

Chapter 10 - "TAKING UP" ARMOR

Ephesians 6:16–17 says, “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.*”

Paul described to the Ephesians: “taking the shield of faith” and taking “the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit”

THE SHIELD OF FAITH

The Roman soldier used two types of shields. One was small and round and the other was a large door model. Paul is describing the large door model.

The Roman shields were designed to be soaked with water so we can “*extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one*” (Ephesians 6:16). That’s the way our faith should operate. When Satan fires thoughts into our minds, our faith should quench those thoughts.

Your faith is your most powerful weapon against the devil. It is the first line of your defense! The devil sends the thought and your faith will help you to do the right thing.

“Faith puts out the thought with a response, “I will trust God to give me what He desires for me to have, and I will trust Him to help me use what He gives me to bring Him glory.” The stronger your faith, the more you are able to say, “I will trust God “

The Bible refers to three degrees of faith: little, great, and perfect.

Little faith says, “God can do this.”

Great faith says, “God will do this.”

Perfect faith says, “It’s as good as done.”

The stronger your faith, the more you are able to say, “I will trust God to deal with this in His way and in His timing. I will trust God to deliver me, defend me, vindicate me, provide for me, and in the end, reward me for my faithfulness.”

Another theologian described the three degrees of faith this way.

Romans 10:17 – 1st Degree of Faith comes from hearing the Word of God.

Galatians 5:22 – 2nd Degree of Faith comes when you receive the Holy Spirit. Faith is a fruit of the Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:7-9 – 3rd Degree of Faith comes from the Holy Spirit, it is a spiritual gift.

A WALL OF DEFENSE

The Roman soldiers would work together to set up an almost impenetrable wall to keep the enemy out. As believers we can do the same thing. During tough time in our church or as a group of believers, we can band together in our faith to keep Satan out.

In the Garden, Jesus prayed, “Not My will but Thine,” is the prayer that establishes us in faith.

Philippians 4:19 tells that “*God will supply all your need, according to His riches in glory.*” The Word of God says it and our faith says we believe it. God will supply our “needs” and not our wants. His riches in glory are limitless.

Matthew 17:20 tells us that if we have as small as a mustard seed then we can move mountains. We should pray to God for faith in difficult times.

“Faith is not about what we can do for God. Faith is about what God desires to do for us, in us, and around us. Faith is believing God to act out of His infinite power and wisdom on our behalf. (Stanley)



THE HELMET OF SALVATION (Eph. 6:17)

The purpose of the helmet was to protect the head. The head or mind is the control center for a person. Satan may try to get into your mind but the helmet of salvation will protect us. The helmet of salvation is there to remind us that Jesus is our Savior, and that what He has done for us. We should memorize Romans 5:8 because it reminds us of what He has done for us and it should remind us of how much God loves everyone. It is to remind us that the Holy Spirit is always with us to save us from the enemy.

Romans 5:8 – “*But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*”

If there is one thing that the last couple of years has shown Americans, it is that nobody can monitor or control your thinking but you. You control what you will dwell on in your mind. You have the power to dismiss thoughts or to entertain thoughts. And what is the most important thought to keep at the forefront of your thinking? It is the truth that regardless of what happens while we are on earth, Jesus is our Savior and God is still in control.

“When you recall your salvation with thanksgiving for what God has done on your behalf, you find that you have a growing desire to see other people experience what you have experienced. You are quicker to witness to the truth of Jesus as Savior. You are quicker to give thanks and offer praise for your salvation. You are more eager to pray and intercede that others might come to know Him.” (Stanley)

ONGOING RESCUE

Salvation, in this passage in Ephesians, isn't just the initial claiming Jesus as your Savior. This word for salvation refers also to God's ongoing rescuing and delivering power.

The world says that you have to take care of yourself. What do the following verses say about salvation?

1 Timothy 4:10 – Our hope is in the living God, our savior.

Psalm 7:10 – My shield is with God, who saves the upright heart.

Psalm 68:19–20 – God is my salvation and my deliverer.

Ephesians 5:23 – Christ is the head of the church and our savior.

Regardless of what Satan or the world says, the truth is, we cannot save ourselves

THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT (Eph. 6:17).

The sword was not only a defensive weapon. It was a weapon of offense. In this verse (17b), Paul clearly stated that it was the “*sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*” When Jesus was tempted by Satan, in every temptation Jesus replied by quoting the Word of God. It is the weapon that puts the devil on the run.

The Bible is your most powerful weapon in defeating the devil.

The following verses tell us about the Word of God?

Hebrews 4:12 – It is alive, active and sharper than a two edge sword.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 – It is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, (NIV)

Matthew 24:35 – Heaven and earth will pass away before God's words do.

2 Peter 1:20-21 – The prophecies came from God.



“First, use a concordance, and look up every verse that relates to the temptation that seems to come to you most often. Then write out these verses. You may want to keep them handy. Read them often.” (Stanley)

When you quote the Bible in times of temptation, two things happen. First, you feel strength to stand and resist the devil. James 4:8 says that if we “*come near to God and he will come near to*” us. When we are close to God, Satan will not attack.

Philippians 4:8-9 tell us that when you are close to God, we will focus on the things of God.

Philippians 4:8-9 says, “*8 Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is [a]lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any*

excellence and if anything worthy of praise, [b]dwell on these things. 9 The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.”

Second, when you quote the Bible in times of temptation, the devil has to flee. James 4:7 tells us to “*resist the devil and he will flee from you.*”

THE THREE WORK TOGETHER

“When you activate your faith to believe that God will defend you and defeat the enemy on your behalf, you experience greater courage and confidence. When you set your mind to look for, anticipate, eagerly expect, and openly receive God’s saving power, you experience a heightened sense of hope. You live with renewed enthusiasm for the future—on this earth and in heaven. When you pick up the Word of God and actively speak it to yourself and to the enemy, you experience a renewed awareness of the Holy Spirit alive and working in you and on your behalf. When you are strong in faith, filled with hope, and keenly aware of the Holy Spirit’s presence and power, you are not going to fall victim to the devil’s fiery darts of temptation or crumble and wither under the devil’s attacks! You are going to win the battle every time.” (Stanley)

Ephesians 6:10 tells us to “*be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.*” You have heard me say that you cannot defeat Satan on your own. You must have faith that Jesus will help you and that His power is greater than Satan’s.

We forget what Paul tells us in Ephesians 3:20, Jesus “*is able to [carry out His purpose and] do superabundantly more than all that we dare ask or think [infinitely beyond our greatest prayers, hopes, or dreams], according to His power that is at work within us.*”

“God is my Savior in this situation; He is my hope, He is my Defender, He is my Victor; God is my ever-present Ally,” (Stanley)

PUTTING ON YOUR ARMOR

The Whole Armor of God must be put on every day. We should never start our day without putting it on first. Charles Stanley says that we should mentally and verbally put on these pieces of armor.

Charles Stanley gives us a prayer to help us.

“I am putting on the breastplate of righteousness. Guard my emotions today. Protect my heart. Help me to take into my life only the things that are pure, and nothing that is poison or polluting. Help me to live in integrity and to have a reputation based upon doing, saying, believing, thinking, and feeling the right things. Help me to live in right relationship with You every moment of this coming day.”

“I am putting on my spiritual boots. Help me to stand and walk in Your peace and to move forward in ways that bring Your peace and love to others. Help me to have the full confidence

and assurance that come from knowing that I am filled with the peace that only You can give to those who are Your children. Help me to be a peacemaker. Show me where to walk and how to walk as You would walk.”

“I am picking up the shield of faith. Help me to trust You to be my Victor in every area of life today. Help me to trust You to defend me, provide for me, and keep me in safety every hour of this day.”

“I am putting on my helmet of salvation. Guard my mind today. Bring to my remembrance all that You have done for me as my Savior. Let me live in the hope and confidence that You are saving me—rescuing me and delivering me—from evil.”

“I am picking up my sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. Bring to my remembrance today the verses of the Bible that I have read and memorized, and help me to apply them to the situations and circumstances I will face. Let me use Your Word to bring Your light into the darkness of this world and to defeat the devil when he comes to tempt me.”

“Father, I want to be fully clothed with the identity of Jesus Christ today. I am in Christ. He is in me. Help me to fully realize and accept that He is my Truth, my Righteousness, my Peace, my Savior, the source of my faith, and the ever-present Lord of my life. I want to bring glory to Your name today. I ask all of this in the name of Jesus.

Amen.”

THE ARMOR IS YOUR IDENTITY IN CHRIST

As I said earlier, when we put on the whole armor of God, we are taking on the attributes of Jesus Christ which are truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation and the Spirit.

Galatians 2:20 says that when we accept Christ, *“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.”*

This means that through the Holy Spirit, Christ is in me and I am in Christ. This is at the heart of the Christian’s life. When we put on the whole armor of God, we put on the fullness of Christ’s identity.

When we put on the whole armor of God, we put on the nature of Christ Jesus. The Gospel message does not stop with accept and believe but it requires our obedience.

“We put on His identity, embrace fully His lordship of us, and spiritually clothe ourselves from head to toe, inside and out, with His presence and power. These pieces of armor are not signs of our spiritual power or authority. Rather, they are an acknowledgment of His power and authority.

These pieces of armor are not about us or about what we can do to protect ourselves. No! They are about Christ Jesus and His power to protect us and do what He has promised to do on our

behalf against all the forces of hell! Putting on the whole armor of God is all about being “in Christ.” It is a graphic way of reminding us who we are in Him.

<u>Satan</u>	<u>Jesus</u>
Lies	Truth (Belt)
Turmoil	Peace (Shoes)
Wickedness	Righteousness (Breastplate)
Fiery Furnace	Salvation (Helmet)
Death and destruction	Source of our Faith (Shield)
World’s philosophies and ideas	Word of God (Sword)

“When you put on the full armor of God, you say to the devil, “You have to go through Jesus to get to me! You may launch fiery darts against me. You may assault my mind with your temptations, doubts, fears, and lies. But you cannot defeat me. I am in Christ and He is in me, and there is nothing you can do to touch or destroy my security in Him. Christ Jesus is my all in all.”