

Prepared to Fight

Air Dates: October 17-21, 2022

Day One

If you're a Christian, do you realize that you are in a fight, a real war, every day of your life? Are you prepared for the fight that faces you?

We know from Scripture that as Christians we have an enemy, and that enemy has one objective: to destroy us. He is ruthless and he knows how to fight and does it very well.

In 1 Peter 5:8 (ESV) we read: "*Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour.*" In referring to Satan, Jesus said, "*The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy*" (John 10:10 ESV).

In the sixth chapter of Ephesians we find very explicit instructions on how to fight this enemy of ours. Paul clearly tells us that if we put on God's complete armor, we can successfully resist all the devil's methods of attack. Have you ever learned how to put on the armor of God? Do you do it on a daily basis? If you don't, you are going to war completely unprepared and headed for defeat.

Let's look at each piece of this armor.

The first part is a protective belt called truth (Ephesians 6:14). Since Satan is a liar and the father of lies, his favorite tactic is to lie to us, and he's very good at it. He will lie to you in your thought life, he will lie to you through what you hear and believe from other people, and through what you read and see. We must learn to detect his lies. The Word of God must become our testing station whereby we determine what is true and what is a lie from Satan.

Satan loves to get us to rationalize our way into untruth. We put our human reasoning to work, coupled with our sinful nature and the lies of our culture, and the first thing you know we're justifying sinful behavior—such as lying, affairs, unethical behavior of all sorts. We justify ourselves with words like "But this is different." Or "I really love him." Or "I know God understands. . ." Friends, God never changes his mind and the Bible spells truth out very clearly. We have to know that truth and obey it in order to defeat our enemy.

When there is any area of untruth in our lives, we are walking right into Satan's territory, and we're on our way to defeat. Have you told or done anything untruthful which needs to be set right? If so, do it today. Don't mess around in Satan's territory of lying. When you do, you cannot wear the belt of truth and without that belt, you are wide open to the enemy's lies.

Day Two

Did you know that Christians are supposed to be fighters? Well, the truth is—we're in a daily battle, and we have an expert opponent—Satan.

In Ephesians 6 we're told to put on the armor of God, the first piece of that armor was the belt of truth. The next one is the breastplate of righteousness (Ephesians 6:14). This is designed to protect an area of extreme vulnerability, our hearts, our feelings and emotions.

One way Satan attacks our hearts is by telling us that we are total failures, and therefore we can never be worthy or do anything for God. We know from Revelation 12:10 that Satan is our accuser, and many times he succeeds in convincing Christians that they have no value because they have no righteousness of their own. He loves to bring up your past sin and keep you mired in your past, wounded in your heart.

While it's true that we are unworthy in ourselves, what Satan does not want us to discover is that we have the righteousness of Jesus Christ available to us to wear as our breastplate. That's the secret: We wear the righteousness of Jesus Christ, not our own.

I'm a big believer in talking back to our enemy, to remind him and ourselves that he is truly powerless over us. If you remember, that's how Jesus defeated Satan when he was tempted (Luke 4:1-13). So, when the enemy starts to attack you, talk back and use the Word of God. Say, "Wait a minute; you must not know who you're talking to. I'm a child of God; I have the righteousness of Jesus Christ as my breastplate. Therefore, no matter what you say about me, you're wrong. I'm a new person and you can no longer defeat me.

Try it. Put on the breastplate of righteousness before you leave home each day, and all through the day remember to talk back to your enemy when he tries to destroy you through accusations.

Day Three

Do you get prepared for battle every day? Are you aware that, as a Christian, you are in a very real struggle with a most real enemy?

Already we've talked about the belt of truth and the breastplate of righteousness, two important pieces of our armor from Ephesians 6. The next one is the gospel of peace to be worn on our feet (6:15). Did you ever wonder why peace is to be worn on your feet? Seems a little illogical, when you think about it. I would have guessed that peace would be worn on our hearts. We think of having peace in our hearts. But instead we're told to put peace on our feet. Why?

Well, you see, when you have peace on your feet, then nothing can stop you. Think about it: When your feet aren't properly protected or when your shoes are hurting you, it's hard to keep going, isn't it? If you're taking a hike, you don't put on shoes with three-inch heels. You wouldn't get very far in those shoes. If you are to run a race and finish it, you have to wear the right shoes.

Well, peace is the boot you wear that will get you through anything. Peace on your feet protects you from the conditions of the path on which you are walking; you are no longer vulnerable to the surroundings or the environment. Doesn't matter where that road takes you—into a desert with burning sand, or through ice and snow, or in a lovely meadow with flowers and birds—if you're wearing the boots of peace you can keep going because your feet are protected.

Fear debilitates us, incapacitates us, handicaps us, but peace frees us to keep on keepin' on. This is peace which passes all understanding, even your own. And Satan hates to see it in a Christian because those sandals of peace on your feet make you strong and give you endurance.

Wearing peace on your feet also gives you a strong testimony in this troubled world. Have you been wearing the shoes of peace lately? You need to have them on to be prepared to fight an enemy who is out to get you. Pray on those shoes of peace; you shouldn't leave home without them.

Day Four

Another piece of that armor is the shield of faith (Ephesians 6:16). The Scripture says with this shield we can extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one. All of them, not just some of them. Do you know how to use the shield of faith against Satan?

Taking the shield of faith is directly related to knowing God. The more you know him, the more you will trust him, and the more you trust him, the stronger will be your shield of faith.

Do you know whom you have believed? Knowing God is all important. Sadly, many of us know more about our friends than we do about God. Until you pursue a knowledge of God, your shield of faith will be weak, and will not stand up against all those flaming missiles that your enemy is constantly throwing at you. You need faith, and faith comes as you get to know God.

Faith also comes through exercise. When you trust God in a certain situation, and you see how he protects you, then the next time the enemy comes at you, your shield of faith is stronger because you remember the last time when you exercised faith, and God took care of you. Faith builds faith, but it has to begin by knowing God so that you believe he is trustworthy.

Our next piece of armor is the helmet of salvation, which protects our head (Ephesians 6:17). We are all aware that our minds are vital to the health of our body, both physically and emotionally. The Bible tells us that we are what we think. Before anything happens outwardly, it has its beginnings in our mind.

Little wonder that Satan makes his greatest effort to control our thinking. If he can capture your mind, he can control and destroy you. Without the helmet of salvation every day as your protection, you are defenseless.

Protecting your mind with the salvation which comes from Christ means that you don't allow anything into your mind that contradicts or violates or offends that salvation. If you are not willing to carefully control what goes into your mind, and to make certain that you consistently fill your mind with good things, your mind will be unprotected and provide an easy target for your great enemy, Satan.

So, put good things into your mind, and keeping the wrong things out. That will win your battle with Satan.

Day Five

We have been given only one offensive weapon to use in this spiritual battle, but it is all we need. The Word of God is our sword (Ephesians 6:17). Paul said in 2 Corinthians 10:4 that *"the weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds."*

Remember how Jesus defeated Satan when he was tempted on the mountain. He quoted Scripture back to him, and though Satan tried three times to trick Jesus, he finally had to give up because the Word of God is far too powerful for him.

Now let me ask you something. If Jesus had to use the Word of God to defeat Satan, how much more do we? You will remember also that the Word of God was in his head. He knew it and could recall it when he needed it. Does that give you some idea of how to use the Word of God as your sword? You need to know it to use it, and when you do, Satan has absolutely no defense against it.

Here's the thing: you need to wear all of this armor every day to stand against your enemy. I want to encourage you to start praying on each piece of the armor daily, before you leave home, so you're prepared for that enemy.

So, pray on each day the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of peace, the helmet of salvation, the shield of faith and the sword of God's Word. I have learned to do this, and I find that it becomes that daily reminder and awareness of the battle I face and how important this armor is to my survival as an effective witness for Jesus Christ.

I trust you will get very serious about putting on the armor of God on a daily basis, so that you are able to withstand the enemy's attack and be victorious.