

Our Spiritual Armor

Lesson 04 of the series, "Spiritual Warfare"

A. We are involved in a spiritual battle.

"Finally, 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. For our struggle is not 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. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand." Ephesians 6:10-13 (NIV)

****WARNING**** The devil is always looking for his next opportunity.

"Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your Christian brothers and sisters all over the world are going through the same kind of suffering you are."

1 Peter 5:8-9 (NLT)

B. Thankfully God has given us spiritual armor so we can stand firm in our battles.

"Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Ephesians 6:14-17 (NIV)

1. We must put on the helmet of salvation.

"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 (NLT)

- All who come to Christ are saved by grace. "God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it." Ephesians 2:8-9 (NLT)

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16 (NIV)

- All who come to Christ have all of their sins forgiven and forgotten. "We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, with undeserved kindness, declares that we are righteous. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins. For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood." Romans 3:22-25 (NLT)
- All who come to Christ need never fear dying. And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life." 1 John 5:11-13 (NIV)

2. We must put on the breastplate of righteousness.

Righteousness = right living, integrity in one's lifestyle and character.

- Righteousness prevents the devil from gaining a foothold in our lives. "Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him, throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy. So stop telling lies. Let us tell our neighbors the truth, for we are all parts of the same body. And 'don't sin by letting anger control you.' Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry, for anger gives a foothold to the devil." Ephesians 4:21-27 (NLT)
- Righteousness gives us boldness & confidence. "...deacons *must be* reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience... For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." 1 Timothy 3:8-13 (NKJV)

- Righteousness prevents us from being disqualified. “So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing. I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.” 1 Corinthians 9:26-27 (NLT)
 - The Holy Spirit gives us the desire and the power to pursue righteousness. “Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.” Philippians 2:12-13 (NLT)
3. We must put on shoes of readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.
- Ready to live out my faith in Christ. “And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful.” Colossians 3:15 (NLT)
 - Ready to share my faith in Christ. “But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.” 1 Peter 3:15-16 (NIV)

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Connect Group Questions

1. Read Ephesians 6:10-13. Can you think of times when the devil has exploited you at your most vulnerable moments? If you are willing share a hurt, hang-up, or sinful habit that you have had to deal with over and over again.
2. What does it say about our faith in God if He clearly shows us what we need to do but are reluctant to follow through? How does our reluctance to obey give Satan an opening into our lives?
3. What activities and responsibilities do you perform out of a sense of guilt? How can you tell the difference between conviction of sin by the Holy Spirit and a sense of false guilt from the devil?
4. Read 1 Peter 5:8-9. How does Peter's warning make you feel?
5. Read John 3:16 & 5:24, Romans 3:22-25 and 1 John 5:11-13. Why do many Christians worry about their salvation and dying?
6. What game plan do you need to put into practice in order to fill your mind with truth?
7. Discuss the following quotations:

"Rebellion is as sinful as witchcraft, and stubbornness as bad as worshiping idols." Samuel, OT prophet, in 1 Samuel 15:23 (NLT)

"You did not do anything to achieve your salvation but you must do something to exhibit it." Oswald Chambers

"Know it or not, like it or not, you and I are in a war! And we need to begin living as if we were in a battle for our lives. Because, in fact, we are!" Stu Weber