



The Armor of God

Ephesians 6:10-18

There is a very real battle going on all around us, and even in us. We are tempted to follow the crowd and go the ways of the world. But when the Lord God is living in us, we have His grace, power and wisdom to follow the Holy Scriptures, to trust our lives for Jesus Christ and His family-of-faith.



Day #1: In the Lifeboat

Pretend the floor is the ocean. Now imagine there was danger in the water. What if the water contained something much deadlier, stronger than you? What if it were teaming with sharks? Would you want to just be *near* your boat, or would you rather be *in* your boat? You would certainly want to be *in* the boat!! Although sharks are deadlier and stronger than you, the boat is a stronger defense. If sharks were circling, you would be crazy not to sit deep inside the protection offered by the boat! You certainly would NOT be sitting at the railing, with feet and hands dangling in the water.

The Bible describes the devil not as a shark, but as a ravenously hungry lion (1 Peter 5:8). Lions (beasts, not football team) can very much be like sharks. A lion prowls around constantly, seeking to destroy those he deems weaker. Because Jesus loves you and has created you for His purposes, the devil hates you. The devil wants to trick you, to ruin you and every good thing in your life. He tries to draw you into danger by making sinful behavior appear cool. He wants you to believe lies about God, lies about others, and even lies about yourself.

But even though the devil is a tricky liar, he is nothing compared to the truth! Jesus said, "I am...the Truth". Truth ALWAYS wins! God is more wise and loving and powerful than we can imagine. With just a word, He created the universe, everything in it, and everything beyond it. God is in control of all things. And He **freely and generously** offers Himself to us.

+ Finally, be strong **in the LORD** and **in His** mighty power.- Ephesians 6:10

Stay strong by staying **in the LORD**. "Abide in", or "Remain in" Him. It is sort of like climbing into your personal indestructible Lifeboat everyday. When you are **in the LORD** our Savior, hell cannot have its way with you to harm you. Sure, it can bump your boat, startle you, but cannot bite off your arm. You are safe **in** God's care.

***** So the question is, HOW can I be **in** God? (Read & listen to His Word; worship Him in prayer; sing (or hum) His praises; thank Him; talk about the good things He is doing.) It is easier and less scary to **stay in** God's protection than to jump ship and try to get away from God's care. Why defend against the devil's bite on your own? As a family, ask each other, "Am I in Jesus' Lifeboat today?"

Day #2: At War

Did you know that all believers are at war? It is not a battle against other people. It isn't even a battle for control over our freedoms & country, our schools & families, our minds & attitudes. The war **is against** hell that wants to harm souls.

+ For our struggle is **not against flesh and blood**, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world **rulers of this darkness**, against the **spiritual forces of evil** in the heavenly places.- Ephesians 6:12

Satan wants people to go against God and His Word. He wants our thoughts to turn away from God. He wants us to think that evil is ok?! or even good?! Satan is a clever, deceiving demon-spirit. Hell knows that if he can get our minds onto things other than God and His Word, then it is easy-peasy to get us to rebel. But Satan's secret plans to keep us away from Jesus are NO MATCH for God's incredible mercies.

Make no mistake, once you have trusted Jesus to forgive your sin, God adopted you into His family-of-faith! Satan can NEVER take that away. But the devil also knows believers who are trapped in sin, are choosing to NOT be blessed. They may kill off their life with God. They cannot bear spiritual fruit. Such double-minded souls do not display God's glory well.

Battling Satan's schemes is impossible. I am mortal and my sinful nature clings to me like sewer slime. I am no match for hell's master liar, deceiver, manipulator. The great news is that God has **freely and fully given us** everything we need to defeat the devil!

For this reason, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to take a stand on the evil day and, after you have done everything, to stand. Ephesians 6:13

Look at the verse above. *Whose armor do we put on?* (God's armor.) This spiritual armor is stronger than any metal on earth. It is limitless protection we need for our minds from the devil's temptations. It is the very power of God, and it is freely given to each believer, for each believer's safety. When you are **in** God's armor, you are **in** His protection.

***** Ask Jesus to make you aware of the spiritual battle going on around you. Ask Him to show you the devil's tricks to distract you, tempt you, or lie to you, harm you.

Day #3: The Armor

Ephesians 6:14-18 describes the **armor** of God. We know that the writer of these verses, Paul, was in prison for several years. He had no company other than the Roman soldiers who were guarding him. Paul really knew what the soldiers' armor looked like. Paul compared God's protection for us to those suits of armor. A soldier wears armor to protect him from his enemy's blows. Soldiers also have weapons with which to strike enemies.

Day #3 continued:

Stand, then, with the **belt of truth** buckled around your waist, with the **breastplate of righteousness** fastened in place, and with the readiness that comes from the **gospel of peace tied to your feet like sandals**.

- Ephesians 6:14-15

First, we must know **truth**. Just as a soldier's belt holds his armor in place and carries his weapons, the truth holds our spiritual armor together. The devil is called the father of lies (John 8:44). He is afraid of the truth because the truth is that God is immeasurably greater than he is. The truth is that when Jesus died on the cross, He freed all from the guilt of sin. And with His resurrection, Jesus gives guaranteed freedom to live now and forever in Him.

In a suit of armor, **the breastplate** guards the soldier's heart and other very important organs. Without a solid breastplate, a soldier would easily be killed with one blow from the enemy's sword or arrow. Being **righteous** is being right, perfect, or without sin. God is righteous. The **only** way for us to be righteous is by faith in Jesus, trusting Jesus who died to take away our sin (Romans 3:22). We put on the breastplate of righteousness when the Holy Spirit works faith in us with His Word. The enemy destroys those who do not trust in Jesus as their Savior.

Every good soldier needs **solid footing**. Without it, he would slip and fall, and the enemy would strike him. The Bible tells us to be prepared or ready with the gospel of peace to give us sure footing. **The gospel of peace is being SURE that because of Jesus' sacrifice for me, I am saved from my sin; I have nothing to fear from God or from people. I only have this sure footing when the Holy Spirit uses His Word to create trust in Jesus.**

You find all of these things only in Jesus Christ. He is the truth (John 14:6). When God's Word creates trust in Jesus, the Father immediately and completely says we are holy, righteous, pure in His sight. Jesus brings us peace with God (Romans 3:22, Luke 7:50).

Day #4: The Weapon

The Holy Spirit continues to describe the armor of God:

At **all times hold up the shield of faith**, with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the Evil One. Also take the **helmet of salvation** and the **sword of the Spirit**, which is **the Word of God**.

- Ephesians 6:16-17

The soldier's shield is used to defend himself against the enemy's attack. The **shield** is held up in front of the soldier to block arrows that are sailing toward him. Several times, the Bible says that lies are like deadly arrows (Psalm 25:18, 26:18-19). From the first book of the Bible to the last, we see that the devil is a liar - especially about God and those who follow God (Genesis 3:4-5; Revelation 12:10). Only **by faith** in Jesus, which is **a gift from God**, will stop the devil's lies from landing in our hearts and minds (Ephesians 2:8).

The helmet may be the most important part of the armor because it protects the soldier's head. Without a helmet,

Day #4 continued:

the soldier would easily be crushed. Paul compares our salvation to a **helmet**. Salvation is being saved from the punishment that we deserve because of our sin. Having faith in Jesus is the **ONLY** way to have salvation (Acts 20:21). Once we are saved, the devil cannot destroy us.

Then we come to the **sword**. This is a weapon with which the soldier can strike his enemy. Paul says our weapon is the Word of God. God's Word is living and active. It is sharper than any sword on earth (Hebrews 4:12). One of the wonderful things that the Holy Spirit does is He reminds us of Bible verses that we have learned. When you are in a situation where the devil is trying to attack you with doubts or lies, the Holy Spirit will remind you of the truth, of Holy Scripture that you know (John 4:26, John 16:13). The Bible calls that your spiritual sword!

Set aside a special time each week when you can refresh Bible verses that fit your life. The more you study God's word, the more strength you put into your armor.



Day #5: "Pray On"

Take a few minutes to draw a picture of the armor of God. Can you remember all of the pieces Paul wrote about? (Belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, shoes of the gospel of peace, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, sword of the Spirit)

The last truth the Holy Spirit reveals is **prayer**.

At every opportunity, **pray** in the Spirit with every kind of prayer and petition. **Stay alert** for the same reason, always **persevering in your intercession** for all the saints. - Ephesians 6:18

Prayer may not seem powerful, but it certainly is. We worship God by asking Him to carry out His mercy and gracious will, to us the power of the Holy Spirit. That is a very powerful thing indeed! Paul uses the word **dunamis** to describe the power of God's Holy Spirit (Ephesians 3:16). This is the same word that we get the word **dynamite** from. Now that is some amazing power!

Every person who has faith in Christ, crucified and risen has God's merciful power. In God's grace, you are protected when the devil tempts, tricks, lies (1 Corinthians 10:13). In God's gracious armor, you are safe, the devil is defeated and you are blessed to live a life that is fruitful, a winner, pointing other people to Jesus Christ, extending Christ's Kingdom of powerful kindness.

Look at your picture and pray about each piece of armor. Thank God for providing the **breastplate** of righteousness and the **helmet** of salvation by sending Jesus to take away your sin. Ask God to protect you from the devil's lies with the **belt** of truth and the **shield** of faith. Ask God to keep your faith firmly planted and ready to share the gospel of peace. Ask God to use the **sword of His word** to defeat the devil's schemes in your life and in the lives of those around you. **Stay sharp & alert. Be thankful to Jesus!**