

THE THIRD PART OF THE MESSAGE ON THE CHRISTIAN WARRIOR:

2. THE CHRISTIAN'S WEAPON (ARMOR)

Ephesians 6:11, “Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.”

Ephesians 6:13, “Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.”

Reminder: We are not called to rebuke or bind the devil but to resist the devil by taking up the whole armor of God.

Observe: This armor is for every Christian for the Christian life, not for special people for ministry.

Imperative: “Put on...”, “Take up...”

❖ **Regarding God's armour, William Gurnall (1655) writes in *The Christian in Complete Armour*:** “In heaven we shall appear not in armour but in robes of glory; but here are to be worn night and day; we must walk, work and sleep in them, or else we are not true soldiers of Christ.”

The whole armor (truth, righteousness, gospel of peace, faith, salvation, word of God): You can't be selective, “faith” but no “truth”

What if you don't put on the whole armor of God? You cannot stand against the schemes of the devil. You cannot

withstand in the evil day. You cannot live a Christian life. Can there be a soldier in the battlefield without the armor? Can there be a Christian in the spiritual warfare without the armor of God?

Note: Paul has used the Roman soldier's clothing (belt, breastplate, shoes, shield, helmet, sword) to explain the Christian soldier's clothing (truth, righteousness, gospel of peace, faith, salvation, word of God).

Caution: The clothing is not fixed to the list of virtues and the list is not exhaustive.

❖ **I Thessalonians 5:8**, But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the **breastplate of faith and love**, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.

I. BELT OF TRUTH (Eph. 6:14)—Put on the belt of truth (*aletheia*) to stand against the schemes of the devil

Just as the belt holds the whole garment of the soldier firmly, you too put on the truth to stand against the schemes of the devil firmly.

BELT OF TRUTH - I

Ephesians 1:13, In him you also, when you heard **the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation**, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 4:21, “assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, **as the truth is in Jesus**”

The word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that **Christ died for our sins** in accordance with the Scriptures, that **he was buried, that he was raised on the third day** in accordance with the Scriptures...” (1 Cor. 15:3-4)

SCHEMES OF THE DEVIL:

The Gospel of Lies:

- Gospel of healing,
- Gospel of material prosperity,
- Gospel of self-esteem,
- Gospel of charity,
- Gospel of solution to life’s problems,
- Gospel of moralism,
- Gospel of hyper-grace.

Application: Stand against the schemes of the devil (the gospel of lies) by clinging firmly to the Gospel of Truth.

Caution in Galatians 1:6, “I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are **turning to a different gospel.**”

Jude 3, “Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to **contend for the faith** that was once for all delivered to the saints.”

BELT OF TRUTH - 2

William Gurnall, “Some by truth mean a truth of doctrine; others will have it truth of heart, sincerity; they I think best that comprise both ... one will not do without the other.”

- ❖ **Ephesians 4:25**, “Therefore, having put away falsehood, **let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor**, for we are members one of another.”
- ❖ **Colossians 3:9**, “Do not **lie to one another**, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices”

The book, *The Day that America Told the Truth*, states that “91 percent of us lie regularly”. “Of the people interviewed, 92 percent said the main reason for their lying was to save face (avoid humiliation), and 98 percent said the reason they told lies was so as not to offend people”.

- ❖ **Matthew 5:7**, Let what you say be simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything more than this comes from evil.
- ❖ **Proverbs 6:16-17**, There are six things that **the Lord hates**, seven that are an abomination to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue...
- ❖ **Psalms 51:6**, Behold, you delight in **truth in the inward being**...
- ❖ **Ephesians 4:15**, “Rather, **speaking the truth in love**, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,”

- Do you speak the truth to your elders?
- Do you speak the truth in your spiritual accountability to your mentors?
- Do you speak the truth in your communication with other believers?
- Do you speak the truth and not hide the bitterness inside and behave nice outside?
- Do you speak the truth to your spouse?
- Do you speak the truth to your parents?
- Do you speak the truth in your workplace?
- Do you speak the truth in your business?
- Do you speak the truth in love?
- Do you speak lies for material profit?
- Do you speak lies to cover your sins?
- Do you speak lies to save your face (humiliation)?
- Do you speak lies to please people?
- Do you speak lies to avoid bad consequences?

SCHEMES OF THE DEVIL: John 8:44, “You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”

When you lie, you reflect the nature of the devil, not God who is the truth.

When you lie, you yield to the schemes of the devil, not live by the Spirit.

When you lie, you live a defeated Christian life.

❖ **Acts 5:3**, But Peter said, “Ananias, why has **Satan filled your heart to lie** to the Holy Spirit...”

REPENT and SEEK FORGIVENESS AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS.

Application: Stand against the schemes of the devil (to lie) by speaking the truth.

2. BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (Eph. 6:14)— Put on the breastplate of righteousness to stand against the schemes of the devil

Just as the breastplate of the soldier protects the vital organs of the soldier (particularly the heart), you too put on the breastplate of righteousness to stand against the schemes of the devil.

Isaiah 59:17, “He [God] put on righteousness as a breastplate”

1. Positional [Imputed] Righteousness:

❖ **2 Corinthians 5:21**, For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

John Stott: To have been justified [declared righteous] by his grace through simple faith in Christ crucified, to be clothed with a righteousness which is not one's own but Christ's, to stand before God not condemned but accepted—this is an essential defence against an accusing conscience and against the slanderous attacks of the evil one.

Application: Stand against the schemes of the devil in the justification by faith in Christ Jesus.

2. **Functional [Practical] Righteousness:**

As God's righteous people, we practice righteousness, i.e. the right standard of living/character/. WE DO [practice righteousness] BECAUSE OF WHO WE ARE [righteous in Christ], NOT TO BECOME WHAT WE ARE NOT. We don't practice righteousness to become righteous; we practice righteousness because we are righteous in Christ.

Paul's Example—2 Corinthians 6:4-7, “but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; **by truthful speech** [belt of truth], and the power of God; with **the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left** [breastplate of righteousness, i.e. moral righteousness, holiness];”

❖ **I Peter 2:24**, “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and **live to righteousness.**”

- ❖ **Ephesians 4:24**, “to put on the new self, **created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.**”

What are the righteous standards of God?

- ❖ **Ephesians 4:25**, “Therefore, having **put away falsehood**, let each one of you **speak the truth with his neighbor**, for we are members one of another.”
- ❖ **Ephesians 4:26**, **Be angry and do not sin**; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and **give no opportunity to the devil.**
 - **Application:** Stand against the schemes of the devil (anger) by walking in patience.
- ❖ **Ephesians 4:27**, Let the thief no longer steal, but rather **let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands**, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.
 - **Application:** Stand against the schemes of the devil (deceptive earning) by walking in integrity and being a blessing to those in need.
- ❖ **Ephesians 4:28**, Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, **but only such as is good for building up**, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.
 - **Application:** Stand against the schemes of the devil (corrupting) by speaking only edifying words.

- ❖ **Ephesians 4:31**, Let all **bitterness** and **wrath** and **anger** and **clamor** and **slander** be put away from you, along with all **malice**.
 - **Application:** Stand against the schemes of the devil by refusing to yield to bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, slander, malice.

- ❖ **Ephesians 4:32-51-2**, Be **kind to one another**, **tenderhearted**, **forgiving one another**, as God in Christ forgave you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And **walk in love**, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.
 - **Application:** Stand against the schemes of the devil by clothing ourselves with kindness, tenderheartedness, forgiveness, love.

- ❖ **Ephesians 5:3-4**, But **sexual immorality** and all **impurity** or **covetousness** must not even be named among you [must not even be hinted at among you, AB], as is proper among saints. Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.
 - **Application:** Stand against the schemes of the devil by refusing to yield to all kinds of sexual immorality, impurity, and covetousness.

- ❖ **Ephesians 5:22**, **Wives, submit to your own husbands**, as to the Lord.

- **Application:** Stand against the schemes of the devil by submitting to your own husbands as to the Lord.
- ❖ **Ephesians 5:25**, Husbands, **love your wives**, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,
 - **Application:** Stand against the schemes of the devil by loving your wives as Christ loved the church.
- ❖ **Ephesians 6:1**, Children, **obey your parents** in the Lord, for this is right.
 - **Application:** Stand against the schemes of the devil by honoring and obeying your parents.
- ❖ **Ephesians 6:4**, Fathers, **do not provoke your children to anger**, but **bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord**.
 - **Application:** Stand against the schemes of the devil by patiently bringing up the children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.
- ❖ **Ephesians 6:5**, Bondservants, **obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart**, as you would Christ.
 - **Application:** Stand against the schemes of the devil by obeying, revering, and sincerely serving your earthly masters in the workplace.

Paul David Tripp and Timothy Lane in *How People Change*: “Often when we hear the words “spiritual warfare,” our

minds think “demonic possession” and “exorcist deliverance.” But Paul normalizes the term for us. Where does spiritual war take place? In all the normal situations and relationships of life. The greatest war is not between nations or peoples. It is the war for our hearts.”

Which one is tough? Casting out demons or resisting the devil by putting on the breastplate of righteousness?

Fourth part of the Sermon continued next week... (pray, prepare, prevail)