

INTRODUCTION

1. This morning we are looking again at the armor that God supplies for every believer which is found in Ephesians chapter 6.
2. When we were together last time we looked at verses 13-15 where we saw the purpose and the first three pieces of armor.
3. Let's hear these verses again as we read them this morning.
4. Read Ephesians 6:10-18.
5. We are approaching the end of our study in the letter to the Ephesians.
6. As Paul comes to the end, he says in verse 10, "finally" and then continues for 15 verses.
7. This word "finally" means "in conclusion."
8. Paul is giving his final thoughts as they are laid out before us.
9. What final thoughts would you give to a church?
10. Paul's have to do with being aware of the warfare we're engaged in with the devil and his demons.
11. In essence he is saying, the true Christian described in Ephesians 1-3 who lives the faithful life described in 4:1—6:9 can be sure that he will be involved in the spiritual warfare described in 6:10-20.

12. The faithful Christian life is a battle; it is warfare on a grand scale—because when God begins to bless, Satan begins to attack.
13. [So], if we are walking worthy of our calling, in humility rather than pride, in unity rather than divisiveness, in the new self rather than the old, in love rather than lust, in light rather than darkness, in wisdom rather than foolishness, in the fullness of the Spirit rather than the drunkenness of wine, and in mutual submission rather than self-serving independence, then we can be absolutely certain we will have opposition and conflict.¹
14. We must remember then that “Satan is only God’s master fencer to teach us to use our weapons” (SAMUEL RUTHERFORD).²
15. William Jenkyn says, “The devil shapes himself to the fashions of all men. If he meet with a proud man, or a prodigal man, then he makes himself a flatterer; if a covetous man, then he comes with a reward in his hand. He hath an apple for Eve, a grape for Noah, a change of raiment for Gehazi, a bag for Judas. He can dish out his

¹John MacArthur, *Ephesians* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996, c1986). 331.

²I.D.E. Thomas, *The Golden Treasury of Puritan Quotations*, electronic ed. (Simpsonville SC: Christian Classics Foundation, 1996).

meat for all palates; he hath a last to fit every shoe; he hath something to please all conditions.”³

16. Since this is the case, it is imperative that we have the armor that God supplies on to oppose the enemy and to hold your position while under attack.
17. I was talking with someone the other day who told me they do not believe in the devil.
18. I told him that’s what he wanted him to believe and that he was experiencing his work right then.
19. Scripture gives many names for our enemy and one of them is “liar.”
20. Jesus told some Jews who were opposing Him in **John 8:44 (NASB77)** ⁴⁴ "You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*; for he is a liar, and the father of lies.
21. Not only is he called a liar but he is called “Satan” which means “adversary or opposer.”
22. He is referring to by Paul in Ephesians 6:11 as “the devil” which means “slanderer.”

³I.D.E. Thomas, *The Golden Treasury of Puritan Quotations*, electronic ed. (Simpsonville SC: Christian Classics Foundation, 1996).

23. He's also referred to as the "evil one" (Jn.17:5), the "enemy" (Mat.13:28), the "tempter" (Mat.4:3), a "murderer" (Jn.8:44), and an "accuser" (Rev.12:10).
24. He is called "Abaddon" which means "destruction" (Rev.9:11) and "Apollyon" which means "destroyer" (Rev.9:11).
25. Paul referred to him as "the god of this world [who] has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God" (2 Cor.4:4).
26. Jesus referred to him as "the ruler of this world" in John 12:31.
27. Jesus acknowledged his existence In Mat.4, John 12; 14 and 16.
28. Paul acknowledged his existence in Ephesians 2:2 and 6:11.
29. John in 1 John 3:8; 5:19.
30. James in 4:7; Peter in 1 Peter 5:8; and Jude in Jude 1:9.
31. E.M. Bounds said, "The existence and work of the devil is a serious matter. It is to be considered and dealt with from the most serious standpoint, and only serious people can deal with it. For this reason, the New Testament gives the repeated note of warning, 'be sober.'"
32. Satan doesn't want people to believe he exists so they will not hinder his work but help it.

33. But the Scriptures teach that Satan is a real person who has the ability to plan (2 Cor.11:3), the ability to communicate (Mat.4:1; Gen.3:1-6) the ability to will something (Mat.4:8-9), and the ability to express emotion (Rev.12:17).
34. He is everything that a person is but most importantly he is an angel—a fallen angel.
35. **Isaiah 14:12-14 (NASB77)** records his fall when it says, ¹² "How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, You who have weakened the nations! ¹³ "But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north. ¹⁴ 'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'
36. **Ezekiel 28:14-19 (NASB77)** ¹⁴ "You were the anointed cherub who covers, And I placed you *there*. You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire. ¹⁵ "You were blameless in your ways From the day you were created, Until unrighteousness was found in you. ¹⁶ "By the abundance of your trade You were internally filled with violence, And you sinned; Therefore I have cast you as profane From the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the stones of fire. ¹⁷ "Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I put you before kings, That they may see you. ¹⁸ "By the multitude of your iniquities, In the unrighteousness of your trade, You profaned your sanctuaries. Therefore I have brought fire from the midst of you; It has consumed you, And I have turned you to ashes on the earth In the eyes of all who see

you. ¹⁹ "All who know you among the peoples Are appalled at you; You have become terrified, And you will be no more."

37. I shared all that with you because it is imperative that we know who our enemy is and that we see the seriousness of the battle.
38. Don't be deceived into thinking the devil is not real or that he or his demons will not attack you.
39. They hate you and hate everything you stand for that's is why it is imperative that we be prepared for the battle and that we use the armor God has provided and being prepared for the battle is engaging this battle in the Lord's strength.
40. **Ephesians 6:10 (NASB77)** ¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might.
41. Now, we looked at the first three pieces of armor beginning at verse 14.
42. We saw "the girdle of truth," "the breastplate of righteousness," and "the gospel of peace."
43. In "the girdle of truth" we saw that girding your loins was a mark of preparedness.
44. Both the Roman Soldier and the ordinary citizen wore a robe and when in battle or in a hurry or doing heavy work, both would tuck the edges of their robe so that it would not become a hindrance.

45. The Roman soldier tucked his robe into the heavy leather belt that girded the soldier's loins.
46. The ordinary citizen either took his robe off or tucked it around his waist.
47. The point is, "readiness" or "preparedness."
48. Paul says that girding up was a matter of pulling in the loose ends as preparation for battle and the belt that pulls all the spiritual loose ends in is truthfulness.
49. Every Christian must tuck in their belt truth. They must be prepared by knowing the Word of God.
50. So the idea of truthfulness has to do with a sincere commitment to fight and win without hypocrisy—self discipline in devotion to victory. Everything that hinders is tucked away.
51. The second piece of armor is mentioned at the end of verse 14.
52. It is called "the breastplate of righteousness."
53. The "righteousness" here mentioned is not "justifying righteousness" but "sanctifying righteousness."
54. It's the practical righteousness of a life lived in obedience to God's Word.
55. Peter said in **1 Peter 1:14-15 (NASB77)** ¹⁴ As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts *which*

were yours in your ignorance,¹⁵ but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all *your* behavior.

56. So to put on the breastplate of righteousness is to live in daily, moment-by-moment obedience to our heavenly Father.
57. The third piece of armor occurs in verse 15.
58. Paul says, “and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.”
59. Paul says to “strap on” to your feet the “preparation” or “the firm foundation” or “readiness” of the gospel of peace.
60. The Christian soldier should see to it that his feet are equipped with the sandals which will give him a firm footing, namely, the good news that speaks peace to a sinful heart, for the Lord Jesus made peace by the blood of His Cross, making a way for a holy God to reunite Himself with a believing sinner who in Adam had been separated from Him and His life. The Greek word “peace” is *eirēnē* (εἰρήνη), and means “that which has been bound together.”⁴
61. So “the gospel of peace” refers to the good news that believers are at peace with God.

⁴Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament : For the English Reader* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997, c1984). Eph 6:14.

62. John Calvin said, “The message of our reconciliation to God, and nothing else gives peace to the conscience.”⁵
63. **Romans 5:1 (NASB77)** ¹ Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.
64. So, in “the gospel of peace,” Paul is not talking about preaching or teaching but about fighting spiritual battles.⁶
65. Now if you will notice in the first three pieces of armor we have three very practical principles.
66. In the girdle of truth we learn that we are to know the Word of God.
67. In the breastplate of righteousness we are to obey the Word of God.
68. In the gospel of peace we are to rest in the assurance of God.
69. Now we come to the last three pieces of armor: “the shield of faith,” “the helmet of salvation,” and “the sword of the Spirit.”

⁵John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentaries: Ephesians*, electronic ed., Logos Library System; Calvin's Commentaries (Albany, OR: Ages Software, 1998). Eph 6:15.

⁶John MacArthur, *Ephesians* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996, c1986). 355.

70. Notice in verse 16, “*the shield of faith.*”

I. Be Prepared for the Battle (vv.10-12)
II. Use the Armor God Has Given You (vv.13-18)

- A. The Purpose of the Armor (vv.13-14a)
- B. The Pieces of the Armor (vv.14-18)

- 1. The girdle of truth (v.14a)
- 2. The breastplate of righteousness (v.14b)
- 3. The gospel of peace (v.15)
- 4. The shield of faith (v.16)

Paul says “in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil *one*.”

Paul begins verse 16 with the phrase, “in addition to all.”

This “introduces the last three pieces of armor. The first three—girdle, breastplate, and shoes (vv. 14–15)—were for long-range preparation and protection and were never taken off on the battlefield. The **shield**, **helmet**, and **sword**, on the other hand, were kept in readiness for use when actual fighting began.”⁷

- a) The meaning of the shield of faith

The word “shield” used here (*thureon* (θυρεον)) designated the shield of the heavy

⁷John MacArthur, *Ephesians* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996, c1986). 357.

infantry, a large, oblong one, four by two and one half feet, sometimes curved on the inner side.⁸

The edges of these shields were so constructed that an entire line of soldiers could interlock shields and march into the enemy like a solid wall.⁹

And because they were “covered with hide,” they would “beat out fires or extinguish flaming arrows tipped with blazing tar.”¹⁰

The word “faith” (pistis) refers to “basic trust in God for daily provision and help.”

It is “the confidence, the trust, the commitment which a Christian has toward God and Christ.”¹¹

⁸Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament : For the English Reader* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997, c1984). Eph 6:14.

⁹Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary* (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1996, c1989). Eph 6:13.

¹⁰Andrew Knowles, *The Bible Guide*, 1st Augsburg books ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 2001). 622.

¹¹Robert G. Bratcher and Eugene Albert Nida, *A Handbook on Paul's Letter to the Ephesians*, UBS handbook series; Helps for translators (New York: United Bible Societies, 1993). 163.

It is “utter dependence on God, upon His presence and His power.”¹²

When temptations burn, when circumstances are adverse, when doubts assail, when shipwreck threatens, **faith** looks up and says, “I believe God.”¹³

The writer of Hebrews said in **Hebrews 11:6 (NASB77)** ⁶ And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

- 1) In **Proverbs 30:5 (NASB77)** ⁵ Every word of God is tested; He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him.
- 2) **1 John 5:4 (NASB77)** ⁴ For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

b) The purpose of the shield of faith

“with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.”

¹²*KJV Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1994). 2427.

¹³William MacDonald and Arthur Farstad, *Believer's Bible Commentary : Old and New Testaments* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1995). Eph 6:16.

The word “extinguish” (sbenneumi) means, “to quench.”

The “flaming arrows” were “the tips of arrows [that were] wrapped in pieces of cloth that had been soaked in pitch. Just before the arrow was shot, the tip would be lighted and the **flaming missile** would be shot at the enemy troops. The pitch burned fiercely, and on impact it would spatter burning bits for several feet, igniting anything flammable it touched. In addition to piercing their bodies, it could inflict serious burns on enemy soldiers and destroy their clothing and gear.

The most reliable protection against such **flaming missiles** was the *thureos shield*, whose covering of metal or leather soaked in water would either deflect or **extinguish** them.¹⁴

What are some of the “flaming arrows” that Satan shoots at Christians? Temptation.

His first arrow shot at man was to his wife, Eve, in the Garden of Eden.

Genesis 3:1-5 (NASB77) ¹ Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said

¹⁴John MacArthur, *Ephesians* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996, c1986). 359.

to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?'"² And the woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat;³ but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, lest you die.'"⁴ And the serpent said to the woman, "You surely shall not die!"⁵ "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

He shot the arrow of temptation at Jesus in Matthew 4.

He is the one who dangles the bait before the Christian that James refers to in James 1:13-15.

Satan continually bombards God's children with temptations to immorality, hatred, envy, anger, covetousness, pride, doubt, fear, despair, distrust, and every other sin.¹⁵

John Owen says that Satan "seeks to inject his evil and blasphemous thoughts about God into the hearts of the saints. It is his own work. He does not use the world or our own hearts in this temptation. No one would conceive of God and think evil of him. Satan

¹⁵John MacArthur, *Ephesians* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996, c1986). 359.

is alone in this sin, and shall be so in the punishment. These fiery darts are prepared in the forge of his own malice, and shall, with all their venom and poison, be returned into his own heart forever.”¹⁶

Thomas Adams said, “When Satan assaults any poor soul, he suffers nothing to appear to the eye but pleasure, profit, a sweet satisfaction of our desires, and a phantasma of happiness. There is also wrath, and judgement, and torment, and sting of conscience belonging to it! These must be, but these shall not be seen. All the way is white snow, that hides the pit. Green grass tempts us to walk; the serpent is unseen. If temptations, like praises, might be turned on both sides, the kingdom of darkness would not be so populous. If David could have foreseen the grief of his broken bones ere he fell upon Bathsheba, those aspersions of blood and lust had not befallen him. If Achan could have foreseen the stones about his ears before he filched those accursed things, he would never have fingered them. But as it is said of Adam and Eve after their fall, “Then their eyes were opened”; then, not before. Judas was blind till he had done the deed,

¹⁶ John Owen, *Temptation: Resisted and Repulsed*, (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1658, 2007). 8-9.

then his eyes were opened, and he saw it in its true horror.”¹⁷

If the belt of truthfulness is knowing the Word of God, and the breastplate of righteousness is obeying the Word God, and the gospel of peace is resting in the assurance of God—the shield of faith is believing God.

Paul gives the next piece of armor in verse 17:

5. The helmet of salvation (v.17a)

“And take the helmet of salvation.”

take—a different *Greek* word from that in Eph 6:13, 16; translate, therefore, “receive,” “accept,” namely, the helmet offered by the Lord, namely, “salvation” appropriated, as 1Th 5:8, “Helmet, the hope of salvation”; not an uncertain hope, but one that brings with it no shame of disappointment (Ro 5:5). It is subjoined to the shield of faith, as being its inseparable accompaniment (compare Ro 5:1, 5).

The head of the soldier was among the principal parts to be defended, as on it the deadliest strokes might fall, and it is the head that commands the whole body. The head is the seat of the *mind*,

¹⁷I.D.E. Thomas, *The Golden Treasury of Puritan Quotations*, electronic ed. (Simpsonville SC: Christian Classics Foundation, 1996).

which, when it has laid hold of the sure Gospel “hope” of eternal life, will not receive false doctrine, or give way to Satan’s temptations to *despair*. God, by this hope, “lifts up the head” (Ps 3:3; Lu 21:28).¹⁸

The “helmet” was “made of thick leather covered with metal plates, and others were of heavy molded or beaten metal. They usually had cheek pieces to protect the face.

The purpose of the **helmet**, of course, was to protect the head from injury, particularly from the dangerous broadsword commonly used in the warfare of that day. That was not the much smaller sword mentioned later in this verse, but was a large two-handed, double-edged sword (*rhomphaia*, see Rev. 1:16; 2:12; 6:8) that measured three to four feet in length. It was often carried by cavalymen, who would swing at the heads of enemy soldiers to split their skulls or decapitate them.

The fact that the **helmet** is related to **salvation** indicates that Satan’s blows are directed at the believer’s security and assurance in Christ.¹⁹

¹⁸Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, A. R. Fausset, David Brown and David Brown, *A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997). Eph 6:17.

¹⁹John MacArthur, *Ephesians* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996, c1986). 360.

But with the helmet of salvation, “the Christian is not daunted, since he knows that ultimate victory is sure. Assurance of eventual deliverance preserves him from retreat or surrender. “If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Rom. 8:31).”²⁰

1 Thessalonians 5:8 (NASB77) ⁸ But since we are of *the* day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation.

The helmet of salvation refers to believing God’s Word. You must take God at His Word and believe it without question.

The sixth weapon is found at the end of verse 17:

6. The sword of the Spirit (v.17b)

Paul says, “And the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.”

The “sword” (machaira) was “a short, straight sword used by the Roman soldier” (Rienecker). It “varied in length from six to eighteen inches.” It was “the principle weapon in hand-to-hand combat” (MacArthur).

²⁰William MacDonald and Arthur Farstad, *Believer's Bible Commentary : Old and New Testaments* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1995). Eph 6:17.

- a) It was the sword that was carried by the soldiers who came to arrest Jesus in the garden

Matthew 26:47 (NASB77) ⁴⁷ And while He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, came up, accompanied by a great multitude with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and elders of the people.

- b) It was the sword that Peter used to cut off the ear of the slave of the high priest

Matthew 26:51 (NASB77) ⁵¹ And behold, one of those who were with Jesus reached and drew out his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

- c) It was the sword used by Herod's executioners to put James to death

Acts 12:2 (NASB77) ² And he had James the brother of John put to death with a sword.

The word "Spirit" (pneuma) is the genitive of origin and indicates that the Holy Spirit is the origin of the sword.

Paul says the sword of the Spirit is "the Word of God."

It is the "word" (rhema), "sayings" (Strong), "individual words or particular statements" (MacArthur).

Romans 10:17 (NASB77) ¹⁷ So faith *comes* from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

Hebrews 4:12 (NASB77) ¹² For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

This piece of armor indicates the use of God's Word, hiding it in your heart (Ps.119:11), and speaking it directly to the enemy like Jesus did in Matthew 4.

CONCLUSION

1. So you have in each piece of armor a practical application for your life.
2. The girdle of truth refers to knowing God's Word.
3. The breastplate of righteousness refers to obeying God's Word.
4. The gospel of peace refers to resting in the assurance of God.
5. The shield of faith refers to believing God.
6. The helmet of salvation refers to believing God's Word.

7. And the sword of the Spirit refers to using God's Word.
8. Do you know and obey the Word?
9. Do you rest in the assurance of God?
10. Do you believe God as well as His Word?
11. Are you using God's Word in the hand-to-hand combat with the enemy?
12. What is the one piece of armor that is the foundation for it all?
13. Verse 18 says "prayer."
14. This is the only way you can "be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints" and we'll say more about that next time.
15. We're in a real battle with a real enemy.
16. God has given you real weapons to fight off the attacks from the devil and his demons.
17. Are you using them?
18. Have you taken them up so that you can stand firm against him?
19. If you do not know God's Word or obey then you don't have a chance against the enemy.
20. The same is true with the rest of the weapons.

21. Remember the battle is *spiritual*.
22. If you're here this morning and Jesus is not the Lord of your life, then you have already lost the battle.
23. Satan is your Lord and master and you live your life according to his rule.
24. The only way you can break away from his dominion is to surrender your life to the King of kings and Lord of lords—Jesus Christ who came to crush the head of Satan.
25. Surrender to Him now as we pray.
26. Let's pray.