

ECCLESIA CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST
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Bible Study Series



DEFENSIVE WEAPONS

KEY VERSE: (Ephesians 6:10-12 KJV)

¹⁰ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.¹¹ Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.¹² For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

(THE MESSAGE BIBLE)

*¹⁰⁻¹² And that about wraps it up. God is strong, and he wants you strong. **So, take everything the Master has set out for you, well-made weapons of the best materials. And put them to use so you will be able to stand up to everything the Devil throws your way.** This is no weekend war that we'll walk away from and forget about in a couple of hours. This is for keeps, a life-or-death fight to the finish against the Devil and all his angels.*

OBJECTIVES: Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Describe your defensive spiritual weapons.
- Identify each piece of the armor of God.
- Explain the function of each piece of armor.

INTRODUCTION

You have learned that the great spiritual battle in which you are engaged cannot be fought with natural weapons. It must be fought *both offensively and defensively with spiritual weapons*. You already studied "God's Battle Plan" and learned that the basic battle strategy includes:

- The Word of God
- Delegated power and authority
- Prayer
- Fasting
- Keys of the kingdom
- The name of Jesus

In addition to these basic warfare strategies, the Bible reveals that you have a whole arsenal of spiritual weapons.

In this lesson you will learn about your defensive spiritual weapons.

DEFENSIVE STRATEGIES

The Bible teaches the following defensive actions which must be taken by the believer:

SUBMIT AND RESIST: *Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you. (James 4:7)*

Note the order in this verse: **First submit, then resist**. Many people skip over the first step of submission and try resisting the Devil, only to discover it does not work. Defeat results when you act independently of God. *It is the humble, not the arrogant and self-confident, who overcome the enemy.*

You will be able to resist Satan only as you submit to God. *To "resist" means to "stand firm against and oppose the enemy at every point." The Scripture does not teach us to go looking for demons, but to resist them when they approach us.*

RESIST SATAN STEADFASTLY IN FAITH: *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.*

Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in you brethren that are in the world. (I Peter 5:8-9)

To resist "in the faith" means to resist on the authority of God's Word.

DON'T GIVE PLACE TO SATAN: Do not leave room for Satan to operate in your life: *Neither give place to the Devil. (Ephesians 4:27)*

RECOVER YOURSELF FROM SATAN'S SNARE: You must recover yourself from Satan's snare by applying *Biblical strategies:*

And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will. (II Timothy 2:26)

ABSTAIN FROM FLESHLY LUSTS: To "abstain" means to keep yourself from something and refuse to do it:

Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul. (I Peter 2:11)

For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication. (I Thessalonians 4:3)

Abstain from all appearance of evil. (I Thessalonians 5:22)

STAND YOUR GROUND: When you "stand your ground" you are defending that which is rightfully yours.

Wherefore take unto you the whole Armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand...Stand therefore...(Ephesians 6:13-14a)

BEWARE OF EVIL, SHUN IT, AND PUT IT OFF: Study Ephesians 4:17-32. The "putting off" of all the evil behavior listed there is defensive warfare.

Don't be led away by the error of the wicked:

Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. (II Peter 3:17)

To "shun" means to avoid or turn away from. You should avoid every evil thing related to the enemy. *But shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness. (II Timothy 2:16)*

TRY THE SPIRITS: Trying the spirits prevents deception.

Beloved, believe not every spirit whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. (I John 4:1)

To "try" means to "test." You are not operating in unbelief when you try the "spirits" of those with whom you come in contact or in operation in and around you. If they are true, they will pass the test.

SHUN FALSE TEACHERS: When you receive false teachers into your home you become partakers of their evil. Defend your home from enemy attack:

If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds. (II John 10-11)

LAY ASIDE WORLDLY AFFAIRS: You are to lay aside worldly affairs which prevent you from being a good soldier. To "lay aside" is defensive action you must take.

Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. (II Timothy 2:3-4)

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. (Hebrews 12:1)

Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. (James 1:21)

PUT ON THE ARMOR OF GOD: *Put on the whole Armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil. (Ephesians 6:11)*

"Put on" indicates action you must take. Paul introduces the subject of warfare by emphasizing that the battle is not a natural one and natural weapons are ineffective. Spiritual battles must be fought with spiritual weapons. Paul describes the armor to be used in spiritual warfare:

Wherefore take unto you the whole Armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

And your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace.

Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. (Ephesians 6:13-17)

The purpose of the armor is to be able to stand against the wiles (deceit, cunning, craftiness) of the enemy, Satan.

It is your responsibility to put on the armor: Put on the whole Armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. (Ephesians 6:11)

But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof. (Romans 13:14)

The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the Armor of light. (Romans 13:12)

The phrase "put on" means to "put on once and for all." Your spiritual armor is not like an athletic uniform you put on at game time. You put on the armor once and for all and leave it on the rest of your life. Just as a soldier on the battlefield does not take his armor off and on, you will not lay down your armor until you go to be with the Lord. If you do not have your armor on at all times, you are vulnerable to the enemy. It is wise to check often that each piece of your spiritual armor is still in place.

The first division of armor covers three things you have done in the past.

"Having put" indicates something you have already done if you are a believer.

- Having your loins girt about with truth (verse 14)
- Having on the breastplate of righteousness (verse 14)
- Having your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace (verse 15)

The second division includes things which are to be put on in the present:

- Taking the shield of faith (verse 16)
- Taking the helmet of salvation (verse 17)
- Taking the sword of the Spirit (verse 17)

In Ephesians 6:11 Paul emphasizes putting on the whole armor of God. Some of us are preoccupied with but one piece of God's armor to the extent that others are neglected. You must have on the whole armor or you may find yourself being an expert in the use of the "sword of the Spirit" and still defeated because you have forgotten the shield of faith.

The Belt: The first piece of armor to be buckled on is the girdle or belt of truth. In the natural world, a suit of armor was attached to the belt which held the other pieces of armor in place. The truth of God's Word is the spiritual belt to which all other pieces of armor are attached. Satan's first attack on man was on truth:

And the woman said unto the serpent...God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die. (Genesis 3:2-4)

The truth will protect you from lies and doctrinal errors of the enemy. Truth is the undergirding of your spiritual armor. You are to have your loins (your spiritual vital organs) girt (covered) with truth:

Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth... (Ephesians 6:14)

What is the truth?

- Jesus said, "I am the truth. "John 14:6
- The Holy Spirit is the "Spirit of truth. "John 14:17
- God is truth. Romans 3:4
- God's Word is truth. Psalms 119:151
- The Gospel is truth. Colossians 1:5

The Breastplate: In the natural world, the breastplate covered the upper body of the warrior to protect vital organs such as his heart, lungs, etc. The spiritual breastplate of righteousness does not refer to your righteousness, but to the covering of the righteousness of Christ:

And be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith. (Philippians 3:9)

You do not stand on your own merits. You stand in Christ. You cannot face the enemy without the protection of the righteousness of Christ:

By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the Armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left. (II Corinthians 6:7)

The righteousness of Christ protects your spiritual "vital organs" from attacks of Satan and from unrighteousness. The breastplate of righteousness must be buckled on to the belt of truth.

The Shoes: There are many types of shoes for different purposes. Some are for walking, others for specific sports activities. A soldier's shoes are another kind...They are shoes designed for warfare. A soldier who cannot advance on the battlefield is disabled in warfare.

"Feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace" indicate a readiness to advance in the spiritual realm. These spiritual shoes protect your will from the temptation of the enemy who would lead you in wrong paths. They indicate your willingness to do every good work and to spread the Gospel to all nations. These spiritual shoes will also enable you to stand against the enemy as Paul encourages you to do (Ephesians 6:14).

The Shield: In the natural world, the shield was used to provide protection to the warrior's entire body. Your spiritual shield is called the "shield of faith."

There are several types of faith mentioned in the Bible. There is saving faith, the gift of faith, and the spiritual fruit of faith. But the word "faith" when used in relation to the "shield of faith" speaks of defensive faith. This faith is a firm trust and confidence in God which protects your whole being. It protects you from flaming missiles of doubt and unbelief sent by the enemy. This shield of faith is a calm and confident trust in God which deflects all the fiery arrows of the enemy from their target.

The shield of faith is the constant application of God's Word to the issues of life. It is a faith that enables you to overcome the evil forces of the world:

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. (I John 5:4)

Combined with love of God, faith is most effective:

...putting on the breastplate of faith and love... (I Thessalonians 5:8)

It is faith based on truth:

He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. (Psalms 91:4)

It is faith based on salvation:

Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness hath made me great. (Psalms 18:35)

Without faith, you have no grasp of truth. Without faith you cannot receive salvation. Without faith you cannot go forth with the Gospel of peace. Without faith you cannot claim the righteousness of Christ and effectively use the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God.

Faith is not an assumption or presumption. It is a fact based upon God's Word. You can increase your faith by hearing God's Word (Romans 10:17), acting upon your present faith (Romans 1:17), and seeking God (Hebrews 12:2).

The Helmet: *The helmet of salvation is not something you put on when you get saved.* Remember, we are dealing with spiritual armor here, and it is assumed that you are a believer and a member of God's army before you start putting on the armor.

The helmet of salvation represents a regenerated mind. It represents a transformed and renewed thought life. You will learn later that Satan desperately fights for control of the mind. An undisciplined mind makes the Christian warrior easy prey to sinful deceptions of the enemy.

Paul speaks of the helmet as the "hope of salvation" in I Thessalonians 5:8. Salvation, when properly experienced and understood, protects your mind. Salvation embraces the past, present, and future. You have been saved from the guilt and penalty of past sin. You are being saved from the power of sin in the present. The "hope of salvation" refers to salvation in the future tense. It is final salvation from the presence of sin when Jesus returns. The hope of this future salvation strengthens your mind against the attacks of Satan. You have a confident hope in the future because God is working out His purpose:

...according to His good pleasure, which He hath purposed in Himself; That in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in

*Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him.
(Ephesians 1:9-10)*

The Sword of The Spirit:

The "sword of the Spirit" is the Word of God. It is both a defensive and offensive weapon. You already learned how Jesus used the Word in defense against the attacks of Satan. In the next lesson you will learn how this weapon is used offensively.

Prayer:

After describing the Christian soldier's armor, Paul comments: *Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints. (Ephesians 6:18)*

As you learned when you studied "Gods Battle Plan," prayer and its associated practice of fasting are also powerful spiritual weapons. These two weapons can be used both offensively and defensively.

Check out the summary of the armor of God and its purposes which follows:

THE ARMOR OF GOD **Ephesians 6:10-18**

TRUTH (girdle)

Protects from...

DECEPTION

RIGHTEOUSNESS (breastplate)

Protects from...

UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

PEACE (shoes)

Protects from...

CONFUSION

FAITH (shield)

Protects from...

UNBELIEF

Sword of the Spirit

SALVATION (helmet)

Protects from...

BONDAGE

- The girdle or belt of truth protects from the deception of Satan which can lead to unrighteousness (sin).
- The breastplate of righteousness protects from unrighteousness (sin) which leads to confusion.
- Feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace protects from spiritual confusion which results in unbelief.
- The shield of faith protects against unbelief which results in bondage. The helmet of salvation protects from bondage.
- The sword of the spirit, the Word of God, is used as both an offensive and defensive weapon.

Note the downward progression of one not protected by the armor of God: Deception leads to unrighteousness (sin) which always results in confusion. Confusion results in unbelief, and unbelief always results in spiritual bondage.

LIFE APPLICATION

Examine yourself: Is all your spiritual armor in place?