 host with him
- ✓ Christ talked to him (Matt. 4; Luke 4)
- ✓ Christ talked above him (John 12,14,16)
- ✓ The apostles – James, John, Peter and Paul were warned

C. What Can He Do? Lots

- ✓ His works: He tempted Eve (Gen. 3); he tempted Christ (Matt. 4); he perverted God’s Word (Matt. 4); he hindered God’s servant (1 Thess. 2); he fought with Michael (Jude 9); he brought sin into the world (Gen. 3); he hinders the gospel (2 Cor. 4); he snares the wicked (1 Tim. 3); he desires the nations (Rev. 16); he has the world in his lap (1 John 5).

D. How Is He Described In Word of God?

- ✓ His titles: The anointed cherub (Ez. 38), prince of this world (John 16), prince of the power of the air (Eph. 2), god of this age (2 Cor. 4), prince of demons (Luke 11:15), Satan (his most common name means adversary), Devil (which means slanderer), the old serpent, the great dragon, the roaring lion, the evil one, Abaddon, Apollyon, tempter, accuser, the spirit now working in the sons of disobedience.

E. What Is He Like?

- ✓ His character: He is described by our Lord in John 8:44 as a liar and liar. He works overtly and covertly with doctrines of devils and seducing spirits. He is a sinner (1 John 3:8), an oppressor (Rev. 12:10), a perverter (1 Tim. 4:3), and an imitator (2 Cor. 11:13-15).

Now back to Ephesians 6:10.

Because of the reality of Satan, demons and spiritual warfare, let’s start tonight with a check of our enablement. (v. 10)

The whole book of Ephesians talks about this ENABLEMENT

FIRST, v. 10 has POWER PROMISED: “BE STRONG”

3 power words:

- strong = enduomai, enduino
- strength = kratos – dominatu
- might = ischus – possassino

7 power words in 1:19-20:

- negathos = “greatness”
- dunamis = “power” – inherent power
- energeia = “working” – ability
- kratos = “strength” – dominion
- ischus = “might” – possession
- egeres ress = power
- ekaOis = coronation power

APPLICATION : When you received Christ, the greatest power of all entered you. John 1:12 “to as many....”

SECOND : v. 10 has possessions promised “in the Lord.” Why is that?

Because...

The committed Christian and Satan are on a collision course. It’s inevitable, as you live for God, that your life will intersect with the forces of hell. The adversary works hard, effectively and powerfully against the child of God, but throughout the book of Ephesians we find that CHRISTIANS POSSESS TREMENDOUS RESOURCES. These include:

Follow in Ephesians and mark them:

1:3 – being given “all spiritual blessing in the heavenlies”

A. Our Enemy

End of v. 11 and read v. 12

1. rulers
2. powers
3. world forces of this darkness
4. spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places

Satan and hosts –

Question #1 – Are you aware of the foe? Do you realize we’re in battle? Do you realize your adversary wants to devour (1 Pet. 5:6-9)?

Lesson One – Be aware of the enemy – Satan and his organization

How? – by noting his methods

His Methods –

The “wiles of the devil” in Eph. 6:11 refers to his method of attack. The same word for “wiles” is used in Eph. 4:14 and is translated “cunning craftiness” by which he lies in wait to deceive us. The “wiles of the devil” are lies, false doctrines, false religion, and false teaching. His whole system deceives subtly, supernaturally, cleverly and powerfully.

1. IN HIS OWN CHILDREN

A. Preventing the Word

1. he snatches the Word away (Luke 8:12)
2. he blinds the minds (2 Cor. 4:3-4)

B. Perverting the Word

Satan has men stand in the pulpits who deny:

1. the authority of Scripture
2. the deity of Christ
3. salvation by grace
4. the second coming
5. judgement
6. sin, etc.

C. Politicking

1. he influences governments and nations (Is. 14, Ez. 28, Dan. 10)
2. Ps. 106:36-37 – “all the gods of the nations are demons.

2. IN GOD’S CHILDREN

- A. creating doubt (Gen. 3:1-5)
- B. persecuting (Rev. 2:10)
- C. hindering service (1 Thess. 2:18)
- D. infiltrating the church (Matt. 13, 2 Cor. 11:13-15)
- E. dividing the church (2 Cor. 2:5-11)
- F. tempting to sin

Second v. 10 – Let’s focus on our enablement – or the power to win in life!

The whole book of Ephesians talks about this enablement.

First – v. 10 has power promised

Aspect of God's enabling us to "be strong"

---- to be victorious is 3 power words :

- strong – enduomai = enduing
- strength – kratos = dominating
- might – ischus = possessions

Therefore Christian, you have power promised

11 to 7 power words in 1:19-20

1. negathos – "greatness"
2. dunamis – "power" = inherent power
3. energeia – "working" = ability power
4. kratos – "strength" = dominion power
5. ischus – "might" = possession power
6. egeres ress – power
7. ekaOis – coronation power

Many years ago it was a spiritual highlight of my life to spend some time in the 500 year old home of Martin Luther....on the wall of his study was the faint stain of an inkwell that smashed and spilled ink. Luther was so aware of Satan and his opposition he angrily threw the inkwell at him. A verse of "A Mighty Fortress" captures the moment "the prince of darkness....". The verse that reminds us of the spiritual conflict we are in is Eph. 6:12

We need to put on the armor of God because of the enemy we face! Remember – Our enemy Satan opposes everything God does. For example:

1. JESUS IS TRUTH (John 1:17) John 1:17 For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. SATAN IS LIES (John 8:44; 2 Cor. 4:3,4) 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,⁴ whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.
2. JESUS GIVES LIFE (John 5:24) John 5:24 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from

death into life. SATAN GIVES DEATH (John 8:44; Heb. 2:14) Hebrews 2:14 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,

3. JESUS PRODUCES SPIRITUAL FRUIT (Gal 5:22,23) Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. SATAN PRODUCES FLESHLY FRUIT (Gal 5:19-21) Galatians 5:19-21 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness,²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,²¹ envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.
4. JESUS MATURES (James 1:2-4) James 1:2-4 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.⁴ But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. SATAN DEVOURS (1 Pet. 5:8) 1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.
5. JESUS LIBERATES (John 8:31) John 8:31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. SATAN ENSLAVES (2 Tim. 2:26) 2 Timothy 2:26 and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.
6. JESUS DEFENDS US (1 John 2:1) 1 John 2:1 My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. SATAN ACCUSES US (Rev. 12:10) Revelation 12:10 Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.

So you have this tremendous conflict going on all the time between God and Satan, in the life of a believer. Also we must remember our enemy is not hypothetical but real. The fact of Satan's attack is laid out clearly in four New Testament passages:

1. *Acts 20:31* – Paul warns the Ephesians of the attack of their church by wolves from the inside and false teachers from the outside.
2. *2 Cor. 2:11* – Paul tells us to not be ignorant of Satan's devices.
3. *James 4:7* – James tells us to resist the devil
4. *1 Pet. 5:8-9* – Peter tells us to be sober, vigilant, and aware of Satan's schemes.

A point to remember is our enemy is biblically:

1. Identified – "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood." Man is not our enemy. Jesus hated sin and loved sinners because He knew that the sinner was not the enemy. The real enemy is he who is behind the sinner, the "god of this world." According to 2 Cor. 4:4, "he has blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them." We should feel loving, sympathetic, gracious, merciful pity towards sinners, because they are just dupes of Satan (2 Tim. 2:26). Man is not the enemy. Our enemy is beyond the human level. The point that Paul is trying to make is that our battle is not a human battle, it's a supernatural one. Because of this, we can't fight it on our own, we must appropriate God's power, and put on the armor.
2. Defined – "principalities, ... powers, ... rulers of the darkness of this world, ... spiritual wickedness in high places." Satan is not a solitary enemy. He has a force of demon beings so vast, they are beyond our ability to know. The demonic forces are highly organized.
 - THEIR ORGANIZATION. At their creation – God created all the angels at one time. Since angels do not procreate, they were all created at some distinct point in eternity past and have

existed since that time. The different categories or orders of angels, before Satan's fall, were as follows (from highest to lowest) :

- archangels (1 Thess. 4:16; Jude 9)
- principalities (Eph. 1:21; Col. 1:16)
- powers (Eph. 1:21; Col. 1:16)
- thrones (Col. 1:16)
- dominions (Eph. 1:21; Col. 1:16)
- mights (strengths) (Eph. 1:21)
- cherubim (Gen. 3:24; 2 Kings 19:5; Ez. 10:1-22; 28:14-16)
- seraphim (Isa. 6:2,6)

Among the fallen angels (v. 12)

- “principalities and powers” – involved in high operations.
- “rulers of the darkness of this world” (literally – “world rulers of this darkness”) – these are demons that infiltrate the political structure of the world. Behind the scenes, ruling the world, are demonic forces.
- “spiritual wickedness in high places” (literally – “wicked spirits”) – these are the vile, wretched, rotten, evil spirits who go about doing all they can to make life more evil.

Now lets see the pieces God wants us to wear.

Eph. 6:10-20 – Paul sees a soldier prepared for warfare and draws spiritual insights.

1. Loins Girt – Will (v. 14) = preparedness, committed, ready to go
2. Breastplate Right – Heart (v. 14) = consecrated – guard heart
3. Feet Shod – Life (v. 15) = confident
4. Shield Faith – Mind (v. 16) = sheltered, spiritual shield (1 Pet. 1:3-9)
5. Helmet of Salvation – Mind (v. 17) = secure, spiritual security (Col. 3:1-4)
6. Sword of Spirit – Mind (v. 17) = scriptural triumph (2 Cor. 2:14; Col. 3:5-17)
7. Praying Always – Mind (v. 18) = supplied/sustainer (Col. 2:6-10)

Now let's see the significance of each –

1. Loins girt with the belt of truth – we saw this is an ancient way to talk about being committed – ready to go.

Take truth and run with it – Therefore commitment.

It's like the bacon and egg breakfast. The chicken participates and the pig commits.

2. Breastplate of Righteousness

What was a Roman breastplate made of?

Roman soldiers had different kinds of breastplates. Some were made out of very heavy linen covered with overlapping pieces of metal. The most familiar one that we know about, however, was the molded metal chest plate that went all the way from the base of the neck to the top of the thighs – covering and protecting this extremely vital area.

- covered heart (fig. of mind) and intestines (fig. of emotions (feelings)).
- To cover the inward parts with the breastplate of righteousness = a holy consecrated life! What does a covered/protected heart with God's righteousness look like?

First off, what are the elements we must permanently have as a part of our spiritual dress?

- ✓ Battle Gear Part # 1 = belt: Our wills must be committed to Jesus "loins girt"
- ✓ Battle Gear Part # 2 = BREASTPLATE OUR HEARTS MUST BE CONSECRATED TO JESUS "breastplate of His righteousness"
- ✓ Battle Gear Part # 3 = shoes Our walk must be confident in the finished work of Christ "feet shod"

These three, commitment, consecration and confidence, can never be set aside. If your WILL is COMMITTED and your HEART is CONSECRATED and your LIFE is CONFIDENT in Christ, then you are living a daily life of HOLINESS in the VICTORY of JESUS!

How can we be sure? Here is a readiness checkup. An exam to see how prepared for spiritual victory we are:

1. SPIRITUAL HUNGER CHECK: Are you faithful in daily time in the Word of God?
2. SPIRITUAL CONTACT CHECK: Are you habitual in prayer times, keeping in touch with the Lord?
3. SPIRITUAL OVERFLOW CHECK: Are you speaking to others unashamedly about Christ in every day life?
4. SPIRITUAL TREASURE CHECK: Are you giving money sacrificially for the advancement of Christ's church and keeping the rest as a good steward of Jesus?
5. SPIRITUAL OBEDIENCE CHECK: Are you following the commands of Jesus in His Word as the pattern for living your life?
6. SPIRITUAL MINISTRY CHECK: Are you loving, leading and/or serving your family in a Christ-like way?
7. SPIRITUAL HEALTH CHECK: Are you keeping your account clear with Jesus by confession, cleansing, and repentance of all disobedience, lies, wrong thoughts and deeds?

Now for the last four pieces of our armor. All of them deal with our mind, which is the spiritual battlefield. Remember that all of these are choices we can make in order to win the battle each day.

Battle Gear Part # 4 = shield: OUR mind must be sheltered by faith

- ✓ Isaiah 26:3 "The steadfast of mind Thou wilt keep in perfect peace, Because he trusts in Thee.
- ✓ 1 Peter 1:3-9 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,⁴ to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,⁵ who are

kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials,⁷ that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,⁸ whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,⁹ receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls.

Battle Gear Part # 5 = HELMET: THE SPIRIT MUST SECURE OUR MIND

- ✓ Colossians 3:1-4 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.² Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.³ For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.⁴ When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

Battle Gear Part # 6 = sword: our mind must be triumphing by the word

- ✓ 2 Corinthians 2:14 Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.
- ✓ Colossians 3:5-17 Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.⁶ Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience,⁷ in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.⁸ But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth.⁹ Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds,¹⁰ and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,¹¹ where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all. ¹² Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;¹³ bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.¹⁴ But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.¹⁵ And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.¹⁷ And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

So, how can we have this shield of faith to lead us to a secure victory? Some helpful insights come from a look into the soldiers gear of the first century Roman army.

There were two basic types of shields in Paul's day. The first was a small, round shield (Greek, *aspis*) strapped onto a soldier's arm by two leather straps. This was the shield used in close up battle. It would deflect the swords and daggers in hand to hand combat. This was an important shield but not the one Paul is speaking of.

The second shield (Greek, *thureon*) is the one Paul describes in v. 16. This was a very large shield built on a wooden slab five feet high and three feet wide. The wood was covered with metal and a special leather that was soaked in water to extinguish and arrows tipped with fire that might be shot in the course of the battle. With the average height in Paul's day of five feet, most soldiers would be completely covered when they stood behind this shield. In the Roman way of doing battle the foot soldiers would often plant these shields in the ground side by side and thus form an impenetrable wall of metal behind which they safely stood against spears, arrows and even fiery missiles.

So Paul said, faith is the barrier behind which we stand and see all that Satan and his hosts throw at us is deflected and extinguished. Just as the Romans were undefeated as long as they employed the legionaires in battle using these shields, so Jesus always wished to lead us in triumph as we walk by faith behind Him our shield and defender!

Often the Lord has promised us Himself as our shield :

- ✓ Genesis 15:1 After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.”
- ✓ 2 Samuel 22:31 As for God, His way is perfect; The word of the Lord is proven; He is a shield to all who trust in Him.
- ✓ Psalm 3:3 But You, O Lord, are a shield for me, My glory and the One who lifts up my head.
- ✓ Psalm 5:12 For You, O Lord, will bless the righteous; With favor You will surround him as with a shield.
- ✓ Psalm 18:2 The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.
- ✓ Psalm 18:30 As for God, His way is perfect; The word of the Lord is proven; He is a shield to all who trust in Him.
- ✓ Psalm 33:20 Our soul waits for the Lord; He is our help and our shield.
- ✓ Psalm 119:114 You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in Your word.

Remember what this shield can do: Ephesians 6:16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.