

Putting On The Uniform

Ephesians 6:12-17

Satan hates what we are about to study in this lesson on deliverance because it is a life and death matter - life to those who hear it, believe it and do it, and death to those who don't. But I'm trusting that the **church triumphant** will become the **church militant** so that **life** will flow, and **life abundantly!**

Remember that we looked at Luke 12:31, where Jesus said, "Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Yet at the same time, in Matthew 11: 12 we are told that "from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force."

God wants to give us the kingdom. But there is only one way to **receive what God wants to give,** and that is **by force** - not **force over men,** not **force over institutions,** but all-out **force over spiritual powers, principalities** and **rulers of darkness.** Someone is trying to keep you from receiving the kingdom that God wants you to receive, and force is required to overcome the enemy.

Remember also that we run this race of the gospel not just to go through the motions of running. **We run to win!** We run with a view toward winning the race and its prize. **This is the Christian's goal!**

People who think that we're on a stroll through the park don't understand the full message of the New Testament. The apostle Paul exhorted us in 1 Corinthians 9:24 to "Run in such a way as to get the prize." He said in Philippians 3:14, "I press toward the mark of the high calling of God, which is in Christ Jesus." **Press on! Someone is trying to trip you up and take you on a detour to keep you from winning the race.** Child of God, it will take a concerted effort to win!

Listen to me today, something must rise up within you to say, "I won't let the devil take what belongs to the kingdom of God and what belongs to me and to my family ANY MORE. I won't just stand by and

let him ravage our homes, take advantage of our children or gain any authority over our church."

The biggest lie Satan tells today is that "everything is OK." **Everything is not OK!** Most people I know need *more deliverance, more health, more peace and joy* in their hearts. And it will take *effort, commitment, even force*, to meet that need.

In Ephesians 6:10-18 we have a passage critical to our understanding of how to succeed as a warrior for God and win over the devil. We have already seen that we must "be strong in the Lord." We have looked at the fact that we are in a "real" battle against "principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world and spiritual wickedness in high places."

Verses 14-17 give us the pieces of armor that we are to wear. But, what is this armor? It is the very *character* and *attributes* of God Himself. **As we go through these pieces of armor and learn what they mean and how to put them on, turn your attention to one central fact: Each piece of armor is nothing more than a manifestation of the Lord Jesus Christ in our lives.** We are really *putting on Jesus Christ* - and the *character traits manifested by Him*, which were a *reflection of the character of God Himself* - as our defense and our offense while we live out our lives in this world. We are talking about a way of *releasing the character of Jesus Christ* so that the *One who is on the inside of us can be manifest on the outside of us.*

Do you have Jesus living on the inside of you? Then "putting on the whole armor of God" is *a way for you to manifest the Lord Jesus Christ in an outward way.*

The first piece of armor is described as our "waist girded with truth." In another translation it says, "loins girt about with truth." **What exactly is that waist covering?** What are your "loins"?

Your "loins" are those secret parts of the body - your reproductive organs and the organs that dispel waste. In the spiritual realm, then, *you are appropriating truth to release the spiritual waste* -

or **falsehood, lies, deceit** - out of your life. And you are *appropriating truth* so that *you are ready to reproduce yourself in God*. The Bible calls this process being "**conformed to the image of Jesus Christ**" in Romans 8:29.

How do you put on that girdle of truth? May I suggest this way? Every day stand before God in prayer and say, "Father, in the name of Jesus, I know that You are the Truth and You are in me, and I say amen today that You are my Truth. I confess to you my desire to know the Truth and to speak the truth wherever I go."

The next piece of armor is the "breastplate of righteousness." This "**breastplate of righteousness,**" *placed on my chest*, covers my *heart* and *lungs*.

Now my heart pumps blood to my body in the natural, and the Scripture teaches in Deuteronomy 12:23 that "**life is in the blood.**" **The same thing is true spiritually.** My *Jesus heart* pumps blood to my *entire life*, and *my spiritual life is in the blood of Jesus*. My *spiritual lungs* allow me to *breathe deeply the Spirit of God*. And when those vital organs of my body are *spiritually covered with the righteousness of God*, then *I can breathe the fresh sweet air of God's Holy Spirit* and experience *His life* in a way that *activates* and *energizes* my entire being.

How do we put this piece of armor on? Stand before the Lord and say, "God, You gave me as a free gift my righteousness, which is the blood of Jesus. *Therefore, I plead the blood of Jesus on my life.*"

Child of God, when you know that you are covered with the breastplate of the righteousness of God, which is your gift through the blood of Jesus Christ, then your heart pumps its spiritual vitality freely to all parts of your being. Why? Because *you are no longer struggling to make your own life right before God* according to your *works* or *performance*. The pace of your life *evens out* because *you are not struggling to achieve righteousness on your own*.

When you aren't struggling to achieve your own righteousness, you can breathe deeply those things of the Spirit of God. You can take them into your being with freedom, breathing all the way down and completely filling your spiritual lungs with the breath of God.

The next piece of armor is the shoes of the gospel of peace. Jesus is ready to walk in the right paths. He is living on the inside of me. He is prepared to walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh.

To have your "feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace" means that we are to have ever ready shoes. We are to be prepared to go wherever God sends us, wherever He leads, wherever He directs us.

Folks, that means that we can no longer try to buy God off by "sending" our money to the "mission field." God is not asking for your money, He is asking for you!

How do you put on this piece of armor? Stand before the Lord and say, "Thank you, Lord, that You are my Truth; You are my Righteousness; You are my Readiness. And because of my salvation I have a testimony."

The next piece of armor is the "shield of faith." Verse 6 says, "taking the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one." The "fiery darts" are Satan's offense. Your shield of faith, therefore, is your number-one defensive weapon.

Now what are those fiery darts? What are you lifting your shield against? Satan throws at you lies and temptations that are aimed directly at the five-fold covenant you have with God once you are born again by the blood of Jesus. He lies to you:

- 1) that your sins really aren't forgiven.
- 2) that you don't really possess the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, that the Spirit is just an imagination of your mind.

- 3) that you will never be healed because God doesn't really want to heal you.
- 4) that you will never prosper because God doesn't care about your material well being.
- 5) that you will never be a winner before God or a "conqueror" in life.

Now those are fiery darts. Satan does everything in his power to penetrate your mind with those lies. He is faithful to his task.

How do we fight against those fiery darts? We lift up our shield of faith. We speak our faith.

- 1) I am saved, because I have asked Jesus Christ to come into my heart and I believe that He did.
- 2) I do have the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, because Acts 2:38 says He is my gift, and Jesus Christ indwells me with the Person of the Holy Spirit.
- 3) I will be well. God does want to heal me because He said in Exodus 15:26, "I am the Lord who heals you." Isaiah 53:5 tells me that He was "wounded for my transgressions, bruised for my iniquities; the chastisement of my peace was upon Him and by His stripes I am healed"!
- 4) I will live in prosperity. According to 3 John 2 God does want me to prosper.
- 5) I do have victory, because Romans 8 tells us that we are "more than conquerors through him that loved us."

How do you put on this piece of armor? Stand before God and say, "Father, Jesus is my faith. He is the author and finisher of my faith. He is the source of my faith. Therefore, I confess that I will stand on the promises of Jesus in Your Word for my life."

The next piece of armor is the “helmet of salvation.” The helmet of salvation is hope, as seen in 1 Thessalonians 5:8, "But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation. "

Hope is protection for the mind. Some Christians have put so much emphasis on *faith* they have ignored *hope*. The Bible says we are saved by hope. **The Bible says we are looking for that blessed hope, the return of our Lord and Savior.** It says we have hope as the anchor of our soul.

What is hope? Hope is the expectation that good things are going to happen to me based on historical fact. Hope is not wishful thinking. **Hope is not an illusion.** Hope has a historical basis in fact.

Ladies and gentlemen, historically God has been faithful! God has provided financially in the past; **He'll do it again.** God has answered prayers in the past; **He'll do it again.** **Jesus has healed in the past; He'll do it again.** He made a way where there seemed to be no way; **He'll do it again.** He is the God of all hope!

The last piece of armor is the “sword of the Spirit,” which is the Word of God. There is only one thing to do with a sword - **fight!** When Satan attacks, counter attack with the sword, which is the Word of God.

The sword of the Word is the only piece of our spiritual armor that is both offensive and defensive in nature. It is alive and powerful, as seen in Hebrews 4:12, "For the word of God is quick (alive) and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. "

Child of God, get to know the Word of God or your "sword" will be useless to you.

If you have never been saved, why not today?

Please stand for prayer.

Father,

Your Word is true. Give me the courage to put on the whole armor of God and to stand for the cause of Christ. I confess I am more than a conqueror through Christ who loves me.