



# 8 | GENESIS 3:1

## JESUS AND SPIRITUAL WARFARE

*One of God's greatest avenues of sanctification in the Christian life is marriage and children. Marriage is not about getting the special person of your dreams. Marriage and children are all about being sanctified through service to one another.*

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## Call to Worship

Praise the LORD! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens!  
<sup>2</sup> Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his excellent greatness!  
<sup>3</sup> Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp! <sup>4</sup> Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and pipe! <sup>5</sup> Praise him with sounding cymbals; praise him with loud clashing cymbals! Let everything that has breath praise the LORD! Praise the LORD! —Psalm 150

## Songs

*Waymaker*

*A Mighty Fortress is Our God*

*Jesus Strong and Kind*

*You've Already Won*

## Announcements

**WELCOME:** We are glad you are here! Be sure to grab a Welcome Packet if you are visiting with us.

## Introduction

Remember that old news clip that shows **President Franklin D. Roosevelt** addressing Congress the day after the Japanese attack on **Pearl Harbor** in December of 1941? He said this is “**a day that will live in infamy**.” What he was that in reality was: **America was already at war**. I am not the president, but I have a declaration to make: You and I are at war!<sup>1</sup>

In Genesis 3, we have the first introduction to spiritual warfare in the Bible. A serpent shows up. He can do much worse than damage a building. He can destroy a soul and send it to hell. **Satan goes to war against humanity in Genesis 3**, and he's taking no prisoners.

**Genesis 3:1-13** | Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” <sup>2</sup> And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, <sup>3</sup> but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” <sup>4</sup> But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. <sup>5</sup> For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

<sup>6</sup> So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. <sup>7</sup> Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. <sup>8</sup> And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

<sup>9</sup> But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” <sup>10</sup> And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.” <sup>11</sup> He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the

<sup>1</sup> Tony Evans, *Tony Evans Speaks Out on Spiritual Warfare* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2000), 5.

tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" <sup>12</sup>The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." <sup>13</sup>Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

This is **not a physical war with traditional weapons of warfare like guns, tanks, missiles, and bombs**. This is a spiritual warfare that is being waged in every town, city, state, country, and continent on earth for the heart of men, women, and children. Eternal destiny is at stake. Eternal rewards are at stake. This is like no war that people have ever seen, and it is as real as any battle waged throughout the pages of history. God has given us a war chest and provided armor and weaponry in it.

This study will begin to answer the question where did sin come from? This question creates further questions. When were the angels created? Who is Satan? Was Satan at one time good? How did he fall from heaven?

We are studying in the book of Genesis chapter 3, and up until this point we have learned that God made a wonderful creation all without sin in it. But we come to a curious verse in Genesis 3

**Genesis 3:1** | Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?"

It certainly wasn't this way in the beginning. Genesis 1:31a tells us that "God saw everything that he had made, and behold, **it was very good**." Every creature that had breath gave praise to God. Adam and Eve worshipped the Lord in perfect holiness. There was not even a shadow of sin in their hearts. What shone from within them was the radiance of righteousness. In the beginning, everything in the world was beautiful and pure. But that was in the beginning.

Sadly, a radical change occurred. **Now much of what is in the world is ugly and evil**. Look in any newspaper or on the **news or media**. There you will see photos and video and news recording the wretchedness and wickedness of the human condition. And if there were cameras that could photograph the human heart, you would not find what God made; you would not see thoughts that were only pure and good and true. No, there inside the human heart you would see a that which displeases God. God made the human heart to love him and seek after him, but instead we rejected him.

*Jeremiah 17:9* | The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?

Now of all the millions and millions of human beings that now live upon the earth, "**there is none righteous, no not one**" (Rom 3:10), although the first two people were created "very good." God created perfect people, so what happened to the human race? How did a world that was once so wonderful for man become so sinful and sorrowful? What happened? To answer these questions, we must go back to a time at the very beginning to the time when God created the angels.

Key thought: We have the victory in our Lord Jesus Christ! We must not be ignorant of Satan evil schemes. Be on guard. We are more than conquerors through Jesus Christ!

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## 1. JOY IN HEAVEN (JOB 38:7)

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When did God create the angels? The Genesis account does not tell us. The first angel we meet is a fallen angel in the form of a serpent in Genesis 3:1.

## GOD CREATED THE ANGELS

So, when did God create the angels? The Genesis account does not tell us. According to Job 38, it was sometime during the first week when God created angels.

**Job 38:7** | The morning stars [*a metaphor for angels*] sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy.

There were **multitudes of angels who lived in heaven with God**. We know this heavenly host was brought into existence very early, because they witnessed the creation of the world and worshipped God for his most wonderful work. The Lord says that when he laid the earth's foundation man was not there, but it seems that the angels were indeed there.

## ANGELS ARE INNUMERABLE

**Psalm 148:1-2** | Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights! <sup>2</sup> Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his hosts!"

Count as you might, but angels are said to be **innumerable**. In heaven there are still "innumerable angels" worshipping God (Heb 12:22). Heaven is filled with the sound of God's holy angels, a host "**numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands**," singing praises to the Lord (Rev 5:11). All these mighty angels were created, like us, to praise and worship and glorify the Lord. Day and night they praise and worship him. "**Holy, holy, holy**" continually and constantly (Isa 6:3).

## ANGELS ARE GOD'S SERVANTS

They are God's servants. God created the angels to be his servants. According to Hebrews 1:7, God made them to be **like gushes of "wind" who minister like wondrous "flames of fire"**. "He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire" (Heb 1:7).

Psalm 103:20-21 give us their job description.

**Psalm 103:20-21** | Bless the LORD, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word! <sup>21</sup> Bless the LORD, all his hosts, his ministers, who do his will!

They are servants sent to help true believers, both Old and New Testament saints. In Hebrews 1:14, speaking of the angels, the writer of Hebrews asks:

**Hebrews 1:14** | **Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve** for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

So the angels were created by God and for God's glory (Col 1:16), but the Lord graciously uses this heavenly army of angelic beings to serve us and help us, the saints of God. How great is the LORD that our heavenly Father has for us!

## ANGELS ARE CELIBATE

Angels do not get married. **There is no need for marriage.**

**Matthew 22:30** | For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.

Angels have no need or desire for marriage. Being immortal, they have no need or desire to propagate their kind. Marriage, ordained of God for the propagation of the species down here, is not a part of life in heaven. **The elect angels never get tired, never get hungry**, never grow old, never are tempted, and have no need for marriage. They have no need to procreate. They have no need for a helper.<sup>2</sup>

## ANGELS REFLECT GOD'S GLORY

Angels are unbelievably beautiful to look at. The apostle John, to whom God revealed the sight of many angels in heaven, described the appearance of one of them. He testified:

*Revelation 10:1* | I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow over his head, and his face was like the sun, and his legs like pillars of fire.

Some angels have wings and proclaim day and night that God is Holy. Isaiah described the scene he saw around the throne of God with angelic messengers shouting "**holy, holy, holy**" to God day and night (Isa 6:1-3).

**If we saw an angel, they are so beautiful, we might be tempted to worship it.** These heavenly beings were so magnificent that if you or I saw one, we would be tempted to fall down at the angel's feet to worship him. That's what happened when the Apostle John saw one.

*Revelation 22:8-9* | I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me, <sup>9</sup> but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers the prophets."

Now that we know about the angels, we are going to learn that shockingly, **sin did not begin with man. It began with some of the angels.**

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## 2. WAR IN HEAVEN (REV 12:7-9)

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**The devil and his angels were at one time holy.** God didn't create them evil. They chose to rebel against him.

Sin began among some of the angels. The angels were created to praise and serve the LORD in heaven, but many of them were not content with the exalted position that God had given them.

### SOME ANGELS REBELLED

There was war in heaven. We have an account of the fall of the angels in Revelation 12.

*Revelation 12:3-4, 7-9* | Another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. <sup>4</sup> His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth <sup>7</sup> **Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon.** And the dragon and his angels fought back, <sup>8</sup> but he was defeated and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. <sup>9</sup> And **the great dragon was thrown down**, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him."

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<sup>2</sup> John Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of Matthew: An Expository Commentary*, The John Phillips Commentary Series (Kregel Publications; WORDsearch, 2014), Mt 22:30.

**One angel let the revolt.** Jesus witnessed the fall of Satan since it was Christ who is Yahweh that Satan rebelled against.

*Luke 10:18* | I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

Some of the angels left their first position of holiness.

*Jude 1:6* | And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day.

Many angels rebelled against the LORD. They used their God-given gifts of freedom and brilliance and power to treacherously revolt against their Creator, who had so graciously and gloriously blessed them. There came to be a host of other angels, an army of evil spirits, who were opposed to God and everything good.

The rebellious angels became demons and devils. They are now called “cosmic powers over this present darkness” and “spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places” (Eph 6:12). The Bible says:

*2 Peter 2:4* | God did not spare angels when they sinned but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment.

These traitorous angels lost their heavenly home; they were banished forever from the grace of God, being condemned and imprisoned forever in their own wickedness. Wander where they would, they were condemned to perish forever. How great was their fall!

**Human beings have not escaped involvement in this cosmic clash** between good and evil.

*Ephesians 6:12* | For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

## ONE ANGEL LED THE REVOLT

*Satan led the hosts of hell.* He also is leading astray the whole world, and is the chief of the fallen angels, called the “prince of darkness,” the “prince of demons,” the “prince of this world” (Jn 12:31; 14:30).

*He is called the god of this world.*

*2 Corinthians 4:4* | In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

*He masquerades as an angel of light,* but he is the father of lies.

*2 Corinthians 11:14* | And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.

*John 8:44* | [The devil] was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

## SATAN ACCUSES THE SAINTS

*He is called the Devil and Satan,* because (as the Greek and Hebrew words mean) he is an accuser, a slanderer, an adversary.



*Revelation 12:10* | I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.

*He is called the evil one:* “...the whole world lies in the power of the evil one” (1 Jn 5:19), for he is “the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience” (Eph 2:2).

*He is called the tempter* who entices men to sin (Mt 4:3). Jesus says in John 8:44, “**He is a liar and the father of lies**” (Jn 8:44). He is called “the deceiver of the whole world” (Rev 12:9).

*The devil is also alluded to as “Lucifer.”* Lucifer means the shining one or the morning star, because he was created as a bright and brilliant heavenly being (although now he only masquerades as an angel of light). God gave this so-called Lucifer an exalted position among the heavenly host, but he was not content.

### SATAN WANTS GOD’S THRONE

**Lucifer wanted to take the position Most High himself!** Lucifer was not content being a ministering spirit, whose purpose was to worship God and whose service was to obey him. In prophesying against the earthly king of Babylon, Isaiah alludes to the events that transpired in heaven between God and Lucifer during this “war in heaven”.

*Isaiah 14:12-15 (NKJV)* | How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! *How* you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! <sup>13</sup> For you have said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; <sup>14</sup> I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.’ <sup>15</sup> Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit.

**Make no mistake about it, Satan wants God’s throne,** and he wants your devotion. Anytime a person sins, they are giving authority and power and control to the wicked one. Realize that Satan’s destiny is “the lowest depths of the Pit” – the lake of fire, and he wants to take everyone he can with him.

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## 3. WAR ON EARTH (GEN 3:1)

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**Earth is now the new war zone.** This war is still being waged; the battle ground had simply shifted and extended to include another part of God’s dominion. Earth became the new war zone. At some point in time here on earth, Satan began “going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it” (Job 1:7, 2:2)

### SATAN FELL FROM HEAVEN

**The war on earth began when Satan fell from heaven.** In those first early days, what did Satan find as he roamed and prowled around this world? Remember when God created the world, it was “without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep” (Gen 1:2). Some believe that the earth’s underworld was a holding cell for these evil creatures. God created the heaven and earth, but there has been a rebellion in heaven, and God has cast the devil and his angels to earth. Remember Jesus’ eyewitness testimony of Satan’s fall.

*Luke 10:18* | I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

Enter Satan into the Garden of Eden....

## ENTER THE SERPENT

**Genesis 3:1** | Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’”

Satan found Adam and his wife, male and female, who were made of flesh and blood. They must have looked strange to Lucifer. They did not shine like the angels. They were children of God, both pure and good, and they reflected the light of the LORD.

Satan hated that light! He hated holiness and he hated these humans! He must snuff out their light, which shone so clearly, not only in this new world, but in the entire universe. Yes, this “**Prince of Darkness**,” the devil, must snuff out their light, but how?

## THE SERPENT'S WAR

*Ephesians 6:12* | For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

**The war in heaven is now a battle on earth.** It is a war between the Holy One and the evil one. Satan has no power compared to our infinite God. It is not an equal fight. Satan is a created being, a little ant compared to the Lord God Almighty. Nevertheless, the Bible, from beginning to end, from Genesis to Revelation, speaks of this battle.

**Satan brought the war to earth.** Satan had no power over Adam and Eve at first. He was not always the “god of this world.” As we begin Genesis 3, we find that man is in charge of the earth. He’s been given dominion over it to rule in it.

**Satan had no power.** He could not shrivel so much as a blade of grass, because the earth was not yet his domain. He had no power in this world, for all authority had been given to the man and woman. They had been given rule over all the earth. It belonged to them, and they belonged to God, not Satan.

The only way Satan could conquer the world was to conquer Adam and Eve. **The only way Satan could take control of this world was to take control of the man and the woman.** The only way Satan could become “the prince of this world” was to destroy its God-appointed monarchs. All Satan had to do was make the man and woman fall. All he had to do was make them sin, make them eat from that forbidden tree, and they would surely die!

**Satan was already experienced in this line of work having already enticed multitudes of heaven's angels to rebel against God.** If he could lead legions of angelic beings to follow him, why not these weak little worms of the earth as well? How could they possibly stand against an angel, who was so much stronger and more powerful than they were? Of course, on their own they could not. If they were alone in this battle, against Satan and his army of demons, they were surely and hopelessly and eternally lost, but thanks be to God, they were not alone! God was with them!

**Satan is so enticing that when the day of evil came, Eve was enticed, and then Adam followed** Eve. These were people without sin natures, and they were enticed. Don’t go near temptation. Satan knows how to “wage war” against your soul.

## THE SERPENT'S NATURE

Satan is now utterly depraved. He’s a psychopathic angel. He has no mercy, so he does not go after Adam at first. He goes after Eve, the woman.



*John 8:44* | The devil... was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

**Humans are born totally depraved.** That means we have sinful tendencies, but we still have a conscience. Every part of us is broken and fallen. The fall into sin has affected everyone in the totality of our being. Our mind is confused. Our heart is selfish and rebellious. Our body is fallen apart. There is a totality to it. But the devil is **utterly depraved**. He is a complete **sociopath**. He has no conscience. He makes Hitler look like an innocent schoolboy. He makes a serial killer look tame. Satan is the author of lies. He is the author of murder. Have nothing to do with him!

## THE SERPENT'S ATTACK

*Genesis 3:1* | Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?"

With all of that background, look at Genesis 3:1 again. Consider what is happening in Eden. The serpent does not approach the man, Adam, but Eve, the man's wife. **Adam is priest in the garden.** He's to be a **mediator** for his wife. **He's the protector.** He's walked with God and his wife in the cool of the day, fellowshiping with the Almighty. **He's the head. He's the leader.** Adam should be next to his wife, protecting her. But he's on the sidelines watching his wife be tempted by the evil one. There the wicked one is telling his lies, and Adam does nothing. He doesn't understand the damage this demonic serpent can do.

*1 Peter 5:8* | Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

## ALLIGATOR FARM

Several years ago, my family and I visited an **alligator farm in the swamps of Louisiana.** Ironically **one of our guides had his arm in a sling** because he had been recently attacked by an alligator. Personally, I was just glad he had kept his arm! Some alligators can get up to 25 feet in length. They can eat a human being.

As fearful as alligators are, **the damage that the demonic world has done** and can do **should keep you far away.** Determine to draw near to God and stay far away from the wicked one. Live a life of surrender and holiness for God.

## THE SERPENT'S STRATEGY

HE USES SIN TO ENTRAP US. Adam failed in protecting his wife. **He ignored the threat of the serpent.** All men, married and single, need to be the men we should be so that human flourishing can take place. Be the man. Take responsibility. Don't make excuses. We need to stop giving our authority over to Satan. We do that by any sin we may commit. Ephesians 4 specifically mentions the sin of anger.

*Ephesians 4:26* | Be angry and do not sin. Give no opportunity to the devil.

There are numerous sins listed in Ephesians 4 and any one of them gives an opportunity for the devil. **Any sin yields authority to the wicked one** by sinful ways or even attitudes. Keep your distance! **What can we do to resist Satan?** It requires **a total surrender of your heart to God.**

*James 4:7-8* | Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. <sup>8</sup> Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

The way to resist Satan's temptation is to **know the word of God**. Resist like Jesus did. Respond with Scripture and Satan has to flee. Remember Jesus within you is infinitely greater than Satan.

*1 John 4:4* | **Greater is he that is in you** than he that is in the world.

## THE SERPENT'S DEFEAT

**Jesus is coming "in flaming fire**, taking vengeance on those who do not know God and who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess 1:8).

The day is coming when Satan gathers the nations together against the Lord, and Satan and his followers are easily defeated and thrown into the lake of fire, where they will remain forever. Here is **the second coming of Christ, where Satan is forever defeated**.

*Revelation 20:9-10* | Fire came down from heaven and consumed them, <sup>10</sup> and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Satan's defeat at the second coming is resounding. Hell and sorrow are forever banished from the earth. Sin's power and presence is expelled as God comes to dwell with man on the earth. Don't be discouraged by all the suffering and the sorrow. **Remember that we are victors with Christ!**

*Romans 8:37* | In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

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## 4. THE WARRIOR'S ARMOR (EPH 6:14-18)

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One I was at our church building studying several years ago. All the sudden the fire alarm goes off. I call the fire department which tells me to call 911. So, I'm about ready to call 911—so far about three and a half minutes have passed—and **suddenly in front of me are two fire trucks and eight firemen decked out head to toe in full fire gear!** They are on the alert! They come running toward the building with **pickaxes ready to tear down the front door**. I'm glad I was there. I find it fascinating that in our towns throughout our nation with only a moment's notice, **firemen can be on the scene in a moment!** They are our heroes.

In the Bible we are told that we as Christians should be ready at a moment's notice with our spiritual gear on. We are soldiers for Christ.

### THE BELT OF TRUTH

The first piece of God's divine armor he gives us is the belt of truth.

*Ephesians 6:14a* | Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth.

In the Old Testament God wears this belt (Isa 11:5; 59:17). The first thing the soldier always did when he was getting ready to meet the enemy, was to gather all his clothing together and fix it firmly in position by means of this tight band or belt which then held all his clothing in position.

You will find that this very picture frequently used in the Scriptures. We see this illustrated spiritually by Peter when he says:

*Romans 6:14* | Therefore gird up the loins of your mind. —1 Peter 1:13, NKJV

Spiritual victory comes from applying the word of God to your mind and living it out in your life. You cannot live for God if you are being controlled by fear or anxiety. If your mind is filled with lustful thoughts and covetousness or immoral fantasies, you can't serve God. You are paralyzed.

Honestly, **if you lost your belt, you lost the battle**. You didn't have time to gather your garment. You had to have your hands free to fight. If you don't have the belt of truth girding up your mind, you are a dead duck in the realm of spiritual warfare. You have to have intimacy with God. You have to hear from God in his word on a constant basis. How's your walk?

## THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

*Ephesians 6:14b* | Stand therefore... having put on the breastplate of righteousness.

If God "put on righteousness as a breastplate" (Isa 59:17), then so should we. This is a breastplate that God himself made. Specifically, it's forged through the life of Christ. His righteous deeds guard us and protect our most vulnerable part: our heart.

Our **salvation and sanctification can never be through our own power** or our own perfection. The only way to put on this armor is to **look to the cross of Christ**. Without the breastplate, we are completely unprotected from the dragon, who is the accuser of Christ's church. He slithers around whispering all our sins to us. We are sinners in need of Christ's righteousness.

**Righteousness means being made right**. It's putting on our justification and living that justification out in sanctification, holiness. Christ's righteousness gives us right standing with God. We could never protect ourselves from Satan's arrows without this breastplate. Notice the armor is not our own, but God's. Paul said he did **not have his "own righteousness, but the righteousness of God which is by faith"** (Phil 3:9).

If you are justified, God will bring you holiness and righteousness in your life. Every child of God is "**predestined to be conformed** to the image" of Jesus Christ (Rom 8:29).

## THE BOOTS OF PEACE

*Ephesians 6:15* | Stand therefore... and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.

The boots of peace represent **the aggressive, forward moving, posture and attitude of victory and growth** that Christ has gained for us. Today we have shoes for every conceivable type of activity. We have dress shoes, work shoes, leisure shoes. In athletics there are special shoes for every sport, sometimes several types for a given sport. A tennis player might wear one type of shoe on a concrete court, another kind on clay, and still another on grass. Likewise, football and baseball players wear different shoes to play on different surfaces. A soldier's shoes are more important even than an athlete's because his very life could depend on them. As he marches on rough, hot roads, climbs over jagged rocks, tramples over thorns, and wades through streambeds of jagged stones, his feet need much protection. A soldier whose feet are blistered, cut, or swollen cannot fight well and often is not even be able to stand up—a perilous situation in battle. Without his boots, a soldier cannot very well handle his sword or shield and cannot advance rapidly or even retreat.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> MacArthur, *Ephesians*, 354.

The boots give us the spiritual swagger of heart because the Lord has made you ready through his own blood. Our swagger comes from the victory of Christ, not our own boasting, which would be foolish. You cannot play football very well in dress shoes. The bottoms are too slick. You'd be sliding all over. What you need is cleats. A soldier does not go out to war in tennis shoes, but in combat boots! And so, we as Christians must always be **prepared, alert, awakened, and ready for battle knowing he already has the victory!**

The boots are ones which take us places that need God's peace and reconciliation. We must be prepared each day to share the gospel of peace with a lost world. The most victorious Christian is a witnessing Christian.<sup>4</sup> Is there a **forward movement of the gospel** in your life? Are you growing in character? Are you ready to always give out the gospel of peace?

## THE SHIELD OF FAITH

**Ephesians 6:16** | In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one.

With the shield of faith, we have the confidence that God wins. The **shield was large, usually about four feet by two feet**, made of wood, and covered with tough leather. As the soldier held it before him, it **protected him from spears, arrows, and "fiery darts."**

**Together!** The shield has some help alone, but it is most powerful when it is linked with the other soldiers. The edges of these shields were so constructed that an entire line of soldiers could interlock shields and march into the enemy like a solid wall. Roman soldiers lined up side by side in close formation with their shields together, and all of them were covered as they advanced. This suggests that we Christians are not in the battle alone.

From the moment we follow our Lord by faith, we will be tested in all kinds of ways, and sometimes God even allows "a messenger of Satan" to harass us, so that we might remain humble (2 Cor 12:7). But even if we are not directly afflicted, his darts will constantly barrage us. How do we get rid of Satan?

**James 4:7** | Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

You have to **apply the word of God by faith**. When you **get rid of lies** and **replace them with truth**, you are **bulletproof!**

**Don't listen to your emotions or your circumstances** but put up the shield of faith! How did Jesus do it? When he was tempted, he picked up the word of God to defend himself. He answered the deceiver:

**Matthew 4:4** | It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."

Are you lifting up your shield of faith? Are you **sheltering yourself in the word**? Are others sheltering you with the word? You can't do it alone?

## THE HELMET OF SALVATION

**Ephesians 6:17a** | And take the helmet of salvation.

The helmet is not the cocky attitude of a highly trained CIA operative-but a humble swagger that comes from confidence in God's invincibility, his guaranteed victory, his assured triumph or what's known in Scripture simply as "rejoicing in your salvation." We know who is the ultimate Champion: Jesus Christ. It's the confidence of the twice-born. And when you wear this attitude

<sup>4</sup> Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2, 58.

(this helmet) then you carry the boast and confidence of the ultimate David, Jesus Christ. In him, you truly are undefeatable. We say with Paul:

*Philippians 1:6* | I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

We have the victory! He will surely complete his work of sanctification in us!

## THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

*Ephesians 6:17b* | And take ... the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

The sword to which Paul refers here is the shorter sword, which varied in length from six to eighteen inches. It was the common sword carried by Roman foot soldiers and was the principal weapon in hand-to-hand combat. Carried in a sheath or scabbard attached to their belts, it was always at hand and ready for use.

The sword of **the Spirit is also an offensive weapon**, capable of inflicting blows as well as deflecting those of the enemy.

*Hebrews 4:12–13* | For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. <sup>13</sup> And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

A material sword pierces the body, but the word of God pierces the heart. The more you use a physical sword, the duller it becomes; but using God's Word only makes it sharper in our lives.

*A Two-Sided Sword.* This sword is double-sided. **One side defeats the devil.** The other side **cuts and tenderizes our hearts** so that they come to know Jesus. One brings destruction to the kingdom of darkness, the other delivers people into the kingdom of light.

It's not the Bible lying on your coffee table that makes the enemy flee, but the trained mind filled with the knowledge of truth, activated by the power of the Holy Spirit and exercised in an appropriate situation.

### Conclusion

Some of you know **my family's heritage is from Scotland**. My oldest son learned how to play the bag pipes and toured with a bagpipe band for four years. His great grandfather came from Scotland after fighting for his country in the First World War.

I've told you before how he enlisted when he was only 14 years old. He had some fight in him, though he was just a boy. World War I was an awful conflict. Hundreds of soldiers would be encamped in ditches. Rain, cold, and hunger could not stop them.

Their motto was "**for the Crown of Scotland!**" They would think of their homeland and their families, and they would clothe themselves in loyalty for the crown of Scotland! My grandfather was a prisoner of war for a time. He had so much fighting experience before he came to America on a boat to Ellis Island in 1925, and he had only a quarter century under his belt. Why did he fight so valiantly? He fought for his homeland.

That's why we fight as Christians. This battle is only temporary. And we know that we are fighting from a standpoint of victory. We want to see so many come out of the Land of Darkness and the City of Destruction to the Celestial City where Christ reigns.

Dear brothers and sisters be strong in the Lord!

### Benediction

*Romans 8:38-39* - For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.