

## Put On the Whole Armor of God (Part 2)

### Ephesians 6:14-18

Ephesians 6:14-20 (ESV) Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, [15] and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. [16] In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; [17] and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, [18] praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, [19] and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, [20] for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

### Introduction

- A. Last Sunday we looked at Ephesians 6:10-13 which is the first part of this section of Scripture that commands us to **Put On the Whole Armor of God**.
- B. In the sermon last Sunday we looked at why the armor matters. A brief summary:
  - 1. We are weak apart from Christ and His power (with which we are strong).
  - 2. We are in a war (we have 3 enemies: the world, our flesh, and the devil and his crowd).
  - 3. We live in an evil day (obviously).
- C. We also looked at who the devil is what his schemes are. While there are several specific schemes his primary aim will always be twofold. Destroy unity and purity.
  - 1. The war we are in is real and it is serious. Though you will hear me preach the sovereignty of God we do not hold to a mechanical view (nor does the Bible).
  - 2. One of the chief dangers we face is to believe that we live our lives in a time of peace. To do so is to be asleep in the light. We drift away.
  - 3. The fight we are in means our lives as Christians will not be easy. We will find ourselves in circumstances where simply standing is good and faithful.
- D. To stand firm will require armor. There are seven concise descriptions of this armor. Each piece is necessary if we are to stand firm.
  - 1. These descriptions likely come from Roman soldiers which Paul likely had in view as his house arrest continues. Paul is in chains, yet Paul is standing firm.
- I. **First, and I would suggest foremost, is fasten the belt of truth (having fastened).**

- A. Nothing matters more than what we think (believe). Truth always sets us free. Lies and deception always enslave.

John 8:31-32 (ESV) So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, [32] and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

- 1. Truth comes to us by God's Word. Truth from God's Word is the primary way we know Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is truth.

John 14:6 (ESV) Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

- B. When we know truth we are free to live life to the fullest for the glory of God. This is because knowledge of truth leads us to proper practice.
1. This is why Ephesians 1-3 only gave us one command (remember at one time you were separated from Christ). Ephesians 1-3 is the indicative (facts about that which is not visible or obvious).
  2. Based on the truth of Ephesians 1-3 we our lives a certain way because truth causes convictions to be formed in our lives.

Truth is the first thing we put on. Without it we are completely lost. It means that we have a settled conviction with regard to the truth; it means there are no uncertainties, no doubts. It means also that there must be no lack of clarity. Martyn Lloyd-Jones in *The Christian Soldier: An Exposition of Ephesians 6:10-20*, p 189

- C. Truth leads us to convictions (more than preferences).

Too often, what we call convictions are actually preferences. Real convictions are based on revealed truth (that is, Scripture). Preferences are based on personal desire. Convictions are constant; preferences change with desire. Convictions demand faith; preferences rely on the emotions of the moment. Paul Tripp in *Age of Opportunity*, p 131-132

A conviction is a determinative belief: something you believe so strongly that it affects the way you live. Someone has observed that a belief is what you hold, but a conviction is what holds you. You may live contrary to what you believe, but you cannot live contrary to your convictions. Jerry Bridges in *The Discipline of Grace*, p 162-163

- D. Here are six characteristics of biblical convictions (Paul Tripp in *Age of Opportunity*, p 132 ff).
1. A biblical conviction is always based on a study of, submission to, and application of Scripture.
  2. A biblical conviction is always predetermined.
  3. A biblical conviction will not change with circumstances.
  4. Biblical convictions are inflexible.
  5. True biblical conviction is bold.
  6. True biblical conviction is always lived out.
    - Teens obey and honor parents.
    - Anyone flees an illegal party.
    - On the job you wouldn't have a meal alone with the opposite sex.
    - A wife wouldn't visit the internet for a sympathetic ear.
    - Finances (honesty with taxes, debt, tithing and giving).

A person who does not have biblical convictions does not have an internal restraint system. Paul Tripp in *Age of Opportunity*, p 133

- E. Whenever we fall and we find that we are not standing firm, it is because we believed a lie about what is in our best interests.
1. If we don't have the belt of truth we won't get the other pieces of the armor.

## II. Here are the other six pieces of armor.

### A. Second, put on **the breastplate of righteousness**.

1. The breastplate was the armor that protected the trunk of the body. It protected your organs, especially the heart.

Proverbs 4:23-26 (ESV) Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life. [24] Put away from you crooked speech, and put devious talk far from you. [25] Let your eyes look directly forward, and your gaze be straight before you. [26] Ponder the path of your feet; then all your ways will be sure.

2. Watch what you love and how you spend your energy and time. Everything we think and do proceeds from our heart.

### B. Third, for shoes, put on **the readiness given by the gospel of peace**.

1. The Roman soldier wore sandals which were fastened securely. They also had spikes on the bottom of the sole for traction. Feet must be secure to stand.
2. The gospel enables us to firmly stand in assurance and confidence.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (ESV) For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

- We have peace with God, not condemnation. That is how we care for folks.

### C. Fourth, take up **the shield of faith**.

1. Here Paul makes a transition. Paul moves from things we have to things that we take. You need the shield of faith because flaming darts will come at you.

Ex: Temptations and trials (suffering). Be prepared in advance for what will come by knowing the book and the person of Jesus Christ.

### D. Fifth, take **the helmet of salvation**.

1. The Roman helmet was not like a football helmet. It was a leather cap. It's purpose was to protect the head. We guard our thoughts.
2. The danger of weariness (we grow hopeless). According to the Bible, in the end we win though in the meantime the battle rages all around us.

1 Thessalonians. 5:8-11 (ESV) But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. [9] For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, [10] who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. [11] Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

- The hope of our salvation is to one be with Jesus, to see Him, to be like Him.
- Our hope is heaven.

### E. Sixth, take **the sword of the Spirit** which is the Word of God. We are back at truth.

1. Everything else that is armor is defensive. The sword does defense but it also takes the offense. The sword is not passive!

Hebrews 4:12 (ESV) 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.

2. Read the book (reading plan?)! Study the book! Meditate on the book!

Ex: Many time-wasters exist that do not feed the soul (TV).

### III. **Seventh, the final weapon is prayer (not really armor but communication is essential in war).**

A. Prayer is not a piece of a uniform. Prayer is a way of life. When we pray we ask and we listen.

1. Prayer acknowledges our need for God. Prayer, says John Piper, is a wartime walkie-talkie. God loves desperate prayer.
2. Our prayers reveal our passions and desires. Paul's passion and desire was the spread of the gospel. Paul asks for prayer to that end (not freedom or health or wealth).

B. So what are our passions and desires?

1. Do we desire for God's name to be hallowed?
2. Do we desire God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven?
3. Do we desire salvation to come to a friend or family member?
4. Do we desire preaching and worship at Living Hope to be more anointed?
5. Do we desire our families to be fruitful for generations?
6. Do we desire unity in the church?
7. Do we desire purity in our lives?

C. Prayer is work. Prayer flows from humility and faith because we see our weakness and we know that God is a God of might and power.

1. Our prayers reveal who we believe God to be.

Ex: I drift and so I need a list.

### **Close**

A. There you have the whole armor of God. The command comes to you and to me to put on the whole armor of God. It is not automatic. And it is not only for ourselves.

B. The whole armor of God enables us to bring glory and pleasure to God by us becoming like Christ in giving our life for others. To live a life of love is the supreme thing.

1. The root of spiritual disease is found in being pre-occupied with self. Jesus Christ bids us come and die so we gain life we cannot lose.
2. So, Living Hope, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints. Love unity and purity always.

C. Perhaps it isn't good news that we are in a battle but it is the truth. It is definitely good news that the battle is the Lord's and He is with us to the end. He is our peace and rest.