

Armor of God Part Two

Ephesians 6:15-17

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW

We continue our series in Ephesians 6, which speaks of the armor of God. When we study Ephesians 6 it is possible to get lost in the illustrations and metaphors of body armor and miss some very simple lessons God wants us to learn.

God has given us 7 practical things that when employed will defend us against the work of the devil. Those 7 elements of the Christian life are: ***Truth, Righteousness, Evangelism, Faith, Salvation, The Bible, Spirit Powered Prayer.***

Last time we discussed the belt of truth. What we discovered is that it is a great temptation to lie to God to ourselves and to one another. When we are mature enough to admit our true spiritual condition we can confess our sin and eliminate many footholds the devil might exploit if we are not honest with God and ourselves. When we speak directly to one another instead of trying to build coalitions or triangulating we will eliminate unresolved issues that often divide churches friendships and families. The belt of truth is very effective at defending ourselves against the lies and schemes of the devil. Let's move on to the breastplate of righteousness.

RIGHTEOUSNESS

and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS,

Isaiah says of Jesus: ***"He put on righteousness as his breastplate, and the helmet of salvation on his head;***

The armor of God is something that God owns. It is God's armor and God is willing to share His armor with us. This idea of putting on something that belongs to God is clearly seen in the righteousness of Jesus that each

believer wears as his or her own. This leads us to the doctrine of imputed righteousness.

IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS

2 Corinthians 5:21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Jesus Christ took away the guilt and shame that is a result of our sins and he was treated on the cross as though He was the guilty one. When He died for our sins, our guilt and shame died with Him. When he rose from the dead the guilt and shame were removed from those who follow and trust Jesus Christ for salvation.

If you are a Christ follower you are “in Christ.” And those who are “in Christ” have no reason to hide from God in shame.

Romans 4:5 However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.

Some people claim and even dare to teach that our good works save us. This passage could not make it clearer that our good works will not get God to think of us as righteous.

Because we are in Christ The Father applies the righteousness of Jesus to us. We receive this righteousness when we receive Jesus Christ by faith as our Lord and Savior.

This is the nature of the breastplate of righteousness. It is walking with confidence before God and men that we are in good standing with God. We do not have to cower and hide from God. The devil will throw out accusations and he will try to get us to live in shame and guilt over the sins of our past. Part of our spiritual armor is the truth that God loves us for free. The Father chose to consider us righteous just like Jesus because we are in

Jesus Christ. And no accusations will stand against us. When we sin the accuser will try to get us to hide, but Jesus paid enough so that we may confess our sins and walk in the righteousness that God has given us.

That is called imputed righteousness or applied righteousness. The bible tells us to live like the righteous people God says we are. God calls us a king's kid, so live like a king's kid. That way, we will not battle doubts. We can walk in confidence because God calls us righteous, and we are acting righteous, therefore we know God has gotten a hold of us.

RIGHTEOUS LIVING

Romans 6:13

Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.

2 Corinthians 7

¹Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

When we are saved God calls us righteous. Not only that, God will change our desires so that we want to act righteous. The Holy Spirit lives in us so that when we do not act like the righteous people that God calls us to be it will really bother us. God uses our entire life to change our behavior so that we are becoming more and more like Jesus. Our faith and our actions act as a breastplate to fend off the lies and accusations of the devil.

ROMAN BREAST PLATE

The Roman breast plate was made of chain mail. Mail is metal material that is woven like fabric or small chain links. This is the material from which a lot of body armor was made. The Roman breastplate was the

ancient equivalent of a bulletproof vest. The righteousness of Jesus given to us as a gift has made us bullet proof to the devil. We must hold tight to the truth that God says we are righteous and he does not accuse us. We are not at war with God. If God is for us who can be against us?

READINESS TO TESTIFY

¹⁵**and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE;**

The shoes of readiness

When we put something on our feet that means we are ready to move.
SHOES ARE ON THE DOGS ARE BARKING

Each time I put my shoes on my dogs start going mental and jump around like crazy because they know I am getting ready to move and they love to follow me around the property. They know that putting my shoes on means I am ready to move.

GET READY TO MOVE

When we are ready to share the hope that is ours in Christ we are ready to move where Christ wants us. Few people have taken the time to think about what they will say if people ask them about Jesus. When we think through our testimony and familiarize ourselves bible passages that we will share if given the opportunity then we are ready to move.

When we understand how to apply the bible to every day life and think through different aspects of life and how the bible applies to them, we are ready to move and defend people and ourselves from the lies and philosophies of the devil.

THE FIGHTING SHOES

The Roman sandal was bound with leather straps and the soles were studded with nails. It made the soldier sure footed. The shoes in Paul's

picture are put on as a sign of readiness. After all, what are feet for? Paul's quotation of *Isaiah* in sheds more light on this picture: "***And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'***"

Peter says: "***But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.***"

Revelation says: "***They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.***" This does not mean that victory depends on our eloquence. The emphasis in here is on the willingness to go.

FAITH

¹⁶in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

The Roman armor had a shield, usually made of wood or wicker, that covered the whole length of the body. The shield is faith. The image is profound. The picture Paul paints is that of a soldier who holds a position from being overrun. Jesus has won the victory, and God uses us to hold the terrain.

The enemy tries to exploit the fact that the spiritual things are not visible to the naked eye. He bombards us with what is visible and tries to make us loose heart because of the problems that we see with our human eyes. Jesus conquered death for us, but we need God to give us faith to continue to believe that when people around us are dying with cancer? The enemy will rub this in. It takes faith to see beyond these tactics. We have to understand what the writer to the *Hebrew* says: "***Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.***"

Martin Luther reported that the devil came to him and attacked him with accusations about the sins Luther committed throughout his life. God gave Martin Luther the faith to answer the enemy with the following statement : "**Write, washed in the blood of the Lamb,**" and that answer will help us to put out the fiery darts of accusation that are aimed at us also.

We should be careful to avoid sin, to confess whenever we stumble, and to have ourselves cleansed regularly of all pollution. We have to cling to the promise that: "***If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.***"

SALVATION

¹⁷**And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION,**
The helmet of salvation.

As the shield protects the heart, so the helmet covers the head. Our mind, our thinking process, must be protected by salvation in Jesus Christ. Just as smog impairs vision, so sin impairs thinking. The devil is very clever, but he is no match for God. It is amazing how much fog is lifted from our thinking once we put our mind under the control of the Holy Spirit and put the helmet of salvation on our head.

REVIEW ELEMENTS OF DEFENSE

Thus far we have covered a number of ways in which we can defend ourselves against the work of the devil. Let me name the ones we have covered;

truth, righteousness, readiness to testify, faith, and salvation.

TAKING IT HOME

1. Are you asking The Holy Spirit to show you areas of your life where you are not honest with God, with yourself, or with others? If not, will

you do so if you realize that no matter what God leads you to discover He loves and receives you even when you are at fault?

2. Do you ever fall into the trap that God loves you only when you have all your ducks in a row? Do you believe that righteousness is a free gift from God?
3. Will you take the time to think through your testimony and take the time to apply scripture to many areas of life so that we can bring God's truth into this world?
4. Would you take the time to be filled with God's Holy Spirit so that we see things with eyes of faith and we see things with an eternal perspective?