

## The Armor of the Christian (Part 1)

Ephesians 6: 13-18

You don't have to be a Christian very long to figure out we are engaged in a spiritual battle. The enemy stands against everything that is holy and righteous and he seeks to defeat as many believers as possible. He knows it is a campaign he will never win, but he seeks to create as much damage among the ranks as he can. Defeated Christians are no longer productive for the Lord. They are not making a difference in the lives of others. They are not advancing the Kingdom for the glory of our Lord. It is easy to understand why the enemy seeks our defeat.

In our last study we found the preparations necessary to be successful in the battle. As we walk in communion with the Lord, and receive instruction from His Word, we are equipped for battle. The Lord provides what we need to be victorious in life.

Paul reveals the armor all believers are to wear as they engage the enemy in battle. We must be familiar with the armor and ensure that it is properly worn if we are to overcome the adversary's advance. His tactics may change, but our armor has been proven in battle. It is designed of the Lord and continues to be effective for the soldier's success. Every believer must be clothed in battle armor if they are to obtain victory. I want to consider the individual [elements](#) of the armor described in the text as we think on: [The Armor of the Christian](#).

**I. The Girdle of Truth** (14a) – [Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth](#). This piece of armor is not glamorous and may not even be noticed of others, but it is extremely important. In Paul's day, Roman soldiers wore a girdle, or belt, around their waists that served numerous purposes.

- It helped to secure the other pieces of armor.
  - It provided a measure of protection for the mid-section of the body.
  - The soldier's sword was kept in the girdle.
  - It secured the soldier's flowing garment so his movement was unhindered in battle.
- It is imperative the soldier possess the girdle of truth. The enemy seeks to present and promote a lie. [John 8:44 – ... He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.](#) Our world today is filled with lies and deception. We must be clothed in truth.
  - Where does the soldier obtain this girdle of truth; how is it made available? Christ our Lord is Truth, [John 1:14; 14:6](#). We must walk with the Lord, receiving our strength and help in Him. The Word of God is also Truth. [John 17:17 – Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.](#) God's Word

stands as the measure and guide for our lives. It is final and absolute. We must be clothed in the truth of God's Word if we are to endure.

- Truth helps hold our lives together. Life without truth will eventually fall apart.
- Truth protects against being tossed to and fro with the cares and deceit of life.
- Truth aides our journey, helping us avoid pitfalls or being tripped up in battle.

▪ If we are to overcome the enemy and enjoy spiritual victory, we must put on the girdle of truth. [John 8:32](#) – *And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

## **II. The Breastplate of Righteousness** (14b) – *and having on the breastplate of righteousness;*

The breastplate of righteousness is the next element of armor we must possess. It is worn around the torso of the body. Some breastplates covered an area from the neck to the thighs. It served to protect the vital areas of the body, specifically the heart.

▪ We know the heart is essential to life. The same is true for our spiritual existence as well. The heart is often associated with the righteousness of life. The believer's heart is focused upon Christ our Savior, and we must guard the heart against all assaults. Satan is known as the accuser of the brethren. He seeks anything he can find to bring against us. In order to overcome such accusation, we must be clothed in righteousness, guarding our hearts from his advance. Having the breastplate of righteousness is our only hope.

- I want to mention a couple aspects of the believer's righteousness. We possess:

**A. Positional Righteousness** – This is the righteousness we have in Christ. By virtue of salvation we are clothed in the righteousness of Christ our Lord. [2 Cor.5:21](#) – *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* I stand righteous before God because of Christ's righteousness being imputed to my account. His righteousness will never fail. Regardless of the duration or intensity of the battle, the righteousness of Christ will prevail.

▪ Our positional righteousness is not a piece of armor we put on. The saved are clothed in the righteousness of Christ from the moment of salvation, and that never changes. However, we do enter battle bearing the righteousness of Christ. It never leaves us. That brings peace to my heart. I am often weak in the flesh and the enemy is strong. In the heat of battle, while we are prone to stumble and fall, Satan is never able to penetrate the righteousness of Christ. I have been adopted into the family of God. I am counted righteous because of Christ my Savior. I may lose the battle now and again, but His righteousness always prevails.

**B. Practical Righteousness** – This deals with the breastplate itself, fortified by the life we live. As soldiers for the Lord we are expected to live our lives in light of His holiness. Our everyday lives will either strengthen us in the battle or make it easier for Satan to accuse and defeat us.

- The enemy is relentless in his efforts to defeat us, but we can avoid some battles by guarding our hearts. Seeking to live holy and upright before the Lord will protect us in the battle. It will preserve our witness and ability to share Christ effectively. The enemy may roar, but a pure life will be above reproach.
- When our hearts are not right with the Lord due to sin, we lose our joy and zeal for service. The passion for Christ is not there as it should be. Often we lose our desire to pray and read the Word of God. Failing to bear the breastplate of righteousness is detrimental to the success and well being of the soldier. Make certain it is worn and placed properly.

**III. The Shoes of the Gospel** (15) – [And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace](#); Again we deal with a piece of armor that is less noticeable, but extremely important. The soldier must be able to stand to fight. He may be called upon to stand guard against the enemy's approach for extended periods of time. It is impossible to stand without properly protecting and providing for the feet.

- The Roman soldiers of Paul's day had interesting footwear. Their sandals were made of durable leather, having pieces of metal or nails placed in the soles, ensuring traction and sure footing on treacherous slopes. The soldier enjoyed confidence in his ability to stand due to the grip of his shoes. In essence, the soldier was well grounded.
- We too must be well grounded. We must be able to stand when faced with the enemy. Our lives must be settled in the Lord, grounded in what we believe and whom we believe. Many today are not grounded in their faith. There is little depth in their Christian lives. They are prone to wander or led astray by the doctrines of this world. It is essential that we know what we believe and why we believe it.
- The Christian soldier must be certain of his or her salvation. We must be settled in the fundamentals of our faith. When we stand shod in the gospel of peace, we have peace in our hearts and with the Lord, even in the midst of a raging battle. A soldier who is grounded in the Lord will be able to stand against the enemy.
- Soldiers weren't only expected to stand though. There were times when they had to march long distances, over difficult terrain, to obtain victory. They were called to serve their country at all costs.

- The Christian is called to a life of service as well. As we go in service to the Lord, facing the assault of the enemy, we must have our feet shod with the gospel of peace, desiring to share the gospel with others as we travel. Many today have been wounded in battle and need someone to encourage them. Others we encounter have never met Christ in salvation and stand in desperate need of the gospel being presented. May we do our part as faithful soldiers of the cross! [1 Peter 3:15 – But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:](#)

The Spirit-filled believer who is fully clad in God's armor can sing confidently with John Newton,

*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 fade,  
Or fainting shall not die;  
Jesus the strength of every saint  
Will aid you from on high.  
Though unperceived by mortal sense,  
Faith sees Him always near,  
A guide, a glory, a defense,  
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.<sup>1</sup>*

**Conclusion:** We are engaged in a spiritual conflict today. The enemy is relentless in his attacks. We do not have to face the battle unprepared. I pray we will employ the full armor of God as we stand against the enemy. If there are elements in your armor that are weak, why not come to the Lord and allow Him to strengthen and clothe you in His might.

If you are here unsaved, you do not have the benefit of Christian armor. You are forced to face the struggles of life alone. You don't have to live in defeat and hopelessness. Christ gave Himself a ransom for your sin. He paid your debt on the cross. You can be saved today if you will respond to His gracious offer. Please come to Christ as He leads.

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<sup>1</sup> MacArthur New Testament Commentary, The - MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Ephesians.