

Ephesians series: Finding the Right Wardrobe



May 27, 2018

Ephesians 6:14-20

Key- The battle is real and if we are to be victorious we must put on the whole armor of God.

⁴ Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; ¹⁵ and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: ¹⁸ praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; ¹⁹ and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Paul wrote this while in the custody of Roman soldiers. It was easy for him to look at the equipment of his guards and see how God has equipped the believer. The order in which the pieces of armor are described is the order in which the soldier would normally put them on.

STAND THEREFORE:

Amplified: Stand therefore [hold your ground], having tightened the belt of truth around your loins.

➤ **Stand therefore having your loins girt about with truth**



"The soldier might be furnished with every other part of his equipment, and yet, wanting the girdle, would neither be fully accoutered nor securely armed. His belt...was no mere adornment of the soldier, but an essential part of his equipment...it was of especial use in keeping other parts in place, and in securing the proper soldierly attitude and freedom of movement."

Warren Wiersbe - Unless we are motivated and directed by truth, we will be defeated by the enemy. If we permit any deception to enter our lives, we have weakened our position and cannot fight the battle victoriously. The girdle of truth is not an offensive weapon; it is for protection. When the believer has what I call "an attitude of truth" in his life, this protects him from Satan's attacks. It does not prevent these attacks; it keeps the believer from being harmed by them

Two battleships assigned to the training squadron had been at sea on maneuvers in heavy weather for several days. I was serving on the lead battleship and was on watch on the bridge as night fell. The visibility was poor with patchy fog, so the captain remained on the bridge keeping an eye on all activities. Shortly after dark, the lookout on the wing of the bridge reported, "Light, bearing on the starboard bow." "Is it steady or moving astern?" the captain called out. Lookout replied, "Steady, captain," which meant we were on a dangerous collision course with that ship. The captain then called to the signalman, "Signal that ship: We are on a collision course, advise you change course 20 degrees." Back came a signal, "Advisable for you to change course 20 degrees." The captain said, "Send, I'm a captain, change course 20 degrees." "I'm a petty officer second class," came the reply. "You had better change course 20 degrees." By that time, the captain was furious. He spat out, "Send, I'm a battleship. Change course 20 degrees." Back came the flashing light, "I'm a lighthouse." We changed course.

- ✓ We must stand secure in truth. Absolute truth. Society continues to change truth.

- Major impact on how we raise our children
- Major impact on how we approach marriage
- Major impact on how we deal with morality
- Major impact on how we serve God and others

ITS TIME TO GET BACK IN THE BATTLE! PUT ON THE BELT OF TRUTH!

➤ And having on the breastplate of righteousness



"The Puritan writers called this both the "**imputed and imparted**" **righteousness** of Christ for our lives. Inattention to the law of God in our obedience will flatten us before the enemies. And even more so, forgetting your dependence upon the imputed righteousness of Christ so that you put confidence in the flesh will leave you open to doubt and discouragement.

Breastplate (**thorax**) describes either the chest area or part of the body covered by the breastplate or the protective covering of this area as utilized in combat. **Polybius tells us that it was known as a heart-protector.** Usually it was made of bronze but the more affluent officers wore a coat of chain mail. The front piece was strictly the breastplate, but a back piece was commonly worn as well.

Isaiah prophetically describes Messiah wearing the breastplate of righteousness, recording (in the context of a tragic description of sins by Israel) that...He (Messiah) put on **righteousness like a breastplate**, and a **helmet of salvation** on His head; and He put on garments of vengeance for clothing, and wrapped Himself with zeal as a mantle. 18 According to their deeds, so He will repay, wrath to His adversaries, recompense to His enemies. To the coastlands He will make recompense. 19 So they will fear the name of the LORD from the west and His glory from the rising of the sun, For He will come like a rushing stream, which the wind of the LORD drives. ([Isaiah 59:17, 18, 19](#))

Job declared...

I put on **righteousness**, and it **clothed** me. My justice was like a robe and a turban. ([Job 29:14](#))

The **Psalmist** writes...

Let Thy priests be **clothed with righteousness**; and let Thy godly ones sing for joy. ([Psalms 132:9](#))

Peter says believers are now a "holy priesthood" [[1Peter 2:5](#)] and a "royal priesthood" [[1Peter 2:9](#)] -- how much more important for us to be clothed with righteousness!

In a prophecy of the Messiah, **Isaiah** records that...

"Also **righteousness** will be the belt about His loins, and faithfulness the belt about His waist."

(Messiah is speaking) "I will rejoice greatly in the LORD, My soul will exult in my God; for He has clothed me with garments of salvation, He has wrapped me with a **robe of righteousness**, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels." ([Isaiah 61:10](#))

Revelation 12:10

Christians, through one circumstance or another, often lack assurance. They feel unworthy before God. They feel they are a failure in the Christian life and that God is certain to reject them, and He is no longer interested in them. As Christians, we are constantly aware of our failures and shortcomings. Growth seems to take place so slowly. The first joy of faith has faded, and people often come to doubt God's presence with them, love for them, or forgiveness of their sin. There is a nagging sense of guilt. Their conscience needles them, making them feel unhappy and miserable. They feel God blames them. This is simply a satanic attack, a crafty and devilish accusation, a lie designed to undermine what God is doing in your life.

How do you answer an attack like this? You answer by remembering that you already wear the breastplate of righteousness. In other words, you do not stand on your own merits--and you never did. You never had anything worthwhile in yourself to offer to God. You gave all that up when you came to Christ. You quit trying to be good enough to please God. You came to God the Father on the infinite merits of His Son, who died for you. It is not your own miserable, tattered righteousness that covers your heart, but the solid, impenetrable righteousness of Jesus. And His righteousness is durable enough to deflect any of the arrows of Satan's accusations. ([Spiritual Warfare](#))

Ill.- look in mirror- what would you change?

Failure, sinful behavior, wrong choices.

Self worth and self image

✓ **Don't quit- Understand who you are in Christ!**

➤ **And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace**



Paul likely had Isaiah 52:7 in mind when he referred to having shod your feet: How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who proclaims peace, who brings glad tidings of good things, who proclaims salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns!"

Josephus described them as 'shoes thickly studded with sharp nails' . . . so as to ensure a good grip. the military successes both of Alexander the Great and of Julius Caesar were due in large measure to their armies' being well shod and thus able to undertake long marches at incredible speed over rough terrain."

The protection of the feet and ankles consisted of two parts: (1.) **the sandals**, or shoes, which were probably made so as to cover the foot, and which often were fitted with nails, or armed with spikes, to make the hold firm in the ground; or (2.) with **greaves** that were fitted to the legs, and designed to defend them from any danger. These greaves, or boots, [1Samuel 17:6](#), were made of brass, and were in almost universal use among the Greeks and Romans. (Albert Barnes. Barnes NT Commentary)

([Romans 5:6-10](#)). It is this confidence of divine support which allows the believer to stand firm -- he knows that he is at peace with God and God is his strength (see [Romans 8:31](#), [37](#), [38](#), [39](#)).

In the dark days of England during the blitz, while bombs rained down on London and Coventry, the situation was truly desperate. **Then Winston Churchill would come on the radio and speak to the English people when their hearts were filled with defeat and discouragement. At times they would be almost ready to quit. But that one man's voice would ring out and the nation would take heart again. The morale of an entire people would be elevated and strengthened. That is what Christ does. He speaks courage and peace to our hearts.**

You see, it is not a battle against people at all, is it? It is an inner fight, a battle in the realm of the thought life and attitudes. It is a battle in the realm of your outlook on the situation in which you find yourself. This is the place to start. Remember that you wear the belt of truth. ([Ray Stedman. Spiritual Warfare](#) -

how shall they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE **FEET** OF THOSE WHO BRING GLAD TIDINGS OF GOOD THINGS!" ([Romans 10:5](#))

- **Above all taking the shield of faith wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.**



It



Above all: This really has the idea of “in addition to the previous,” and it applies to each of the three pieces of armor that follow. isn’t the idea, these parts of the armor are

more important than the others.

“Even when such a missile was caught by the shield and did not penetrate to the body, says Livy, it caused panic, because it was thrown when well alight and its motion through the air made it blaze most fiercely, so that the soldier was tempted to get rid of his burning shield and expose himself to the enemy’s spear-thrusts. But the *shield of faith* not only catches the incendiary devices but extinguishes them.” (Bruce)

Thoughts, feelings, imaginations, fears, and lies - all of these can be hurled at us by Satan as **fiery darts**. **Faith** turns them back.

- A flood of depression or discouragement, feeling like a black cloud.
- When a relatively insignificant thing gets blown way out of proportion.

- An opportunity to speak with someone about what Jesus did for you and you are fearful.
- Opposition against a sense that God wants you to do something, to follow through on something.
- A sense of panic and helplessness.

Faith involves both renunciation and reliance. We have to first renounce all confidence in our own power and then rely entirely on the power of the Holy Spirit. We must be **enabled**, not merely **helped**. What's the difference? The word **help** implies we have some ability but not enough; we need someone else to supplement our partially adequate ability. By contrast, **enablement** implies that we have no ability whatsoever. We're entirely powerless. We can do nothing. But when by faith we renounce self-sufficiency and embrace reliance on the power of the Holy Spirit, we receive divine empowerment, enablement, and strength for personal transformation and ministry. (The bookends of the Christian Life)

Though many foes beset you round,
And feeble is your arm
Your life is hid with Christ in God,
Beyond the realm of harm.

Weak as you are, you shall not faint,
Or fainting, shall not die;
Jesus, the strength of every saint,
Will aid you from on high.

Though unperceived by mortal sense,
Fate sees Him always near,
A guide, a glory, a defense:
Then what have you to fear?

As surely as He overcame,
And triumphed once for you,
So surely you that love His name
Shall in Him triumph too!

by John Newton

➤ **And take the helmet of salvation**



1 Thessalonians 5:8 speaks of the helmet of salvation in connection to the hope of salvation. The helmet of salvation protects us against discouragement, against the desire to give up, giving us hope not only in knowing that we are saved, but that we will be saved. It is the assurance that God will triumph.

- ✓ One of Satan's most effective weapons against us is discouragement. When we are properly equipped with the helmet of salvation, it's hard to stay discouraged.

Spurgeon commenting on [Psalm 140:7](#) adds:

The head needs protection not only as a vital part, but as the seat of sight.

The helmet protects your head from the enemy's attacks. Your head is a very important part of your body, because it contains your brain, which controls everything. Your head determines how you think about all of life. How you think in large part determines how you feel and how you act....To put on the helmet of salvation requires that you learn to think biblically about the predominant worldviews. You must develop a Christian mind, a saved mind. Your head determines how you function in all of life. If your brain is not working properly, it affects how other parts of your body work. A brain injury can affect motor skills or the ability to speak or think clearly. If a soldier got knocked unconscious by a blow to the head, he was probably doomed. He had to guard his head by having his helmet securely in place. Spiritually, salvation determines how we live in this sinful world. We live as pilgrims who have been rescued from this present evil kingdom of Satan. We live in subjection to Jesus Christ as Lord and King. We view everything—values, money, entertainment, the arts, or politics—from the perspective of being saved people. Understanding the doctrine of salvation equips us to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. Salvation is the foundational doctrine to understand cognitively and to

know experientially. Putting on the helmet of salvation protects everything in your life. Your head determines how you relate to others. Once you put on the helmet of salvation, you realize that all people are in one of two (and only two) camps: either they are saved and going to heaven; or, they are lost and going to hell....But because you have put on the helmet of salvation, you relate to people differently than you did before. You now love the people of God, whom you avoided before. You now view lost people with compassion and understanding, yearning that they would come to know God through Jesus Christ.....So when Paul tells us to take the helmet of salvation, he is saying, "Don't go into the world with your head unprotected. Mind thy head!" It determines how you think, how you function in all of life, and how you relate to people. As someone said, "Watch your thoughts, they become words; watch your words, they become actions; watch your actions, they become habits; watch your habits, they become character; watch your character, for it becomes your destiny" (Frank Outlaw, in Readers' Digest [date unknown]). The helmet protects your head....

Someone has said, "What you think means more than anything else in your life. More than what you earn, more than where you live, more than your social position, and more than what anyone else may think about you" (George Adams, in "Bits & Pieces" [11/84], p. 15). God commands you to receive the helmet of salvation to protect how you think about the many worldly ideas that bombard you daily. Thinking that is protected by the helmet of salvation will enable you to live rightly before God and rightly in relation to others. Salvation means that God has rescued you in the past from the penalty of sin through your faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. He is rescuing you in the present from the power of sin through the resurrection life of Christ in you. He will rescue you in the future from the presence of sin when Jesus Christ returns in power and glory. So, mind thy head! Don't go out into the battlefield of the world without your helmet on! Stand firm against the enemy by taking the helmet of salvation! - [Ephesians 6:17 Mind Thy Head](#)

III.- **Mind the gap Mind Your HEAD!**

1 Thessalonians 5:8-11

Ray Stedman feels that the **hope of salvation...**

is not talking about the salvation of the soul. He is not referring to salvation as regeneration or conversion. In other words, he is not looking backwards, to the moment of conversion. The first three pieces of armor do so, but the next three pieces of armor, including the helmet of salvation,

look forward, not back. Paul is talking about a salvation that will be a future event. It is exactly what Paul refers to in Romans when he says, "Our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed" ([Romans 13:11](#))....

So we, as Christians, have the helmet of salvation. We have a hope for the future. We understand that God is working out His purposes and therefore we are not disturbed when human programs go wrong and everything fails. We are not surprised when all the plans and programs for human progress end up in the same old ash-heap--the New Deal and the Fair Deal, the Great Society and the New World Order. We have learned to expect wars and rumors of wars, right until the very end. We expect false teachings and false philosophies and cults and heresies to abound. We have been told that all these things will happen.

➤ **And the sword of the spirit which is the Word of God**

Scottish pastor **Thomas Guthrie** said that

The Bible is an armory of heavenly weapons, a laboratory of infallible medicines, a mine of exhaustless wealth. It is a guidebook for every road, a chart for every sea, a medicine for every malady, and a balm for every wound. **Rob us of our Bible and our sky has lost its sun.**



Sword (**machaira** from **mache** = a knife, sword) refers to a relatively short sword (even dagger) for cutting and stabbing. It was extremely difficult to approach a soldier well

trained in the use of the **machaira** for it was short and could be moved rapidly. The fact that it was two-edged made it possible to strike on either side without changing its position in the hand, and its razor-sharp point could pierce armor. Proper use of Scripture in spiritual warfare enables the Christian to stand fast "against the wiles of the devil".

There are two words that are used in the original Greek Scripture for "the Word of God." There is the familiar Greek word **logos**, and then there is another word, used less frequently, **rhema**, which is somewhat different in meaning than the first. The word **logos** refers to the total utterance of God, the complete revelation of what God has said. The second word, **rhema**, means a specific saying of God, a passage or a verse that has special application to an immediate situation. It implies a use of the Word of God that is applied to a specific experience in our lives. The second word, [rhema](#), is the one used here.

➤ **Praying always and watching**



ONE NIGHT, [JOHN PATON \(biography\)](#) AND HIS WIFE--a missionary couple in the New Hebrides Islands--were awakened by chants outside their mission station. Looking out, they saw that scores of hostile islanders had surrounded the station with torches, intent on burning the place down and killing the missionary couple. The Patons got down on their knees and prayed throughout the night, asking God to deliver them. The tense, dark hours passed, yet the islanders kept their distance.

Finally, around daybreak, the Patons looked out the window--and the hostile tribesmen were gone. John Paton was baffled. There seemed to be nothing preventing the islanders from attacking, yet no attack came. Paton didn't find out why the islanders left so mysteriously until a year later, when the chief of the tribe was won to Christ. Remembering the night-long siege of a year before, John Paton asked the newly converted chief why the tribesmen had departed instead of burning the mission station to the ground. "We were afraid of the men who were with you," the chief replied.

"What men?" asked Paton.

"There were a hundred tall men around the mission house that night," said the chief. "Their clothing shone with light, and they had swords in their hands. We knew that they would never let us harm you, so we went back to our village."

That is spiritual warfare at its most extreme! God does not always have to intervene in such a dramatic way on behalf of His children. Yet the battle is just as real, just as deadly, for you and me in our everyday lives as it was that night for the Patons in a mission station on the New Hebrides Islands. You and I are hemmed in by enemies every day, but God has provided a defense for us that will enable us to stand against the schemes and flaming arrows of the enemy. The apostle Paul has listed for us three steps we must take in order to "be strong in the Lord," and to resist the attacks of Satan ([Ibid](#))

Group prayer, individual prayer, silent prayer, shouting prayer, walking prayer, kneeling prayer, eloquent prayer, groaning prayer, constant prayer, fervent prayer – **just pray.**

Often we just don't pray because we are simply overconfident in our own abilities.

Winston Churchill said to Britain in the early days of the Second World War: ***"I must drop one word of caution, for next to cowardice and treachery, overconfidence leading to neglect and slothfulness, is the worst of wartime crimes."***

Prayer for others now

Key thought- The battle is real and if we are to be victorious we must put on the whole armor of God.

One minute take-away