

SPIRITUAL WARFARE
SERIES

THE ARMOUR OF GOD



'Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.' Ephesians 6:10-13

We are at war, whether we realize it or not. This is a war that has raged continuously for thousands of years and will continue until Jesus returns. As a believer, you have automatically taken a position to be in God's camp and as a result, there will be battles you will have to fight. But you're not fighting from a position of uncertainty or weakness, rather you are fighting from the position of enforcing the victory Christ has already won for you.

This study kicks off our series on spiritual warfare and lays the foundation of one of the tools that we have been given which is the armour of God. What is this armour and how do we deploy it effectively, so we don't become casualties of war?

May the Holy Spirit open up our understanding through this series and give us the grace to walk in consistent victory.

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Day 1

We Are Soldiers

'Soldiers don't get tied up in the affairs of civilian life, for then they cannot please the officer who enlisted them.' 2 Timothy 2:4

There are two camps in existence – that of Jesus and that of the world, there is no middle ground. Once you have accepted Jesus as your Lord and saviour you have automatically joined the His camp and enlisted in His army. It's important we understand this because it will help us appreciate the role we play and the power we have. It will also help us understand how to navigate the distractions that will be thrown at us to try and divert our focus.

'But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.' 1 Timothy 6:11-12

'For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.' Jeremiah 29:11

When Paul was giving Timothy this charge, he made it clear that the life of believer requires us to be active rather than passive and that we should be intentional about living out the faith we profess. He called it the good fight of faith, which means it's something that has to be contended for – it won't happen automatically.

We have to be intentional about what we do and what we think, how we live and what we live for. The life of a soldier is driven based on instructions from the commanding officer, because soldiers recognizes the authority the commanding officer has over them. When we accept Jesus as our Lord and saviour what we're saying is that we are willing to submit to Him as the authority over our lives and to do what He says, knowing and trusting that His plans for us are always for good. The One who has enlisted us is more than capable to keep us.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank you for helping me realise that I'm a soldier in your army. Help me Lord to consistently fight the good fight of faith



Day 2

Belt of Truth

'Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist' Ephesians 6:14

In olden days, the Roman soldier had a belt round his waist which served as a useful tool for holding a lot of things such as swords, money and spoils of war. The belts was so firmly tied that regardless of how the soldier moved, everything was kept intact. Likewise if the belt wasn't firmly tied things would be falling all over the place, drastically reducing the soldier's efficiency in battle which could be fatal.

What does this have to do with our spiritual warfare? Just as the soldier had to put the belt on to keep things in place every time he put on his uniform, we also as spiritual soldiers must always be armed daily with the belt of truth.

'I will worship toward Your holy temple, and praise Your name for Your lovingkindness and Your truth; for You have magnified Your word above all Your name.' Psalms 138:2

'In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise' Ephesians 1:13

'Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth.' Ephesians 4:14 NLT

Where do we find the truth? In God's word – this should be our daily pursuit as the truth of God keeps our lives in check and acts as our daily defence. When we face any circumstance that doesn't line up with God's word, we can hold on to the integrity of His word knowing it can never fail us. This is the belt that holds things in place for us. There are so many counterfeits we will encounter in life, it's critical we daily fill ourselves with the truth so we don't deviate from the right path.

Prayer: Father, help me pay the price to spend time in Your word daily so I know for myself what the truth is concerning my life and your word can act as my defence and help me stand firm daily.

Day 3

Breastplate of Righteousness

The breastplate on the armour of the Roman soldier was to protect the vulnerable chest/torso area. As it was made of layers of strong metal, any sword/dagger aimed at the soldier would face the barrier of the breastplate so damage would not be done to the heart or other sensitive internal organs. As most warfare was based on close contact or hand-to-hand combat, no soldier ever went to war without the breastplate.

'He made Christ who knew no sin to [judicially] be sin on our behalf, so that in Him we would become the righteousness of God [that is, we would be made acceptable to Him and placed in a right relationship with Him by His gracious lovingkindness].' 2 Corinthians 5:21 AMP

'So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.' Romans 8:1

Similarly, the breastplate of righteousness protects the areas believers are most fiercely attacked by the enemy – our mind and emotions. Understanding that our righteousness is in Jesus Christ alone and not in ourselves provides a defence against the barrage of accusations and negative emotions that kingdom of darkness may hurl at us. When we remind ourselves and the enemy that Jesus already paid the price for our sins, we are freed from the condemnation that the enemy projects upon us – feelings of being unforgivable or that we have to work to make God forgive us.

'...For the accuser of our brothers and sisters has been thrown down to earth—the one who accuses them before our God day and night.' Revelation 12:10

'Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.' Proverbs 4:23

Beyond unforgiveness, there are several accusations that the enemy attempts to throw at us daily. There are also many issues that could weigh us down and destroy us if we don't guard our hearts diligently – the daily worries and cares of life, our tendency to excess in particular areas. The breastplate of righteousness comes from our faith in Christ and is formed from a practical moment-by-moment obedience to God's Word.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, help me to put on the breastplate of righteousness through a daily committed walk with you.

Day 4

Feet Fitted With Readiness

And having strapped on your feet the gospel of peace in preparation [to face the enemy with firm-footed stability and the readiness produced by the good news]. Ephesians 6:15 AMP

The Roman sandals were interesting in that they were comfortable enough to walk miles in – which was a regular requirement - yet sturdy enough for the soldier to maintain his balance in any type of environment as they had studs in the soles. How does this apply to our spiritual warfare?

'And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, "How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!" Romans 10:15

'But my life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God.' Acts 20:24 NLT

The last two weapons we discussed were largely defensive, but this is one of the offensive tools we have against the kingdom of darkness. As faithful soldiers, we are to be ever ready to share the gospel of peace. However, you can't share what you don't know, so developing this weapon helps you deepen your knowledge of who God is and what Jesus did for us on the cross.

'And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.' Mark 16:15

Sharing the gospel expands His territory here on earth. It may involve much time and effort, but anyone who is committed to sharing the gospel never walks alone. Such a person always has heaven's backing and supernatural enablement to fulfil this mandate from Jesus. As we walk closer with Jesus, the desire to share the gospel with others increases until it becomes second nature to us. As we share the gospel, the light of God's truth lifts burdens, delivers captives and transforms lives. And usually you experience personal transformation first before God begins to use you as a vessel to bring transformation into the lives of others.

Prayer: Lord help me be willing to spread the gospel. I trust that you will give me the strategy and the enablement to fulfil this important mandate.

Day 5

Shield of Faith

'Above all, lift up the [protective] shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one' Ephesians 6:16

The Roman soldiers would lift up their long shields as individuals or groups of soldiers coming together to cover themselves, protecting their units from weapons thrown at them by their enemies. For the believer, our faith in the promises of God is our shield which serves as a first line of defence and dual of guarding and deflecting the arrows of the enemy. The shield of faith has to be lifted which means it must be actively used, not just passively handled.

'Now faith brings our hopes into reality and becomes the foundation needed to acquire the things we long for. It is all the evidence required to prove what is still unseen.' Hebrews 11:1
TPT

'For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.' Romans 8:24-25

'...We can't even imagine the greatness of his power.' Job 37:5

The strength of our faith isn't in ourselves or how much we think we can do, but in the one in whom our faith is placed in. The more we receive revelation of God's character and His unlimited power, the higher and longer we can lift the shield of faith, because there will be times where perseverance will be required.

'So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.' Romans 10:17

Strong faith doesn't just happen, it must be built up through hearing the word of God repeatedly until it moves from our head and sinks into our spirit. We need to read, speak, meditate upon the word which is what will cause faith to be built up in us. This is critical because the enemy's primary agenda is to attack our knowledge of and trust in God and cause us to depend on ourselves or others. Also believers can truly be a formidable force when we come together collectively to exercise our faith on a matter in line with God's word and agenda.

Prayer: Dear Lord, give me a hunger for your word, and let me treasure spending quality time hearing and digesting your word.

Day 6

Helmet of Salvation

'And take the helmet of salvation...' Ephesians 6:17

The purpose of the helmet for the soldier was to protect his head from injury during warfare. The head is a critical part of the body and if damaged in any way, the brain may not be able to send the accurate signals to the body which could lead to the soldier's safety and life being severely compromised during a battle. How do we apply this in our spiritual warfare?

'The message of the cross is foolish to those who are headed for destruction! But we who are being saved know it is the very power of God.' 1 Corinthians 1:18

'...But everyone who endures to the end will be saved.' Matthew 10:22

'But let us who live in the light be clearheaded, protected by the armor of faith and love, and wearing as our helmet the confidence of our salvation.' 1 Thessalonians 5:8

Remember Satan's major goal is to challenge the knowledge of God in our life. As such one of his strategies is to attack our understanding of our salvation and the fact that it is a journey and not a one-time event. We have confidence that Jesus who began a good work in us will see it through to the very end and we will be victorious.

For He [the Lord] put on righteousness like a coat of armor, and salvation like a helmet on His head; He put on garments of vengeance for clothing and covered Himself with zeal [and great love for His people] as a cloak. Isaiah 59:17 AMP

'God's voice is glorious in the thunder. We can't even imagine the greatness of his power.' Job 37:5

'We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God. We capture their rebellious thoughts and teach them to obey Christ.' 2 Corinthians 10:5

What is our confidence of victory? It's not in ourselves because we are flesh and the arm of flesh will always fail. It is in the Lord our God who loves us so much He sent His son to die for our sins. It's in the one whose power is unlimited and is well able to save us in every situation and lead us in the victory He already purchased for us.

Prayer: Lord, help me always take the helmet of salvation to protect my mind from the barrage of negative thoughts and keep my hope of salvation.



Day 7

Sword of the Spirit

'And take ... the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God' Ephesians 6:17

The Roman army used a double-edged sword which could inflict major damage on anyone it penetrated due to its ability to go deep and cut in two directions. This weapon was designed to be purely offensive in nature meaning it was meant for attack alone. What's the spiritual application? The Bible tells us clearly that the sword of the Spirit is the word of God. With the word of God we have the ability not just to defend ourselves, but to cause some real damage to the works of darkness.

'For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.' Hebrews 4:12

'But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'" Matthew 4:4

When the devil tempted Jesus after His 40-day fast, Jesus showed us how to respond to everything the enemy throws at us: "it is written..." The devil has no response to the word of God, because it is God-breathed meaning the Spirit of God is in His word and the Spirit of God is greater than any other spirit.

Why then do we sometimes struggle with this very important tool? Oftentimes we may not have dedicated the time required to study what the word of God says about a particular matter, which leaves us fighting with blunt swords. It's also possible that we may read something and not fully understand what we have read and so we may not be applying the word accurately to the given circumstance. In those circumstances, it's important that we ask the Holy Spirit to open up our understanding so that we can receive a personal revelation of the word. Anyone that has a personal revelation of God's word in a particular area can never be defeated in that area.

Prayer: Lord give me the grace to be a student of your word and as I read, please open my understanding and give me a personal revelation of Your word.



Day 8

Using the Armour

'We use God's mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments. We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God. We capture their rebellious thoughts and teach them to obey Christ.' 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 NLT

Over the last few days we have looked at each part of the armour described in Ephesians 6. We will have seen from our study that it will be impossible to wage war successfully from a passive posture. When we lack knowledge of the word of God or we have an or inconsistent prayer life, we open ourselves up to whatever life or the enemy may throw at us which isn't how God designed us to live.

'Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.' Romans 8:37

'Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.' Colossians 2:15

We are triumphant in Jesus, He already won the victory for us. But if we don't know who we are in Jesus or what we are entitled to, the devil will continue to cheat us because he doesn't fight fair. Make no mistake, the kingdom of darkness knows when a believer knows his/her rights and authority.

'Praise the Lord, who is my rock. He trains my hands for war and gives my fingers skill for battle.' Psalms 144:1

'That finished the devil's harassment for the time being. So he stood off at a distance, retreating until the time came to return and tempt Jesus again.' Luke 4:13 TPT

Some of us may wonder why we need to keep fighting battles if Jesus already won the victory for us. Remember we have an enemy who though defeated, is still on the rampage looking for who to devour in the little time he has left. The easiest prey for him is the believer that doesn't know how to utilize the weapons of warfare God has given us. May that not be our portion. May we cooperate with the Holy Spirit as He trains and equips us to be successful warriors.

Prayer: Father, keep my prayer and bible life alive and active so I know who I am in you and the victory Jesus has given me.



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