

The Whole Armour Of God
(Ephesians 6:10-18)

- I. Christians must fight an ongoing battle with the world, the flesh and the devil.
- A. Paul prescribes proper equipment for this battle. **EPH 6:10-18; 1TH 5:8.**
 - B. All of the equipment is needed. The partially equipped warrior is likely to be overcome.
 - 1. The lack of a defensive piece provides a target for the enemy to exploit.
 - 2. Not having a true sword, or not being convinced that the true sword is true, leaves one without the power that the Holy Spirit has invested in Scripture. This is “spork” Christian warfare.
 - 3. The whole armour of God is needed to *stand against the wiles of the devil* (v. 11), and to *withstand in the evil day* (v. 13). You will have to defend yourself against Satan’s cunning head/heart games (**2CO 11:3**) and also against the troubles he uses to oppress you, per **2CO 12:7**.
 - C. Resistance is not futile; it is required: “...having done all...” (v. 13). **JAM 4:7; 1PE 5:9.**
 - D. Victory is achievable, albeit with scrambling and scars, unto a good finish. **1CO 10:13; 2TI 4:7.**
- II. The armour is needed for spiritual warfare. **v. 12 c/w 2CO 10:4.**
- A. These are the unseen forces behind lies, ignorance and lust.
 - B. These forces had their fullest expression in the crucifixion of Christ. **LUK 22:53.**
 - C. The work of God’s mighty power in Christ has delivered us from the power of darkness. **EPH 1:19-21 c/w COL 1:12-14.**
 - D. These forces continue to work in the children of disobedience. **EPH 2:1-3.**
 - E. These forces sometimes are manifested in children of light who through ignorance or lust are doing their bidding. **MAT 16:21-23; ACT 5:3.**
 - F. It is helpful to remember that opposition to the truth is owing to the spiritual forces animating them. **GAL 3:1; 1TI 4:1-4.**
 - 1. Depersonalizing error helps us avoid the pitfalls of hatred.
 - 2. We can rather pray for, and witness to such in love to convert them. **JAM 5:19-20.**
 - 3. We can even let them go their own way if unrepentant. **MAT 15:14; 1CO 5:11-13.**
- III. First, we are exhorted to be “...strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might” (v. 10).
- A. This is a reliance upon the grace of God. **2TI 2:1.**
 - 1. The power of grace that renewed us inwardly fits us for battle. **PHIL 2:12-13.**
 - 2. The knowledge of grace strengthens us against false schemes of eternal salvation and from false charges of condemnation. **ROM 11:5-6; 8:1-2.**
 - 3. The accessibility of more grace promises mercy and help in down times. **HEB 4:16; JAM 4:5-6.**
 - B. God’s strength is made perfect in our weakness. **2CO 12:9-10.**
 - C. Our spiritual weapons are “...mighty through God...” (**2CO 10:4**), light sabers of truth which He energizes. **PSA 119:130; ROM 13:12.**
- IV. There is an emphasis on *standing*.
- A. “...stand against the wiles of the devil” (v. 11).
 - B. “...able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand” (v. 13).
 - C. “...stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong” (**1CO 16:13**).
 - D. “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free...” (**GAL 5:1**).
 - E. “...stand fast in one spirit...” (**PHIL 1:27**).

- F. “Stand therefore...” (v. 14).
- G. This is not a battle to be fought lying down, nor won by falling down, nor avoided by turning tail and running (for there is no armour for the backside). **PSA 78:9.**
- H. Of uncertainties and troubles, Paul said, “But none of these things move me...” (ACT 20:22-24).

IV. “Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth...” (v. 14).

- A. Mind that Paul does not say, “Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with tradition/philosophy/emotion/sensationalism/pageantry/loaves and fishes, etc.”
 - 1. It is truth that begins to outfit the saint for successful contention and victory.
 - 2. Truth is the beginning point of Christian salvation. **EPH 1:13-14.**
 - 3. Truth produces fruit for the harvest of victory. **COL 1:5-6.**
 - 4. Truth renders our worship acceptable. **JOH 4:23-24.**
- B. Peter commands, “Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind...” (1PE 1:13).
 - 1. This is a directive to correct thinking.
 - 2. The gospel’s great work is “...bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (2CO 10:5).
 - 3. The first mind to capture is our own. **ROM 2:21.**
 - 4. Pray for wisdom and understanding in earnest and God will reward. **PSA 119:34; JAM 1:5-6.**
 - 5. We should long to neither be deceived, nor to deceive others.
- C. gird: To surround, encircle (the waist, a person about the waist) with a belt or girdle, esp. for the purpose of confining the garments and allowing freer action to the body.
 - 1. Girding embraces the concept of freedom through restraint.
 - 2. Spiritual agility is enhanced by the restraining confines of the truth.
 - 3. “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (JOH 8:32).
 - 4. “None are more hopelessly enslaved than those who falsely believe they are free.” (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)
- D. loin: In the living body. Chiefly, pl. The part or parts of a human being or quadruped, situated on both sides of the vertebral column, between the false ribs and the hip bone. 2. Chiefly *Biblical* and *poet.*, This part of the body, regarded as the part of the body that should be covered with clothing and about which the clothes are bound; so, *to gird (up) the loins* (lit. & fig.) to prepare for strenuous action.
 - 1. Striving against temptation and sin is strenuous, and moreso when hindered by ignorance, falsehoods or heresy. **2TI 2:15-18.**
 - a. Without the truth, our strenuous action is so much wild thrashing about and wasted time.
 - b. Without the truth, our strenuous action may actually be working against our own salvation rather than for it. **ACT 26:9.**
 - 2. The other articles of Christian armour cover parts of the body which have tough bone beneath them.
 - a. But the loins are a soft spot, very susceptible to fiery darts.
 - b. Without the truth we are easy marks. **ROM 16:17-18.**
- E. Consider truth’s relationship to the other pieces of armour/armament.
 - 1. Truth is not independent of righteousness. **JAM 4:17; ROM 1:18.**
 - a. Truth without righteousness is hypocrisy and self-condemning.
 - b. Truth without righteousness is like holding the blade of the sword in battle.
 - 2. Truth is not independent of the gospel of peace.
 - a. Truth should generate and accord with peace.

PSA 119:165; 2CO 5:18-20; COL 3:15.

- b. Truth without peace is like marriage without love: dry, unsatisfying, stressful.
- c. “Let the truths of God rule in your heads, and let the peace of God rule in your hearts.” (Matthew Henry)
- 3. Truth is not independent of faith.
 - a. Truth is a chosen means to salvation only when believed (and put into practice). **2TH 2:13.**
 - b. Truth without faith is ineffectual to save. **HEB 4:2.**
 - c. The truth about the upcoming flood would have worked no salvation for Noah without faith. **HEB 11:7.**
 - d. Truth without faith is like real fruit to a famished man who is not persuaded that it isn’t just a plastic ornament.
- 4. Truth is not independent of (hope of) salvation.
 - a. If there is no hope within us of a blessed future state, what great purpose is there in the truth?
 - b. Without salvation, we might as well scrap the truth. **1CO 15:13-14, 32.**
- 5. Truth is not independent of Scripture.
 - a. Truth must ever be measured by Scripture. **PSA 119:142, 151; ISA 8:20.**
 - b. Science, history and philosophy books change regularly and present only partial truth.
 - c. God’s word is constant and is all truth. **PSA 119:151; PRO 8:8.**
 - d. Truth without Scripture may be nothing more than paganism.
ACT 17:28-30.

V. “...and having on the breastplate of righteousness;” **EPH 6:14.**

- A. breastplate: A piece of armour for protecting the breast.
- B. righteousness: Justice, uprightness, rectitude; conformity of life to the requirements of the divine or moral law; virtue, integrity.
- C. That which protects the breast also protects the heart.
 - 1. The heart of man is subject to emotional affectation and is a deceiver, and so is a poor determiner of right and wrong. **JER 17:9; PRO 28:26.**
 - 2. Even after receiving a new heart in regeneration (**EZE 11:19-20; 36:26-27**), man must guard against the deceptions by and of the heart. **HEB 3:12; JAM 1:26.**
 - 3. Well-intended converts to Christ and the gospel of His grace can be zealously affected by false emotional appeals to the heart. **GAL 4:17.**
 - 4. The breastplate of Christ’s *provided and imputed* righteousness protects our hearts against the manipulative lies of Satan that promote righteousness by the law. **GAL 3:21; 2CO 5:21; ROM 5:19; PHIL 3:9.**
 - 5. The breastplate of *practical* righteousness is an auxiliary to the knowledge of salvation by grace.
 - a. It does so by uprightness and not making provision for the flesh to fulfil its lusts. **ROM 13:14; ROM 8:3-5; GAL 5:16; 1JO 5:18.**
 - b. Practical righteousness guards against a condemned heart, and thus gives us a confident assurance before God. **1JO 3:18-21; 2:29; 3:7.**
 - 6. Without practical righteousness, our assumption of salvation by provided righteousness (grace) is ill-founded.
EPH 2:8-10; 2TI 2:19; ROM 3:8; JUDE 1:4.
 - a. Without practical righteousness, our confidence and assurance of God’s

- favor is thwarted.
- b. We will be as David in morose desperation yearning for the former joy of his salvation. **PSA 51:11-12.**
 - c. Worse, we may be delivered to strong delusion and condemnation. **2TH 2:10-12.**
- D. The breastplate must be made of the proper righteousness or Satan's fiery darts will get through to the heart.
- 1. Pharisee righteousness which was hypocritical and extra-biblical is useless. **MAT 5:20; 23:2-4; MAR 7:1-5.**
 - 2. Works-righteousness doctrine is Christ-denying bondage. **ROM 10:4; GAL 3:10; 5:1.**
 - 3. Super-righteousness which binds one to extremes of duty, or assumes flawlessness is possible before the resurrection, is destructive. **ECC 7:16.**
- E. Consider the relationship of righteousness to the other pieces Paul notes.
- 1. Righteousness is not independent of truth.
 - a. Righteousness cannot be defined apart from truth. If that were the case, it could be concluded that a lie or an error is right. Definitions of good and evil would be elastic and reversible. **ISA 5:20; MAL 3:15.**
 - b. This implies that there must be an immutable standard of truth. The relationship of righteousness to Scripture will be examined further on.
 - c. A breastplate of righteousness might protect some vital organs, but how would one know for sure that the breastplate was properly constructed and fitted without the truth?
 - d. The carnal philosopher might say, "There is no such thing as absolute truth." (an absolute statement---Is it true?). Thus, "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools," (**ROM 1:22**).
 - e. He who would wear the breastplate of righteousness must first have his loins girded about with truth. Paul's order in **v. 14** is obvious, sensible, necessary.
 - e. Righteousness without truth is like a jury trial verdict determined by a roulette wheel. Only by sheer accident would the verdict be just.
 - 2. Righteousness is not independent of the gospel of peace.
 - a. The *gospel* (good news / glad tidings) is that Christ made peace with God for us through His righteousness. **COL 1:20; 2CO 5:21.**
 - (1) Trusting in His work of righteousness for us yields peace in the soul. **MAT 11:28-30; ROM 7:24-25.**
 - (2) Liberated from the deceptions of the adversary about the purpose of practical righteousness (*evidential* instead of *causative*) we can boldly and joyfully press forward, working out our own salvation with fear and trembling. **PHIL 2:12-13; GAL 2:20-21.**
 - b. Righteousness yields peace. **ISA 32:17; MAT 6:33-34.**
 - c. Righteousness that does not yield peace is likely false or super-righteousness which demands more of self or others than does God Himself. **COL 2:18-23; ECC 7:16.**
 - (1) This is likely to manifest itself in a lack of mercy or tolerance. **LUK 18:9; MAT 23:23.**
 - (2) He that is not at peace with God or himself will also not be at peace with others. Remember King Saul.
 - d. Of what value is the breastplate of righteousness if our unshod feet are

- wounded by the devil's Lego pieces of Pharisee righteousness and inner turmoil which cripple us?
3. Righteousness is not independent of faith.
 - a. Practical righteousness is impossible without faith. **HEB 11:4, 6.**
 - b. As noted above, faith trusts in God's work and promises rather than self-righteousness or works-righteousness. **ROM 4:3-5; PHIL 3:8-9.**
 - c. Faith accepts one's own failures and inadequacies as part of this life and looks to God's covenant faithfulness for relief. **2SAM 23:5; ROM 8:33-34.**
 - d. Without a proper shield, a fiery dart of Satan might still get through our breastplate. c/w **1KI 22:34.**
 - (1) *Harness* in **1KI 22:34** is from the Hebrew *shiryan* (SRN H8302) which can mean "...a breastplate, coat of mail, habergeon, harness."
 - (2) It is rendered *breastplate* in **ISA 59:17.**
 - (3) What of the man who is trusting more in his righteousness than God's? Will not his soul be vexed by his failures? Or could he not just as easily slip into self-righteousness and pride?
 - (4) What of the man who is striving to live righteously before God but is reluctant to trust Scripture's promises in a difficult area of obedience? Is he any better than Israel at Canaan's border or Peter facing social pressure? **HEB 3:19; GAL 2:11-12.**
 - e. Jesus Christ augmented His righteousness with faith to defend Himself against Satan's temptations. **MAT 4:1-11.**
 4. Righteousness is not independent of (the hope of) salvation.
 - a. The hope of salvation is great incentive for doing righteousness. **1JO 3:1-3.**
 - b. Righteousness yields assurance of eternal salvation. **JOH 5:28-29; ROM 2:6-7.**
 - c. Christ's righteousness was strengthened by hope of deliverance. **ACT 2:26-28.**
 - d. Without the hope of salvation, righteousness seems pointless. **1CO 15:19, 30-32.**
 - e. If the breast is protected but not the head, millstones of doubt, desperation and defeat can still do us in. c/w **JDG 9:53.**
 - f. Righteousness without the hope of salvation is like running a marathon with no finish line or medal.
 5. Righteousness is not independent of the sword of the Spirit (Scripture).
 - a. Scripture defines righteousness (**PSA 119:128, 172**). It is "...the word of righteousness..." (**HEB 5:13**).
 - b. Righteousness not defined by Scripture may be a false righteousness which:
 - (1) invites chastening due to ignorance of God's will. **LUK 12:48.**
 - (2) invites wrath due to wilful altering of Biblical morals. **MAL 2:17.**
 - (3) invites wrath due to wilful trivializing of Biblical commands. **MAT 5:19.**
 - (4) is a false bondage. **COL 2:20-23; 1TI 4:1-3.**
 - (5) is only a *form* of godliness, a vain shew of piety. **2TI 3:5; MAT 23:5-7, 28.**
 - c. What are the chances of success of a warrior fighting a righteous cause without a weapon, or with a broken or fake weapon?