

## The Whole Armor of God- The Church Militant

Because you are now equipped with a deeper understanding of the power of the Gospel, it is up to you to take that power and wield it as a soldier would a sword. Do not wait for the fight to come to you, but take it to the enemy. "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist (*Gk.436- stand against, oppose; withstand*) the devil, and he will flee from you."- Jas 4:7

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

- We cannot trust in earthly weaponry (*Lk 11:21-22*) to battle against this particular "roaring lion" who lies in wait "seeking someone to devour" (*1 Pet 5:8*), through his evil schemes- Thayer: "*cunning arts, deceit, craft, trickery*". When fighting spiritual battles we need "the armor of light" (*Rom 13:12*), and "the armor of righteousness" (*2 Cor 6:7*) which is the whole armor of God. The *full armor* will be discussed shortly. These weapons are spiritual since the war is spiritual, like fighting fire with fire, only we fight it "with pure water" (*Heb 10:22*).

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**Eph 6:12** 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.

- According to Rev 12:13, Satan continues his war against the saints, but is restricted "by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death" (*Rev 12:11*). There are presently spiritual battles, between the forces of good and evil (*Rev 12:7*) for the souls of mankind, being waged in the unseen world, to *influence* governments (*Dan 10*) and individuals alike (*Act 5:3*), which in turn have a negative impact on all that is righteous and moral. Man, in his seemingly universal ignorance, has been influenced negatively by his unknown adversary, which is why we are to "Go into all the world and proclaim the Gospel to the whole creation" (*Mk 16:15*). One of Satan's biggest deceptions is **that he doesn't exist!** His reality seems bazar to the average person who has been conquered by him through ignorance of the truth. How can you fight against an enemy you know nothing about?

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- cosmic powers over this present darkness- Interlinear: "*the world rulers of the darkness of this age*". (*Gk.2888- an epithet of Satan*) This is with reference to "the sons of disobedience" and the ignorance they have succumbed to via "the spirit (*Gk.4151- vital principle, mental disposition, angel [Gal 1:8?], demon*) that is now at work in" them (*2:2*). It is a **spiritual** darkness in that it *obscures* "the light of the Gospel" (*2 Cor 4:4*) wherein they could be saved (*denominationalism came from such obscurity*), and to the carnal man it is a **moral** darkness in that it devalues life with "hands that shed innocent blood" (*Pro 6:17*) and "in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves" and by such (*along with a host of other unrighteous acts*), God has abandoned

them (*Rom 1:24*). Not only does such ignorance exist in the physical realm, it exists as...

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- forces of evil in the heavenlies- The Interlinear does not add the phrase “*in Christ*” here, as it does in 1:3, 20, since the covenant relationship between Christ and His church is holy. This is where “the prince of the power of the air” (2:2) resides, along with his evil minions. This is the origin of evil influences, on both the sons of God and on the sons of men, to sin. The walk that those “born of God” walk **is** according to truth (*light*) so they “cannot keep on sinning because [they have] been born of God” (1 *Jn* 3:9; *Jn* 3:5-6). Those truly converted faithful saints are “awake” (5:14) to evil influences that are constantly before us, by way of the internet and other “deceitful schemes” (4:14). Whereas, the sons of men walk in ignorance so “every intention of the thoughts of his heart [is] only evil continually” (*Gen* 6:5). This is the unbeliever who succumbs to sin as if by second nature “and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death” (*Jas* 1:15), and death, in context, is to “suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, **away from** (*this is spiritual death*) the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His might” (2 *Thes* 1:9- *Emp. Added*).

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**Eph 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.

- Because of these evil forces (*v. 12*), that the world doesn’t believe exist, it is up to the church to arm herself, even though “the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds” (2 *Cor* 10:4). Christ, the “Lion of the tribe of Judah” (*Rev* 5:5) “humbled Himself” (*Php* 2:8) to become the “Lamb without blemish or spot” (1 *Pet* 1:19), and in such a fashion was able to destroy that “roaring lion [who is ever] seeking someone to devour” (1 *Pet* 5:8). Therefore, as that was a war between two spiritual entities (*good and evil*), so it is with the church in her preparation for **any evil day**. As Christ *abase* Himself to become physical man, man has to *abase* himself “to be strengthened with power through [God’s] Spirit in [the] inner being” (*Eph* 3:16). As the apostle Paul stated in 2 *Cor* 12:10- “when I am weak, then am I strong”. The only way to defeat spiritual evil is to train for it, as a soldier trains for battle; he has to tear down (*humble himself*) before he can “strengthen what remains” (*Rev* 3:2). Paul also stated in 1 *Cor* 9:24 that in a race only one “receives the prize” but we are to “so run, that [we] may obtain [it]”. When David told Saul that he would “go and fight with this Philistine (*Goliath*)” (1 *Sam* 17:32) he convinced the king that he was able to defeat him because he “struck down both lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them” (*v. 36*). But when Saul tried putting his own armor on David consisting of “bronze... and... a coat of mail” (*v. 38*) it only hindered him from going out and “Then David said to Saul, ‘I cannot go with these, for I have not tested them’” (*v. 39*). The same goes for the Christian who thinks he is able to battle against the spiritual giants over this present darkness, yet hasn’t made the attempt to be “a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth” (2 *Tim* 2:15). Many, if not most, won’t go to battle knowing they haven’t sufficiently prepared themselves

for it, relying on others to do their fighting for them. How well would a nation fare if its military was run in such a way?

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- withstand- Gk.436- to *stand against*, that is, *oppose*: -resist. How can we *oppose* evil if we aren't fully prepared for it when it comes?

Jas 4:7 Submit (Gk.5293- to *subordinate*) yourselves therefore to God. Resist (Gk.436) the devil, and he will flee from you.

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- evil day- This is **any** day of spiritual warfare, so we are to "be ready in season and out of season", having tested the whole armor of God in order to "reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching" (2 Tim 4:2). And once we *accomplish* that, we are to continue to stand firm (Gk.2476-according to Thayer: "to stand ready or prepared"), even if we are at the point of exhaustion.

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**Eph 6:14** Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,

- Part of our being prepared to resist Satan includes having fastened (*past tense*) on the belt of truth. Paul here wrote as though they were already prepared with the truth at the time of his writing. He also was familiar with the armor of the Roman soldier and compared the readiness of the Christian soldier to it by having the same armor but with spiritual implications. Truth is worn around the *hip* and is significant as it relates to the rest of the armor; it (*figuratively*) holds it all together. Without truth (*belt*) the soldier stumbles and his armor becomes useless when the enemy approaches. Truth is also necessary in our worship to God (Jn 4:24) thus the world religions (*including denominationalism*) have **not** fastened on the belt of truth.

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- breastplate- Gk.2382- Thayer: "a *breastplate* or *corselet* consisting of two parts and protecting the body on both sides from the neck to the middle", of righteousness- Gk.1343- *equity* (of character or act); specifically (Christian) *justification*. This is the protection a Christian wears that fends off anything (*spiritually speaking*) that would threaten his character as it pertains to fairness. Without it a saint will "show partiality" which is "committing sin" (Jas 2:9). having put on- Again, Paul taught that readiness should not be in question. Wearing a breastplate also protects our "faith and love".

1Th 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. (Emp. Added)

And not that God needs such protections, His breastplate (*along with the rest of His armor*) serve in offense, as opposed to the Christian soldier's which serve in defense.

Isa 59:17 He (*God*) put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on His head; He put on garments of vengeance for clothing, and wrapped Himself in zeal as a cloak.

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**Eph 6:15** and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the Gospel of peace.

- Footwear is the base or foundation of any soldier's armor, and for the Christian it is the *good news of peace*. *Peace (Gk.1515)* according to Thayer: "*is used of those who, assured of salvation, tranquilly await the return of Christ and the transformation of all things which will accompany that event*". The assurance that what this *good news* represents is firm and is a foundation worth standing on. It is that part of the Christian's armor that strengthens his stand, just as the soldier has when in battle (*Roman soldiers had studs on the bottom of their shoes for grip and firmness of stance*); if he has nothing on his feet with which to stand firm he has not made enough *preparation* to keep the enemy from causing him to slip, thus restraining his defenses.

### Soldier's Shoes and Boots

Roman soldiers had shoes called *campagi militares* and also the well-ventilated marching boot, *caliga* (with the diminutive *caligula* used as a nickname for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Roman emperor), whose sole was extra thick and studded with hobnails.  
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**Eph 6:16** In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one;

- The Roman soldier's shield (*Gk.2375- a large shield [as door shaped]*) is what protected him along with the rest of his armor. As it pertains to the Christian soldier, it is his first line of defense. Being one *of faith (Gk.4102)*, demonstrates a reliance on it to save him. The writer to the Hebrews gave a short list of O.T. heroes...

Heb 11:33 who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, 34 quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.

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- As verse 14 states, it is important to be prepared but, there must be a higher degree of readiness on the part of the Christian in all circumstances. If a saint's shield is down he is more likely to be tempted by the evil one (a.k.a., the devil). With his shield of faith firm in hand he can extinguish the flaming darts (by which the devil is able to kindle carnal passions within) because of that reliance on it for his salvation.

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**Eph 6:17** and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,

- The Roman soldier's headwear was what protected his head during battle from the ammunition of his enemy, as Paul would have understood. Although for the Christian soldier this helmet (Gk.4030- *encirclement of the head*) of salvation (Gk.4992- *defense*) is another defensive piece of armor but specifically for the head, thus the weaponry of the evil one cannot penetrate that which is within, the mind. Taking off this helmet, a saint is unable to "love the Lord [his] God with all [his] heart (Gk.2588- *thoughts or feelings [mind]*) and with all [his] soul (Gk.5590- *breath*) and with all [his] mind (Gk.1271- *deep thought [mind or its disposition]*; -*understanding*)" (Mat 22:37). Without such an absolute love for the Lord, the devil will again be able to penetrate a Christian's mindset with evil desires that witness a failure to love his Savior.

Joh 14:15 If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

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- sword- Gk.3162- Thayer: "*the sword with which the Spirit subdues the impulses to sin...*" In this case, as it pertains to the Christian, in both defense and offense. As the word of God is "discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart (Gk.2588- *mind*)" (Heb 4:12), it not only exposes "the unfruitful works of darkness" (5:11) "of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly they are ravenous wolves" (Mat 7:15), if a Christian soldier wields his sword thus keeping it sharp, he is better able to keep **himself** from those "*impulses to sin*", and "by sound doctrine both to exhort and convince the gainsayers" (Titus 1:9). It is what developed his heart to obey "that form of doctrine which was delivered you" (Rom 6:17) and from which you received "the answer of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet 3:21).

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**Eph 6:18** praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,

- Since children of God "are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in [them]" (Rom 8:9), our prayers are at all times to be in remembrance of that holy relationship. Since through our prayers "the Spirit Himself intercedes for us" He does so "according to the will of God" (Rom 8:26-27). So if our prayers are to be in the Spirit they must be addressed in accordance with God's will. He knows our wants but answers our needs.

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- with all- Gk.3956- *all, any, every, the whole*, prayer- Gk.4335- *prayer (worship)*, and supplication- Gk.1162- *a petition*: -request. Whether in worshiping God in prayer or when asking anything of Him, anything and everything done in prayer is to be done according to His will.

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- Sometimes we might not be praying as we should (Rom 8:26) which is why the apostle stated here that it was necessary to keep alert (*another military reference*:

*Gk.697- to be sleepless), with all perseverance which has to do with being constantly diligent.*

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- Paul's request here is for all the saints and not just for our own personal family, friends, neighbors, etc. *(even though we need to pray for their souls as well).*

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Your fight now begins since you have been blessed with the knowledge of spiritual weaponry. As a soldier of the world, after each battle, cleans, trains in and hones his weapon, so it must be with the soldier of Christ. Never lay your sword down. Never let your sword grow dull. Never loosen your armor or let your guard down because your adversary, as a roaring lion will always be ravenous for the souls of the world. Fight the good fight (*1 Tim 6:12*) because for you is laid up a crown of righteousness which the Lord Himself will give you in the end (*2 Tim 4:8*).

2Ti 2:15 Study (*Gk.4704- make effort: -do [give] diligence*) to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing (*Gk.3718- dissect [expound] correctly*) the word of truth.

2Ti 4:1 I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, Who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: 2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. 3 For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, 4 and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. 5 As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

May the God of all grace bless you in your endeavors, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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