

7 Life Lessons from Ephesians

Part 7: Bullet Proof Your Life! (Ephesians 6:10-17)

“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. 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. Stand therefore...”

Eph. 6:10-14a ESV.

3 Questions to Answer First:

#1 - Whose strength is important?

The Lord's strength - the whole armor of God

Why is this important?

Important that we not attempt to fight in our own strength

#2 - Who is the battle against?

The devil, evil, spiritual forces of evil.

Why is this important?

Not against other people; not a “present” or “physical” force.

#3 - What is the objective?

To stand.

Why is this important?

Ours is not to defeat Satan, but to remain standing for Christ.

6 Parts of God's Armor:

All metaphors with descriptors. Understand first the putting on of a soldier's armor in Paul's day, then the truth of the objective.

#1 - Belt of Truth

Not actually “belt,” but “having girded” - binding up the loose dress to free oneself to run and move. This was the “point of junction” for all the main pieces of body-armor - this “girdle” formed the common bond of the whole. We must be convinced of existence of one truth and be convinced of the need to pursue it always. “Relative truth” strikes at the heart of our armor and tells us of our enemy's first strategy for our downfall.

#2 - Breastplate of Righteousness

Why would soldier not want to wear breastplate? After all it protects our most vital organs. Homer (800 to 1,000 years before Paul) speaks of light-armored warriors armed with linen corselets. Easier to move around, not as heavy, but subject to enemy's daggers. Aren't there times in our life when it would just be easier to operate as the “end justifies the means?” Putting on the breastplate of righteousness means that we want to do things the right way, at the right time, for the right reasons... not just right result. We put on integrity, character. (Isa 59:17 - Yahweh “put on righteousness as a breastplate” as his faithfulness to covenant promises.

#3 - Sandals of the Gospel of Peace

fitted with “readiness” (hapox legoma NT); could mean firm foundation - firm footing. Roman soldier wore caliga, a half-boot, equipped for long marches, but also could be studded with sharp nails to enable a firm grip. In context, not just readiness to share gospel of peace with others, but to be able to stand, sure footed, from the battle which results from gospel.

#4 - Shield of Faith

Term refers to large shield, 4 feet tall, 2 1/2 feet wide, protects the whole body. Made of wood, covered in leather. NOT the clipeus, a small round buckler. Faith takes hold of God's resources in the midst of the onslaughts of evil and produces the firm resolve which douses anything the enemy throws at the believer. Why would anyone not? Verb is “carry.” Keeping the faith sometimes is like the burden of carrying heavy object. “Extinguish flaming darts,” Not just initial puncture, but burning flames. Fear of fire tempts soldier to throw down shield. Water logged and leather.

#5 - Helmet of Salvation

“Take” same meaning as “receive.” We receive God's salvation. It is our protection. Significant that helmet is for the head? Can we begin to think our way to salvation, thinking it is up to us and not gift from God?

#6 - Sword of the Spirit (Word of God)

Only offensive piece of equipment, but can also be used defensively to ward off attacks of an enemy. Here we are told specifically that our sword IS the Word of God. This is the message that comes directly to us from God - his revelation of Himself to us. Of course the Bible, but in context also the message we individually receive from Him through His Spirit - prayer.

Conclusion - Go back to v.11 and again v. 13. Circle word “whole” ESV; “full” NIV; “all” NLT, GNT, NCV; “everything the Master has set out for you” The Message; Ask: What are you leaving behind in your battle? Consider which you should be putting on as we take communion this morning.