

Armored For a Fight

Give Honor

Reference: Ephesians 6:10-18

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.

11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

13 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist on the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

14 Stand firm therefore, having belted your waist with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,

15 and having strapped on your feet the preparation of the gospel of peace;

16 in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

17 And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

18 With every prayer and request, pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be alert with all perseverance and *every* request for all the saints,

Pray

Over the last month I have been feeling a sense in my spirit that we need to prepare for spiritual warfare. In fact, I shared this with some of my leaders on the worship team, even before we heard the news about the building we were trying to obtain. I will not call that bad news, because your bible says that God works all things for the GOOD of those who love him.

Romans 13:12-14

12 The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore, let's rid ourselves of the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.

13 Let's behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and debauchery, not in strife and jealousy.

14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to *its* lusts.

Ephesians 4:22-24

22that, in reference to your former way of life, you are to rid yourselves of the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit,

23 and that you are to be renewed in the spirit of your minds,

24 and to put on the new self, which in *the likeness of* God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.



From the Temple of Domitian in Ephesus

- Belt of Truth
 - This was a narrow belt overlayed with bronze plates all around and had five other straps that would hang off of it.
 - This would hold your weapons, your shield, it would “gird up your loins”, and it would display medals and awards
 - When you walk in truth you are able to use all of your tools as a soldier: you can attack, defend, move unobstructed, and show the

reputation of your character. If truth is missing the other pieces do not matter.

- Breastplate of Righteousness

- Protects the vital organs of the body
- Was made up of many small metal plates.
- Righteous living is not based off of a few large deeds. It's in all of the small things throughout the day. You cannot cop out of living rightly throughout the day just because you take the time to do one big, good thing.
- Righteousness is also a product of accountability.
 - Due to the way the straps were tied to put one's armor on, each soldier would help another one to put their breastplates on. The effectiveness of your breastplate was based upon the detail and care of others.

- Preparation of the Peace of the Gospel

- A soldier's shoes would have been soft leather sandals that laced up the shin. Down the middle of the bottom of these shoes would be a metal rod to provide support to the shoe, allowing a soldier to travel further with less wear and tear.
- On the bottom of the shoe would also be metal studs that varied in size. This allowed the soldier to have grip while marching through loose environments and, more importantly, traction while pushing back the enemy. The peace of the Gospel is a firm foundation for one to stand.
- **Ephesians 2:13-14:** But now in Christ Jesus you who previously were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. **14** For He Himself is our peace, who made both *groups into* one and broke down the [q]barrier of the dividing wall,
 - Every step we take in the peace of the gospel of Christ should tear down walls, destroy barriers, bring back those who were lost, heal those that are broken, and set free the captive who is lost.

- Shield of Faith

- There were two types of shields typically used by Roman soldiers: one was a smaller circular shield that was usually only used for show, the other was

a large rectangular shield used for one-on-one combat. The word here for shield is *thureon* and refers to the large shield.

- Does anybody know someone who goes around talking a big game of faith but never does any work?
- The shield was about 4 and a half feet tall and about should we width wide. It was effective for a soldier to protect themselves alone, but was even more effective when connected to the shield of someone beside them, becoming a protective wall around them. Faith works better when it is linked to up with someone else's. The more shields of faith connected in a battle, the more faith is released for victory.
- Shields were made by joining pieces of wood together and bending them in to shape. They were thin covered with up to 6 layers of leather. A soldier would have to care for his shield by often applying oil to the leather. If not it would become dry, brittle, and prone to catching fire. A shield that was well kept would extinguish the flame of an arrow.
- Helmet of Salvation
 - The helmets of the roman army had a bowl shape at the top to glance off blows from above, a neck guard on the back of the helmet, protruding visor that jutted out above the eyes, and two cheek guards to protect the sides of the face. Essentially the helmet provided protection from all directions.
 - Salvation starts with repentance and a renewing of the mind to live in righteousness. All sin begins in the mind. There is no sin that takes place without first going through the mind of a person. The helmet of salvation is a helmet that protects the mind of the believer from idle or destructive thoughts that will, if not brought under submission, will result in a sinful act.
- Sword of the Spirit
 - There were 4 types of swords used by roman soldiers. The one being referred to here is a *machaira* sword. This was a two-edged sword with an extremely sharp point. It was meant for thrusting into the enemy.

- Hebrews 4 talks about the Word of God being quick, powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, even to the division of soul and spirit, bone and sinew. In Revelation 1:16 the words from spoken from the mouth of Christ are as sharp as a two-edged sword. The term here for “word” is rhema. Rhema is a specific word for a specific operation at a specific time. When you are in the midst of a fight do not just flail around swinging and beating at the air, as Paul said in 1 Corinthians 9, but rather listen to the Spirit of God to give you a divine word on what to do that will cut down to the deepest parts of your problem and root it out.
- Communication
 - Praying in the Spirit always. No army goes into battle without a good line of communication.
- The Enemy
 - Four types of spiritual ranking: Principalities, powers, rulers of darkness of this world, and spirits of wickedness in heavenly places. Each of these are assigned over certain regions, nations, cities, or even personal homes.
 - The word for wrestle in verse 12 is *pale*. This was a form of wrestling between two opponents, in which the objective was to pin the other contestant with a hand on the throat. In ancient Greek contests the loser of this fight would have his eyes gauged out and left blind for the rest of their life. The intent of the enemy is to catch you off guard and unprotected in order to lead you into darkness.
- The good news is that we serve a God that heals and restores.
 - The Jesus that healed sickness in the son of an official in John 4, sickness in Peters mother in-law in Matthew 8, and many others that were afflicted in Mark 1 and Luke 4.

- Jesus, who cleansed a man of leprosy in Luke 5.
- Jesus who healed a centurion's paralyzed servant in Luke 7 and a paralytic that was lowered down through a roof in Matthew 9.
- Jesus who healed a mans crippled hand on the sabbath in Mark 3.
- Jesus who raised a woman's son from the dead in Luke 7, who raised Jairus' daughter back to life in Mark 5, and raised Lazarus from the dead in John 11.
- He did so many miracles that your Bible says the libraries of the world cannot contain all that he did.
- But for those of you that feel blind, that feel like you've lost the fight of life, and those that have had the vision of your future and plan that God has on your life painfully gauged away
 - Jesus healed two blind men in Galilee in Matthew 9
 - Heals a blind man at Bethsaida in Mark 8
 - And for those of you that feel you like you started life with a bad hand and never really had a vision for your life, he healed a man blind from birth in John 9
 - Healed a blind and dumb demoniac in Matthew 12
 - Restored sight to blind Bartimaeus in Luke 18
- We serve a God that, even if life has beaten you down, He can restore your life, restore your sight, and win your fight.