

The Whole Armor of God *Ephesians 6:10-20*

Introduction

The book of Ephesians is a letter that was written by Paul and sent to the church at Ephesus. In this letter Paul does not confront a problem but rather describes the wonderful gifts we all have received through Christ. He refers to the church as a body, temple, bride and soldier. All of his examples paint a picture of a church that is driven and united in purpose because each member is doing his or her part to bring about a strong and united church. He concludes his letter with a warning about our most dangerous enemy, Satan. He is dangerous to us individually and as a church. Satan is focused on destroying the church, the individual and family. God has not left us ill equipped. He has provided us with His armor. "Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes" (Ephesians 6:11). Putting this armor on not only protects us as individuals, but also as a church family.

Describe What Armor Is

To begin your class, ask your students what armor looks like. Armor is a protective covering. There are several professions that wear special coverings such as astronauts, deep-sea divers and football players. Explain to your students that during New Testament times Roman soldiers wore special protection when going into battle. In Ephesians 6 Paul, the writer of the book, uses the Roman soldier's armor as an object lesson. During the Feast of Tabernacles, we are going to come to a greater understanding of how the armor God provides for us to stand against our enemy—Satan.

Where Does God Tell Us About His Armor?

God tells us about His armor in Ephesians 6:10-20. A Christian is to "be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes" (verses 10, 11).

Why Does a Christian Need Armor?

Satan is a powerful being. Satan cannot be in more than one place at a time, but he has demons to help him out. Satan is a strong enemy that is a lot more powerful than you and I. The good news is that he is not greater or more powerful than God. God's way is the only way we will defeat our enemy, Satan. We are soldiers in God's army. We are not fighting against "flesh and blood" but "against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms" (verse 12). The only way we can win the battle against Satan is if we do what our Commander-in-Chief tells us to do. God has provided each of us with our own special armor that will protect us and when used correctly we will defeat our enemy, Satan.

What Does God Want Us To Do With The Armor?

God says in verse 13 that He wants you to "put on the full armor of God." He doesn't want you to use just a part of the armor, but all of the armor. He has made you responsible for putting it on and using it. God has made you a promise--if you put His armor on each day

when evil comes “you may be able to stand your ground” (verse 13).

What Does God’s Armor Look Like?

Since God has given us the command to take up His armor, we need to know what that armor looks like. As spiritual armor cannot be seen, the apostle Paul compared each piece of God’s armor with the armor a Roman soldier would wear.

Belt of Truth

A Roman soldier would wear a wide strong belt around his middle. This belt would protect his vital organs and it provided a way to keep the other parts of his armor in place. Knowing that his armor was secure the soldier could move with confidence.

The Christian puts on the Belt of Truth by attending church, Bible School, studying his Bible daily and memorizing scripture. When faced to do battle with Satan you are confident that God will be with you. Why? Because you know what the Bible says in Hebrews 13:5, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” You know that God loves you, John 3:16, “For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son...” God has also promised victory, I Corinthians 15:57, “But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Another way to put on the Belt of Truth is to be honest and truthful. Satan is a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44). When you obey God and do all of the above, you are becoming like Jesus Christ. When you are tempted to lie, turn to Christ for help. Christ is the way to truth (John 14:6). He will protect you if you ask.

Breastplate of Righteousness

A Roman soldier’s breastplate would cover him from his neck to his waist both front and back. It was usually made of leather coated with a thin layer of metal for added protection. Some soldiers would wear a square piece of bronze over the chest and under the leather coat as a heart guard. Just as the Roman soldier needed to protect his heart, you too need to and you do this through righteousness.

The Bible says “there is no one righteous, not even one” (Romans 3:10). “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). The good news is that God no longer looks down on you as a sinner when you accept Jesus Christ as your personal savior. God forgives you of your sins (Ephesians 4:32). God graciously credits you with righteousness because Jesus sacrificed His life for yours. “God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21). You put on the breastplate of righteousness when you live your life right before God. God made us with the ability to choose between right and wrong. When you choose to tell the truth and not lie, to be kind and not hateful, to obey and not disobey, you are choosing the right way of life that protects your heart with the Breastplate of Righteousness.

Feet Shod with the Gospel of Peace

If your feet hurt, it is difficult to walk or run, let alone go into battle. A Roman soldier wore shoes different than the ones we wear today. When a soldier went into battle it was important that his shoes were not slippery. A Roman soldier wore shoes made of leather with hobnails in the soles. The hobnails would secure the soldier to the ground and stop him from slipping.

The Christian puts on the shoes of the Gospel of Peace by praying each day and asking for God’s peace. The Bible says, “He [Jesus] is our peace” (Ephesians 2:14). We gain this peace by accepting Jesus as our savior and accepting His gift of salvation. “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...” (Romans 5:1). As you walk through each day, realize that God loves you and all people. You will walk in peace when you do your best to be kind and loving to your brother. “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to

their needs, that it may benefit those who listen” (Ephesians 4:29). You will be walking in peace by doing all of these things because you will be putting Jesus in your life.

Shield of Faith

A Roman soldier’s shield was either made of wickerwork (flexible thin twigs woven together) or leather stretched over a wooden frame. The shield would give him protection from his enemies’ arrows. Knowing the shield was made of wood, the enemy would often set his arrows on fire before shooting them. The Roman soldier would soak his shield in water before going into battle to stop it from catching on fire. Shields were also made with hooks on the side. Soldiers could line up and hook their shields together to make a wall of protection.

Satan throws fiery arrows and darts at us through temptations, insults and desires of the flesh. You put on your shield of faith by never doubting God, trusting Him completely. You must believe that God is able to work problems out for you and that He loves you and is always with you. You hold up your shield of faith by doing what is right and standing up for what you believe God wants you to do even when you have doubts. When you are weak or waver, lock arms with your Christian friends. “Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds” (Hebrews 10:23, 24).

Helmet of Salvation

A Roman soldier would wear a helmet to protect his head. In New Testament times, soldiers’ helmets were made of bronze.

In order to protect your head, you must put the things of God inside and allow good thoughts to control the way you think. Satan wants to attack your mind so that he may lead you astray. Jesus paid the punishment for sin Romans 8:1. Jesus is there for you to have power over sin, “I can do everything through him [Jesus] who gives me strength.” (Philippians 4:13) You put on the

helmet of salvation when you are careful about what you allow to enter your mind. Another way to put on the helmet of salvation is to appreciate the gift of salvation that God and Jesus Christ have given you. Believe and have confidence that you will be delivered from sin and protected from the enemy Satan. “Since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet” (2 Thessalonians 5:8). You now have all the armor of God on. What is needed next is the tool to fight Satan with.

Sword of the Spirit

A Roman soldier’s sword was normally a long broad knife with a handle. Some swords were sharp on both sides while others only one. They were carried in a sheath on the left side. The more a soldier used his sword, the more frequently he would need to sharpen it.

Our sword is the Word of God. Unlike the Roman soldier’s sword that become dull with use, our sword becomes sharper and more effective as it is used. We keep our sword sharp when we study the Word of God and memorize scripture. When you memorize scriptures, they become a powerful weapon against Satan when he attempts to tempt you with wrong thoughts or actions. “All Scripture is God breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16). The last important part to our armor is...

Prayer and Supplication

A Roman soldier would always keep in constant contact with his commander. This is especially true when a soldier is in battle. As a soldier in God’s army, you need to keep in constant contact with your Commanders—God the Father and Jesus Christ. They are your spiritual leaders. You keep in contact by praying daily.