

THE CHRISTIAN IN COMPLETE ARMOR: Ephesians 6:10-18

INTRODUCTION. I do not know exactly what God has in store for you or me or us in 2026. But I do know a few things for certain: **1)** Christ will build his church. **2)** Satan and his confederates will hate that and try to thwart the work. **3)** Satan and his confederates will especially hate those churches and people who are not lukewarm, but are white hot with zealous love and labor for the glory of God.

1. **Christ will continue to build His church.** This is true individually, if you are a Christian. Jesus will continue to intercede for you. The Spirit will continue to sanctify you, fill you, gift you, strengthen you. The Father will continue to love you, and engage His fatherly providence for your ultimate good.

Jesus will also continue to build His church corporately: "Of the increase of the Kingdom of Christ and of peace there shall be no end" (Isaiah 9:7). The Kingdom will continue to grow like a mustard tree, as more and more sinners get redeemed into saints (Luke 13:18-19). The Kingdom will continue to influence the world for good, like yeast working its way through dough (Luke 13:20-21).

2. **Satan and his confederates will continue to hate Christ's people, scheme against them (Ephesians 6), and try to devour them (1 Peter 5).** Satan and his confederates will still try to separate you from a holy life devoted to Christ; they will try to separate you from your brothers and sisters in Christ who love you and keep you accountable; they will try to tempt you to make shipwreck of your faith by either straying from Christ in doctrine or living; they will try to get you to compromise your convictions concerning God's Word and thereby sear your conscience so that you can walk in darkness and say you are walking in the light.

Also The wicked will try to *shame* you as you try to live for Christ, *silence* you as you try to speak for Christ, *stifle* your growth as you try to grow in Christ, and will even cause *suffering* to come upon you for the sake of Christ.

Additionally, wolves—even *wolves in sheep's clothing*—will continue to try and infiltrate Christ's people to lead them away from their flock, their family, their friends, and, ultimately, from faithfulness to Christ.

3. **The more we are used by Christ to build His church, the more Satan and his confederates will hate us, scheme against us, and try to devour us.** What schemes does the devil care to devise for a group of people who are not laboring zealously to be used to build the kingdom of Christ?

I would submit to you that Satan loves those churches who are safe and calm, politically correct, soft on sin, weak on masculinity and femininity, quiet on the doctrines of grace, vague on domestic duties, silent on civil government, or functionally antinomian when it comes to sold-out obedience to Christ.

Yet those churches and people who are dangerous (to the kingdom of darkness) and zealous (for the kingdom of light), devoted to the truth, hard on sin, strong on masculinity and femininity, loud about the doctrines of grace, crystal clear on domestic duties, vocal on and active in civil government, and who love God's Law when it comes to sold-out obedience to Christ— those are those churches and people that Satan and his confederates hate with a true hatred. Those are those kinds of churches and people that the wicked will seek to shame, silence, stifle, and make suffer. Those are those kinds of churches and people that wolves want to infiltrate.

In short,

- 1)** Christ will build his church.
- 2)** Satan will hate that and try to thwart the work.
- 3)** Satan will especially hate those churches and people who are not lukewarm, but are white hot with zealous love and labor for the glory of God.

– **BOYS AND GIRLS... (recap)**

I do not know about you, but I want to be a person and be a part of a church that Satan hates with a true hatred, because Christ is using me and us to build His kingdom for His glory.

Q1. Do you want to be mightily used by Christ?

Q2. Do you want to be a part of a church that is mightily used by Christ?

CON(TEXT). Final instructions and exhortations to the church in Ephesus. In the first three chapters (1-3) Paul lays out the glorious doctrines of God's grace in Christ Jesus. In the second three chapters (4-6) Paul teaches what a godly life looks like—how we should live in light of God's glorious gospel.

DOCTRINE. Christians must be strong and armored in order to stand against the schemes of the devil, and therefore live totally for God's glory, others good, and their gladness.

OUTLINE. Six main truths and one question. The answers to the question will

specifically deal with each piece of the Armor here prescribed.

I. YOU NEED TO BE SPIRITUALLY STRONG (Ephesians 6:10a).

Ephesians 6:10a "Finally, be strong"

- **GURNALL:** "As a man set upon by a thief stirs up all the force and strength he has in his whole body to defend himself and offend his adversary; so the apostle bids the Christian 'be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might,' that is, *Soul, away to your God, whose mighty power is all intended and devoted by God himself for your help and defense.*"

II. THE ONLY WAY YOU CAN BE SPIRITUALLY STRONG IS THROUGH THE LORD JESUS CHRIST (Ephesians 6:10b).

Ephesians 6:10b "in the Lord and in the strength of his might."

- **GURNALL:** "It implies a further act of faith, not only to believe that God is almighty, but also that this almighty power of God is engaged for its defense; so as to bear up in the midst of all trials and temptations undauntedly, leaning on the arm of God Almighty, as it were his own strength."
- **These two verses deserve to be memorized by you:**
- **i) John 15:5** "Apart from me you can do nothing."
- **ii) Philippians 4:13** "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."
- **BOYS AND GIRLS...**

III. YOU NEED TO ALSO PUT ON THE WHOLE (SPIRITUAL) ARMOR OF GOD (Ephesians 6:11a).

Ephesians 6:11a "Put on the whole armor of God,"

- **GURNALL:** "It is one thing to have armour in the house, and another thing to have it buckled on—to have grace in principle, and grace in action."
 - **GURNALL:** "The Christian's armour is made to be worn; no taking it off until you have finished your course."
 - **GURNALL:** "We must not confide in the armour of God, but in the God of this armour, because all our weapons are only 'mighty through God.'"

You need to be strong and armored. Not either/or, but both/and.

BTW, though this is dealing with spiritual things, I think there is a physical lesson here for us men. Some say, "I do not need to be armed, I am strong." Others say, "I do not need to be strong, I am armed." Still others say, "I do not

need to train because I am armed and strong." Nah. Reject that, men.

- i) You need to be strong ("be strong").
- ii) You need to be armed ("put on the whole armor of God," including a sword).
- iii) You need to train (what use is having a sword that you cannot efficiently swing?).

IV. YOU NEED TO BE SPIRITUALLY STRONG AND ARMORED SO THAT YOU MAY STAND AGAINST THE DEVIL'S SCHEMES (Ephesians 6:11b).

Ephesians 6:11b "that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil."

- **GURNALL:** "Give not place to Satan! no, not an inch in his first motions; he that is a beggar, and a modest one without doors, will command the house if let in."
- **GURNALL:** "Satan with all his wits and wiles, shall never vanquish a soul armed with true grace; nay, he that hath this armour of God on shall vanquish him."

Recommend PRECIOUS REMEDIES.

V. YOU NEED TO BE SPIRITUALLY STRONG AND ARMORED BECAUSE YOU HAVE SPIRITUAL FORCES OF EVIL AS ENEMIES (Ephesians 6:10a).

Ephesians 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."

- **GURNALL:** "The subject of [this text] is solemn; A War Between the Saint and Satan, and that so bloody a one, that the cruelest which ever was fought by men will be found but sport and child's play to this."
- **GURNALL:** "The enemies are not 'flesh and blood' (weak, mortal humans), but a ranked demonic army: principalities (high-ranking rulers), powers (authorities with delegated might), rulers of the darkness of this world (governing in moral and spiritual obscurity), and spiritual wickedness in high places (malignant spirits operating from elevated heavenly realms, yet opposing God)."

VI. YOU NEED TO BE SPIRITUALLY STRONG AND ARMORED SO THAT YOU MAY WITHSTAND IN THE EVIL DAY AND STAND FIRM IN THE FAITH (Ephesians 6:13).

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."

Q1. What is this "evil day"? Temptation. Suffering. Death.

- **GURNALL:** "The end why the Christian is to be thus completely armed is double—negative and positive: that he may 'withstand' the devil's power and policy in the 'evil day,' and, after he hath overcome one temptation, stand ready for another."
 - **GURNALL:** "This is the end of all—to *stand*. It is the errand upon which this armour is sent; it comes from God with this charge, 'I arm thee with this, that thou mayest stand in the evil day.'"

QUESTION.

HOW CAN I WITHSTAND IN THE EVIL DAY AND STAND FIRM IN THE FAITH (Ephesians 6:14-18)?

Recommend THE CHRISTIAN IN COMPLETE ARMOR.

If you want to you withstand in the evil day and stand firm in the faith, you need to **I) FASTEN ON THE BELT OF TRUTH** (Ephesians 6:14a).

Ephesians 6:14a "Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth. . ."

- **GURNALL:** "What is here meant by loins that are to be girt with this girdle? Peter will help to interpret Paul: 'Gird up the loins of your minds' (1 Pet. 1:13). It is our minds that must wear this girdle of truth, and very fitly may our mind be compared to the loins."
 - **BOYS AND GIRLS...**

If you want to you withstand in the evil day and stand firm in the faith, you need to **II) PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS** (Ephesians 6:14b).

Ephesians 6:14b "[Stand therefore] and having put on the breastplate of righteousness. . ."

- **GURNALL:** "Now righteousness and holiness defend the conscience from all wounds and harms from sin, which is the weapon Satan useth to give the conscience its deadly stab with."
 - **GURNALL:** "A man may outlive many wounds received in the arms or legs, but a stab in the heart or other vital parts is the certain messenger of death approaching. Thus righteousness and holiness preserve the principal part of a Christian—his soul and conscience."
 - **BOYS AND GIRLS...**

If you want to you withstand in the evil day and stand firm in the faith, you need to **III) PUT ON THE SHOES OF GOSPEL READINESS** (Ephesians 6:15).

Ephesians 6:15 "[Stand therefore...] and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace."

- **GURNALL:** "The gospel of peace... is as shoes to the Christian's feet; it

enables him to tread safely and surely upon the most difficult and dangerous paths... A soul shod with the gospel of peace will not easily be put out of its way, or frightened from its march, by the threats or allurements of the enemy."

- **GURNALL:** "An unshod soldier is unfit for a march; a soul unpeaceful through unbelief is unfit for duty... Satan loves to fish in troubled waters."
- **BOYS AND GIRLS...**

If you want to you withstand in the evil day and stand firm in the faith, you need to **IV) TAKE UP THE SHIELD OF FAITH** (Ephesians 6:16).

Ephesians 6:16 "[Stand therefore...] In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one;"

- **GURNALL:** "These 'fiery darts' are the temptations, suggestions, and injections of Satan into the soul... They are called 'fiery' because they tend to inflame the soul with fear, despair, lust, rage, or unbelief; and 'darts' because they are shot suddenly, secretly, and with great force."
- **GURNALL:** "Faith quenches these darts by opposing the truth of God to the suggestions of Satan... It interposes God Himself as a shield between the soul and the temptation: 'I am thy shield,' saith God to Abraham."
- **GURNALL:** "Faith is not a lazy grace; it is a shield to be taken, lifted up, and held out in the hand of the soul by vigorous actings... A shield on the arm is better than a shield hanging up in the temple."
- **BOYS AND GIRLS...**

If you want to you withstand in the evil day and stand firm in the faith, you need to **V) TAKE THE HELMET OF SALVATION** (Ephesians 6:17a).

Ephesians 6:17a "[Stand therefore...] and take (receive/accept/take) the helmet of salvation,"

- **GURNALL:** "*Take the helmet of salvation.* It is not enough to have it in the house, or in the armory, but we must take it, wear it, and keep it on the head... This hope must be daily renewed by fresh acts of faith looking to the promise."
- **BOYS AND GIRLS...**

If you want to you withstand in the evil day and stand firm in the faith, you need to **VI) TAKE THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT** (Ephesians 6:17b).

Ephesians 6:17b "[Stand therefore...] and [*take*] the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,"

- **GURNALL:** "The sword of the Spirit, that is, the word of God. It is called

the sword of the Spirit because it is forged by the Spirit, and it is the Spirit alone that draws it out of the scabbard, and puts it into the hand of the Christian to fight with."

- **GURNALL:** "A soldier may sooner die for lack of skill to use his weapon, than for lack of a weapon to fight with... Many have the sword of God's word in their hands and scabbards, but through ignorance or negligence cannot use it."
- **GURNALL:** "Christ Himself, when tempted by Satan, drew no other sword but this, 'It is written!...' With this sword He repelled every temptation, and foiled the tempter."
- **GURNALL:** "This sword is 'mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds' (2 Cor. 10:4). It is able to cut and kill the lusts in the heart, and to vanquish Satan in the field."
- **BOYS AND GIRLS...**

Be strong. Armor up. Take up the sword and train with it.

Private worship. Family worship. Public worship.

If you want to you withstand in the evil day and stand firm in the faith, you need to **VII) PRAY AT ALL TIMES** (Ephesians 6:18).

Ephesians 6:18 "[Stand therefore...] 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. . ."

- **CALVIN:** "Pray in adversity and prosperity."
- **GURNALL:** "The panoply is not complete without this duty of prayer annexed to it... All the armour is to be put on, kept on, and used in prayer. Prayer is the great duty that runs through the whole of our spiritual warfare."
- **GURNALL:** "Prayer and watching are like the right and left hand of a soldier; he is defective without either... Watching is the guard and sentinel that keeps the soul in a praying frame."
- **GURNALL:** "Making supplication for all saints. The Christian soldier must not only pray for himself, but for his fellow-soldiers... We are all embarked in the same ship, engaged against the same enemy; if one be wounded, all suffer."
- **BOYS AND GIRLS...**

2 EXHORTATIONS

I) Make sure to get strength from Christ and take up the whole armor of God.

II) Help others learn how to get strength from Christ and take up the whole armor of God.

CONCLUSION.

Q1. Do you want to be mightily used by Christ?

Q2. Do you want to be a part of a church that is mightily used by Christ?

Then get strength from Christ and make sure you and others take up the whole armor of God.

Labor to be a Christian in Complete Armor.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

- ***The Christian in Complete Armor* by William Gurnall** - https://heritagebooks.org/products/the-christian-in-complete-armour-3-vols-gurnall.html?srsId=AfmBOooigwxfbakqGZEKoAdYAbX-aAQ1__ncnfeHwOATaNHJQB4ssKb
- ***Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices* by Thomas Brooks** - <https://heritagebooks.org/products/precious-remedies-against-satans-devices-puritan-paperbacks-brooks.html>
- ***Heaven Taken By Storm* by Thomas Watson** - <https://heritagebooks.org/products/heaven-taken-by-storm-paperback-sdg-watson.html>

STUDY AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Study Questions

1. According to the sermon, what three things can Christians know with certainty as we enter a new year? How does Matthew 16:18 support the first certainty, and why is this promise particularly encouraging for Particular Baptists who hold to the perpetuity and triumph of Christ's

church?

2. The preacher contrasts “lukewarm” churches with those that are “white hot” with zeal for God’s glory. From a 1689 Baptist perspective (Chapter 26 of the Confession, “Of the Church”), what marks a true church as zealous rather than lukewarm, particularly regarding sound doctrine, church discipline, and baptism?
3. The sermon emphasizes that Satan especially hates zealous, non-compromising believers and churches. How does 2 Timothy 3:12 reinforce this point? In your own experience or observation, where have you seen opposition intensify against those who refuse to compromise on biblical convictions?
4. The central doctrine drawn from Ephesians 6:10–18 is: “Christians must be strong and armored in order to stand against the schemes of the devil.” Explain the distinction the preacher makes between (a) being spiritually strong in the Lord and (b) putting on the whole armor of God. Why are both indispensable?
5. Why does Paul begin the armor with the “belt of truth”? How does commitment to biblical truth (1689 Confession Chapter 1, “Of the Holy Scriptures”) serve as the foundation that holds all other pieces of armor in place?
6. The preacher argues that the “breastplate of righteousness” refers primarily to personal holiness and practical righteousness, not merely imputed righteousness. How does this align with the 1689 Confession’s teaching on sanctification (Chapter 13) and good works (Chapter 16)? Why is a life of active obedience a protective “breastplate” against Satan’s accusations and schemes?
7. Explain the meaning of the “shoes” as “the readiness given by the gospel of peace.” How does assurance of justification by faith alone (1689 Confession Chapter 11) produce boldness and willingness to advance the gospel even in the face of opposition?
8. The “shield of faith” extinguishes the flaming darts of the evil one. What are some common “flaming darts” Satan shoots at believers today? How does memorizing and applying specific promises of Scripture function as this shield?
9. Why is the “sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” the only offensive weapon listed? In light of the 1689 Confession’s high view of Scripture as sufficient and authoritative, how should believers “train” with this sword in private, family, and public worship?
10. The sermon closes by likening prayer (v. 18) to the oil that keeps the armor functional. How does persistent, Spirit-dependent prayer relate to

the Baptist emphasis on dependence upon the Holy Spirit in all aspects of the Christian life (1689 Confession Chapter 10, "Of Effectual Calling")?

Discussion Questions

1. The preacher asks: "Do you personally want to be mightily used by the Lord Jesus Christ for His glory in 2026?" How would you answer this question today? What fears or comforts arise when you consider the promise that zealous believers will face heightened satanic opposition?
 2. In what specific areas of doctrine or practice do you see modern evangelical churches tending toward "lukewarmness" (e.g., softness on sin, silence on the doctrines of grace, vagueness on biblical roles in home and church)? How can a local 1689 Baptist church guard against these tendencies while remaining loving and evangelistic?
 3. The sermon warns that Satan loves to desensitize consciences through compromise. Discuss practical ways believers can keep their consciences tender to God's Word and quick to repent (cf. 1689 Confession Chapter 15, "Of Repentance unto Life").
 4. Which piece of the armor of God do you currently feel weakest in wearing consistently? Share one concrete step you could take this week—by God's grace and strength—to "put on" or "take up" that piece more diligently.
 5. The preacher applies the principle of strength + armor + training to physical preparedness for men. Without debating specifics of self-defense, how might the broader principle encourage Baptist men to pursue physical, mental, and spiritual strength as stewards of the bodies and families God has entrusted to them?
 6. How can older or more mature believers in the church fulfill the concluding exhortation to "help your brothers and sisters... learn how to get strength from Christ and put their armor on"? Give examples of ways this mutual edification has happened (or could happen) in your local congregation.
 7. Looking ahead to 2026, what "evil day" (temptation, suffering, or opposition) do you anticipate might come? How does the certainty that "the gates of hell shall not prevail" against Christ's church encourage you to stand firm together as a congregation?
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SERMON TRANSCRIPT

Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, friends, visitors,

I do not know exactly what God has in store for me or you or us in the year 2026. we are about to enter into a new year and I have no idea what God has in store for you, for me, for us as a church body. But I do know a few things for certain. And as a way of introduction into this text of scripture, Ephesians 6:10-18, I want to give you these few things that we can know for certain as we move into a new year. First of all, we know for certain Christ will continue to build his church. Christ will continue to build his church. We know second that Satan and his confederates will hate that and try to thwart the work. Thirdly, we can know for certain that Satan and his confederates will especially hate those churches and people who are not lukewarm, but are white, hot, with zealous passion for the Lord's glory. You can know those three things for certain as we move into this new year. Jesus will continue to build his church. Satan and his confederates will hate that and try to thwart that. And Satan and his confederates will especially hate those churches and people, individuals who are not lukewarm, but who are zealous, who are white hot with their love for and labor for the glory of God. Let us take each one of those and let me explain to you what I mean. Christ will continue to build his church in 2026. This is true for you individually if you are a Christian. If you belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, you are a member of his body, the church universal. And as a member of his body, Christ will continue to build you. Jesus in 2026, if you belong to Christ, will continue to intercede for you in heaven before God.

The Holy Spirit will continue to sanctify you, fill you, gift you, strengthen you. You Christians individually, as Christ continues to build his church, you need to know the Father will continue to love you and engage his fatherly providence for his glory and for your ultimate good. But Jesus will also continue to build his church corporately. Not just individually, but corporately of the increase of his kingdom and of peace. There shall be no end. Isaiah 9:7. The kingdom of Christ will continue to grow like a mustard tree, and more and more sinners will be redeemed and turned into saints. The kingdom of Christ will continue to influence the world for good like yeast working its way through a lump of dough. So Christ will continue to build his church. Take that to the bank in 2026. But secondly, Satan and his confederates will continue to hate Christ's people, scheme against them, and even try to devour them. Satan and his confederates will try to separate you from a holy life devoted to Christ. They will try to separate you from your brothers and sisters in Christ who love you and who labor to keep you accountable. Satan and his confederates will try to tempt you to make shipwreck of your faith either by straying from Christ in doctrine, what you believe, or in your living, in your life, what you do. They will try to get you to walk away from Christ, either in doctrine or in living. Satan and his confederates will try to get you to compromise your

convictions concerning God's word and thereby searing your own conscience so that you do not think and feel as you should anymore. And the result of that is that you start walking in darkness, but your conscience is so desensitized to the word of God because of your compromise that you are walking in darkness and you are convincing yourself you are still walking in the light. that is what Satan and his confederates would love to happen to you. Also, the wicked will try to shame you as you try to live for Christ. They will try to silence you as you try to speak up for Christ's glory. They will try to stifle your growth as you labor to grow in Christ likeness. They will even cause suffering to come upon you for the sake of Christ. Additionally, wolves, even wolves in sheep's clothing, will continue to try and infiltrate Christ's people to lead away the flock from the flock they are a part of, from their family, from their friends, and ultimately wolves desire to lead you away from faithfulness to Jesus.

So, Christ will build his church. Satan and his confederates will hate it and try to thwart it. But thirdly, what I think you and I need to clearly understand is the more we are used by Christ to build his church, not as if we are the ones doing it in and of ourselves, but we are his instruments. As we are used by Christ to build his church, then the more Satan and his confederates will hate us, scheme against us, and try to devour us. I ask, what schemes does the devil care to devise for a group of people who are not laboring zealously to be used to build the kingdom of Christ? You could say it another way. What does Satan care about lukewarm Christians and lukewarm churches? I think he is really engaged in devising plots, devising schemes to trip up Christians who are just nominal, who just like say they are a Christian, maybe go to church, but do not really live for Christ, are not zealous to speak up for him, to obey him. I do not think he cares. he is like, I have got you right where I want you. You profess Christ, but you do not live for Christ. it is the same with churches. I would submit to you that Satan loves those churches who are safe and calm. Churches who are politically correct, soft on sin, weak on masculinity and femininity. Churches who are quiet on the doctrines of grace because they are controversial. Churches who are vague on domestic duties so as to not upset anyone. churches who are silent on civil government and just say, "Let us just preach the gospel." I think Satan loves those churches who are functionally antinomian when it comes to sold-out obedience to Christ. I do not think he has schemes and plots. He just has lukewarm Christians and lukewarm churches right where he wants them. And it is like, that is great. The world looks on and sees Christ does not really change much. These people just have what they say is like a get out of hell free card, but it does not seem like Christ is really impacting their lives or even the culture around them. Yet those churches and people who are dangerous, dangerous to the kingdom of darkness, and those churches who are zealous for the kingdom of light, devoted to the truth, hard on sin, strong on masculinity and femininity, loud about the doctrines of grace. Those churches that are crystal clear on domestic duties. Churches who are vocal on and active in the civil government for God's glory. Churches who love God's law when it comes to

sold-out obedience to Christ out of grateful joy. Those churches and people, those are the ones that Satan and his confederates hate with a true hatred and count their enemies. Those are the kinds of churches and people that the wicked will seek to shame. The wicked will seek to silence, stifle, and even make suffer. Those churches zealous for the glory of God are those kinds of churches and people that wolves want to infiltrate. In short, Christ will build his church. Satan will hate it and try to thwart the work. and he will especially hate those churches and people who are not lukewarm but are white hot with zealous love and labor for the glory of God. Boys and girls, look up here at me. In a few days, it is going our calendar is going to turn over and it is going to be the year 2026.

And we do not know exactly what God is going to do. We do not know what is going to happen to us, to the church, to me, to you individually. We do not know. We cannot know the secret will of God, what is going to happen this year. But we do know a few things for certain. We know that this next year, Jesus will continue to build his church. More people are going to be saved. Christians are going to grow in Christ's likeness. The Father will love us and provide for us. Christ will intercede for us. The Spirit will continue to sanctify us. We can know that for sure because Jesus said, "I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it." We can also know for certain that Satan, who is real, hates that. He does not want Jesus to build his church. He does not want you to trust in Christ. He does not want you to grow in Christlikeness. So, he hates that and he is going to try to thwart that. he is going to try to throw a wrench into that. he is going to try to keep us from reaching more people for Jesus and growing in Christlikeness. And boys and girls, look at me. The more you love and seek to obey Jesus, the more Satan will hate you and try to thwart you. We know those things for certain. And so I hope all of us can come to this place and understand, wow, we really need help. And we really need to realize if we want to be white hot with zeal for Christ's glory, to take every thought captive for Christ, to bring everything into obedience to Christ, then we need to be prepared because that means the enemy is going to hate us and try to thwart us even stronger. And so I just ask you before we dig into this text, do you personally want to be mightily used by the Lord Jesus Christ for his glory in 2026?

Do you want to be mightily used by Christ? Do you want to be a part of a church that is mightily used by Christ? or we get to frequently baptize people and people are walking with Jesus and growing in holiness. You want to be a part of a church that is mightily used by Christ? Well, if you can answer yes to those questions, then you and I desperately need God's instruction in Ephesians 6:10-18. Look at your Bible with me and notice in verse 10 how he says finally. That begins this long section. Finally. And so the context of where we are at, we are jumping into the end of this letter. But these are the final instructions and exhortations given by God through Paul to the church at Ephesus in this letter. After this section on the armor of God, Paul just gives the final greetings and then concludes his whole letter. So

the final thing he writes to the church at Ephesus is get your armor on and be strong because you have real enemies. that is what he wants to leave the church with. And this letter, you can divide it up into two big sections. If you are familiar with the book of Ephesians, maybe this will just be a reminder to you. But in chapters 1 through three, the first half of the book, it is dealing primarily with doctrine, with the gospel, and even the depths of the gospel of God's grace. it is all about Christ, what he is done, what the Father has done, what the Spirit has done, and are doing for the salvation of God's people. So, it is the doctrine in the first three chapters. And then in chapters 4-6, Paul transitions to basically saying, "What I have told you in chapters 1-3, that is true. Therefore, how should you and I live?" And so, chapter 4 transitions to directions and exhortations and guidance, commands to be obeyed. So, chapters 1 through three is what you should believe. in chapters 4-6. Therefore, since that is true, how should you live? And the very last chunk of the how you should live is this passage that is before us today, starting with verse 10. And the doctrine that you and I should glean from this passage is simply this. Christians must be strong and armored in order to stand against the schemes of the devil. Christians must be strong and armored in order to stand against the schemes of the devil. And the whole point moving on from that the result is so that we live totally for God's glory, others good and our own gladness. And we must be strong and armored in order to stand against the schemes of the devil. And that that is actually how we live totally for God's glory, for others good, and for our gladness. You and I desperately need Ephesians 6:10-18 because I think at least the majority of you would say with me, I want to be mightily used by Christ in 2026. And I want to be a part of a church that Satan especially hates because more people are getting saved, more people are growing in Christ, and God is being glorified through these individuals and through this body of believers. So, let me point out to you six main truths that we should learn from this passage and then I will ask one question and I will give you six or actually seven answers to that question. And that question and answer part at the end, that is when we get into the specific pieces of armor that God says that you and I need to put on, take up. So, first of all, six main truths and then the question will answer the specifics of the pieces of armor that are here prescribed. First of all, notice with me at the beginning of verse 10, finally, we already got that context. This is the last instruction and exhortation of this letter. Finally, he says, "Be strong." Be strong. What should you and I learn from that? Well, you need to be spiritually strong. You need to be spiritually strong. that is the first truth that we should glean as we are laboring to live for God's glory to withstand the evil day to stand in the midst of adversities to stand against the schemes of the devil you need spiritual strength period your own strength is not going to do you need to be strong William Gurnall is a 17th century Puritan who wrote his classic book called the Christian incomplete armor which named this sermon the Christian incomplete armor. it is a thousand-page book double columned small words and the whole book is Ephesians 6:10-18. So if any of these parts of these verses like I want to go deeper into that Gurnall probably has 80 pages on each point that I am pointing out to you

hitting it from every aspect you could ever imagine. And you could read that book, and I encourage you to read that book just as like a daily devotional. You can read a couple of pages a day because it is all divided up into small little chunks to help you understand and to apply. And that is really the heavy part of it is the application of how to be a Christian in complete armor. But Gurnall concerning this command to be strong says, "As a man is set upon by a thief, stirs up all the force and strength he has in his whole body to defend himself and offend his adversary." So the apostle bids the Christian, "Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might." he is saying just as when a thief breaks into your house and you do not just go like, "All right, I guess I am going to deal with it." But you get up and summon all the strength that you have possibly got to go and defend your family, defend your own life against a thief broken in. he is saying that is the force by which he says, "Be strong." Because he is about to say, "you have got an enemy scheming against you. Be strong so that you can withstand the evil day and stand firm in the faith. Men, you know what this is like. Some of you may have had an intruder break into your house during the night. But I know probably every one of you men has at some point woken up and heard something or maybe your wife heard something and says, "You got to go check that out." And you know that adrenaline rush like you think someone might be in your house. I have experienced it multiple times. it is never actually been true. But that rush that happens that is like I feel I feel stronger than I have ever felt. I will be strong. I have got to go defend my family from an intruder. Gurnall is pointing out. he is like that is the kind of thing that he is calling Christians to. Summon up all the strength you can possibly get. You must be as strong as possible to withstand the evil day and to stand firm even against the schemes of the devil. So first of all, take that, feel that, believe that I must be spiritually strong if I am going to be faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ. But look what he says next in the next part of verse 10. it is not just be strong, figure it out. it is be strong in the Lord which means the Lord Jesus Christ and in the strength of his might. Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. So you need to be spiritually strong. that is the first thing you should learn. But secondly, you need to see from this text of scripture, the only way you can be spiritually strong is through the Lord Jesus Christ. The only way you can be spiritually strong is through the Lord Jesus Christ. That means through trusting in him and by asking him to strengthen you so that his strength actually becomes your strength. that is what he means by be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. it is his strength that you need. And the only way you can get that is by trusting in his promises and asking him to give you his strength. Be strong. You have to be. But he says in the Lord and in the strength of his mind. So he is not telling you and I to figure out how to get spiritual strength on our own or tap into some force that can give you strength. he is like, "No, no, no. It comes from the Lord Jesus Christ and the strength of his might. So you need to trust in him and ask him to strengthen you. that is what is implied. William Gurnall in his book points out that first of all this includes knowing that God is all powerful. He has might. He has strength. So you first of all have to acknowledge that God is almighty and you are not. You have

to acknowledge God has the strength I need. I do not have the strength I need for this battle. But he then moves on and he says it implies a further act of faith not only to believe that God is almighty but also that this almighty power of God is engaged for your defense so as to bear up in the midst of all trials and temptations undauntedly leaning on the arm of God Almighty as it were your own strength. You have to know that God is all powerful and trust in and ask him to strengthen you through Christ. You need to memorize these two verses if you do not already have them memorized. When it comes to being spiritually strong for the Christian life, two verses, John 15:5, Christ says, "Apart from me, you can do nothing." Apart from me, you can do nothing. By which he means you can do nothing of eternal significance. You can do nothing of actual ultimate value apart from me. that is what Jesus is saying. You cannot stand firm against the schemes of the devil apart from Christ. You cannot withstand the evil day that he is going to bring up in a minute apart from the Lord Jesus Christ. You have to have spiritual strength and you can only get it from the Lord Jesus Christ. So there is two sides of the same coin. John 15:5, apart from me, you can do nothing. And the other side of that coin is Philippians 4:13 properly understood and applied. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Apart from me, you can do nothing. But Paul says, I can do all things. I can face all things. I can overcome all things if Christ is the one who strengthens me. And so we have enemies. We have Satan, his confederates, the wicked, wolves, even wolves and sheep's clothing. And the only way you are going to be able to stand firm in the faith and glorify the Lord in this life that he is given you is if you realize I can do nothing apart from Christ. But if I depend on him for strength and ask him for strength, I can face everything and anything. Boys and girls, you and I need to be strong as Christians. We have to be strong. A weak Christian will not do. A weak Christian will be blown over by suffering, be punched in the face by Satan and his confederates. We have to be strong. We have to be spiritually strong, boys and girls. And the only way that you and I can be spiritual strong, spiritually strong to stand firm is by trusting in Jesus and continually asking him to give us his strength. Adults, I ask you to just examine your life. I do not think I have told you anything new. You probably know all of that. But I ask you, do you live like that? Do you live like I do not have what it takes. I must get strength from Jesus. Jesus, please give me the strength to say no to sin and yes to you. Give me the strength to do my duties gladly for your glory. Give me the strength to be hard on sin, especially my sin, to be loud about your grace and your mercy in Christ. Give me the strength to talk to this lost person about Christ and to love them enough to call them to repentance and faith. Give me the strength to stand against temptation. You and I need to know the only way we can be spiritually strong is through the Lord Jesus Christ. And we have to live like it. Look thirdly at the first part of verse 11. here is the third main truth that you and I should understand from this text. You need also to put on the whole armor of God. The reason I say also is because what I think is frequently missed in this text, it is just called the whole armor of God. You can see that the translators wrote that probably at the top of this section in your Bible. that is not something Paul wrote

that bold lettering. This section is the armor of God. Christians need to be in complete armor. But I think they forget that there are two very specific commands in this passage. And the first is you have to be strong. And the second is being strong, you also have to have armor. You must be strong. And you must put on the whole armor of God. The armor does not make you stronger. You have to be strong. The strength that you have does not protect you or give you an offensive weapon like the armor does. You have to have both. You need to not only be strong, but also put on the whole spiritual armor of God. This is spiritual armor, not physical armor. And notice, put on the what? Whole armor of God. every piece of the armor of God that he prescribes in this text of scripture is to be put on. And so as we get further and as we start detailing each piece of this armor that Paul that God through Paul tells us to put on, you need to remember that he says you need every single piece of this armor. You cannot just have a helmet. You cannot just have a shield. You cannot just have a breastplate or a belt or shoes. You cannot just have a sword. you have got to have the whole armor of God. that is what is prescribed here. So, you need to be strong and you need to put on the whole spiritual armor of God. Gurnall says, "It is one thing to have armor in the house and another thing to have it buckled on, to have grace in principle and grace in action." he is saying, "Put on the whole armor of God. I will just have these pieces of armor and I know about them. I understand them. I could wear them if I wanted to. he is saying you need to put on every single piece of this armor I am about to tell you about. it is one thing to have armor in the house and another thing to have it buckled on. You and I need to have it buckled on. that is what he means by put on the whole armor of God. The Christian's armor, again, Gurnall says, "The Christian's armor is made to be worn. No taking it off until you finish your course." The Christian armor is meant to be worn, not just owned, and never taken off until you have finished your course. There are times in battle that soldiers sleep in their armor because at any time the enemy can come in and attack and they have to be ready. They do not have time to put all their armor on. And that is what Paul is implying here. it is like you need to sleep with your armor on. You never take the armor off in this life. And Gurnall also points out something helpful to us that he says we must not trust in the armor of God but in the God of this armor because all our weapons are only mighty through God. So as we try to understand this and say we want to obey God here and put on the whole armor of God, Gurnall does a great job of cautioning us from going off course. says you cannot trust in the armor. You have to trust in the God of the armor. So your faith is not in these individual pieces of armor. Your faith is in the God who gives you this armor to protect you and to help you fight. So our faith must always be in the God of the armor. But notice again, lest I belabor the point, you need to be strong and armored. it is not either or. it is both. And you need spiritual strength and you need spiritual armor. And just as an aside, by the way, though this is dealing with spiritual things, I think there is a physical lesson here for us men. Remember again, it is you need to be strong and have armor. Okay, that is spiritual. But let us apply the principle just physically. I think there is a lesson especially here for us men.

Some people say I do not need to be armed because I am strong. Others say I do not need to be strong because I am always packing. Still others say I do not need to train because I am armed and I am strong. And I say reject that men. Reject that. learn even from this that first you and we are applying this physically. You need to be strong. You need to have armor. And part of that armor even in this context is a sword, an offensive weapon. And thirdly, you need to train. What good is it to have a sword and you do not know how to swing it? So do not be like those men who say, "I do not need to be armed, I am strong." Or, "I do not need to be strong, I am armed." or I do not need to train because I am armed and strong. Well, if you are strong and you are armed, but you do not know how to use your strength or use what you are armed with, you are still not going to be much help. And so, it is definitely with us spiritually. We need to put on the whole spiritual armor of God and be spiritually strong by getting strength from Christ. But next, notice in the next part of verse 11, he tells us why we have to be strong and armored. He says, "That you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil." Look at it in your Bible. Why do you need to be strong and put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil?

Gurnall points out again, "give no place to Satan. Know not an inch of his first motions to tempt you to sin. He that is a beggar and a modest one outside will command the house if you let him in."

he is saying Satan is like a beggar outside of your house and he cannot really affect you much outside, but the second you let him in, he will rule the house. He has schemes to get in. "Satan with all his wits and wiles shall never vanquish a soul armed with true grace. Nay, he that hath this armor of God shall vanquish him." Gurnall says you need to be spiritually strong and armored so that you may stand against the schemes, the plots, the temptations of the devil. And outside of the scriptures and just a continual diet of God's word in private family and public worship, the most helpful book that I have ever read in Standing Against the Schemes of the Devil is Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices by Thomas Brooks. Just like Gurnall's Complete Armor, it can be read in little bitty short chunks, even as like a daily devotional. And if you have not read it, please because I love you. Please pick up a copy of that book and just slowly work through it or work through it in large chunks if you want. Uh Thomas Brooks, Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices. Very, very helpful to know how to stand against the devil's schemes. So there is the fourth truth. that is why you need to be spiritually strong and armored because the devil and his confederates are plotting against you continually. The wicked are plotting against you. Wolves are plotting against you. And so you got to be able to stand against the schemes. The devil is not dumb. he is smarter than you. he is stronger than you. he is been studying human nature for 6,000 years. He knows how to bait your hook. He knows how to wiggle in your house and take captive of it. he is got schemes and you and I need to be both strong and armored so that we can stand against those schemes. But look at

the fifth truth that we learn and it is here in verse 12. The fifth truth, verse 12, for we do not wrestle against flesh and blood. he is saying we do not merely fight or wrestle against human beings. that is what he means by 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. What does he mean? Well, it is a further reason that you need to be spiritually strong and armored because to put it simply, you have spiritual forces of evil as your enemies. Satan is real. Demons are real.

those who have been, as Paul puts it, there are those who have been captured by Satan to do his will. that is talking about human beings. Their consciences are seared. They love their sins so much. They hate Christ, no matter what they profess. So that they are constantly working, whether they admit it or not, to undermine Christ and his people to thwart the plan of Christ and the people of Christ. he is saying, "We do not merely wrestle against flesh and blood. Even those human enemies who hate Christ and hate you and want to silence you, want to stifle you, want to cause you to suffer, he is saying ultimately the battle you are fighting is not just like against flesh and blood. it is spiritual forces of evil. it is ultimately a spiritual battle that he is speaking of here. Gurnall again says the subject of this text is sobering, a war between Satan and the saint. it is a war between Satan and the saint. And he says, "It such a bloody war that the cruelest which ever was fought by men will be found but sport and child's play."

The enemies are not flesh and blood, he continues, weak mortal humans, but a ranked demonic army, principalities, high-ranking rulers, powers, authorities with delegated might, rulers of the darkness of this world, governing in moral and spiritual obscurity, and spiritual wickedness in high places, malignant spirits operating from elevated heavenly realms, yet opposing God. You need to know we have real enemies and there is spiritual forces of evil that are our enemies. So, we need to be strong and armored. And then look what he says next in verse 13. He keeps building on this. you have got to be strong. What he said first, you got to get strength from Jesus. You got to put on the whole armor of God. And now he is given the reasons. And here is the next reason in verse 13. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God. he is reminding us what he is all commanded already commanded that you may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand firm. So, you need to withstand in the evil day first of all and then having done all, notice his language in this whole thing. You got to put on the complete armor of God, every piece. You need to withstand in the evil day and do everything you possibly can. that is why he says, "And having done all, you cannot leave any duty short." it is too you have too threatening of enemies to leave anything short. You got to do everything you can. And the whole end and purpose is that you would stand firm. Stand firm. So withstand in the evil day. What is the evil day? Well, most likely he is talking about the day in the sense of when temptation to sin comes upon you. When the schemes of the enemy land upon you, that is the evil

day he likely has in mind. that day that we would call evil when I was tempted so greatly to betray Christ, to betray my family or friends, to betray my church, ultimately to betray my Lord. that is the evil day. You need to be able to withstand when the schemes of the devil come against you. But the evil day can also be taken, I am sure in Paul's mind, would include the day of suffering. the day of suffering when you are suffering evil when persecution is coming upon you or just in the providence of God suffering in general is happening to you. You know that day though God works all things together for good you can still say when suffering happens to you that is an evil day. When suffering happens that is when you are tempted to disobey Christ. that is when you are tempted to distrust Christ. that is when some are even tempted to try to abandon Christ because of the suffering that has come upon them. So this evil day, temptation, suffering, and Gurnall even in his book, he likens it lastly. He says he is probably talking about even the day of death. You want to be able to stand firm all the way to the end, do not you? You want to be able to stand firm and die with a clear conscience looking to Christ and saying like John Newton, I know two things. I am a great sinner and Christ is a great savior. I text a brother this week and asked how I could pray for him and his main request for himself was that I would finish well. I want to and in other words, you could say, I want to be able to withstand in the evil day, even the day of my death, I want to stand firm for the Lord Jesus Christ and finish my course.

So, the sixth truth that you should learn that I have been elaborating on is you need to be spiritually strong and armored so that you may withstand in the evil day and stand firm in the faith. Notice withstand in the evil day. So there is attacks coming against us with temptation, with suffering, with the threatening of death or death itself. And having done all, we have to do everything we can by God's grace and the strength that he supplies. And the whole goal of it all is that we would stand firm in the faith. Stand firm through faith in and obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Gurnall says this is the end. This is the point of it all to stand. It is the errand upon which this armor is sent. The armor comes from God with this charge. I arm you with this that you may stand in the evil day. So you and I need to be spiritually strong and armored so that we may withstand in the evil day and stand firm in the faith because we have spiritual forces of evil as enemies. because we have to stand against the devil's schemes. that is why we have to put on the whole armor and get strength from the Lord Jesus Christ. So now we move into these pieces of the armor. And my question is helping us hopefully understand why these pieces of armor are mentioned. And you can ask the question like this, how can I withstand in the evil day and stand firm in the faith? How can I do that? And he gives you specific pieces of armor to put on so that you can be strong. And here is how you stand. Look at the beginning of verse 14 in your Bible.

Stand therefore. that is a command. that is an imperative verb. Stand therefore.

Now, from that, every piece of armor that he is mentioning is showing you how you are going to withstand in the evil day, do everything you can, and stand firm, trusting in and submitting to Christ. Does that make sense? Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth. And then he starts mentioning all of the pieces of armor. So all the pieces of armor are given to you so that you can plant your feet, get strength from Christ, be armored up, and stand, take the field for Christ's glory. Stand. Therefore, so first of all, if you want to withstand in the evil day and stand firm in the faith, you need to fasten on the belt of truth. You need to fasten on the belt of truth. He says, "Stand therefore having fastened on the belt of truth." Now, all of this is likened to armor and most likely the Roman soldiers armor that maybe even the soldiers who were keeping watch over Paul as he is in prison. And he gets a constant view of the armor that they wear as they are on duty. See, most interpreters think that is probably exactly what he is doing. the armor that even as uh Ephesians listeners would understand like I know what a Roman soldier looks like. I know what that belt looks like. I know what the breastplate, the helmet, the shield, the sword, the shoes they wear. And so he is using a common metaphor that they would understand to say here is some spiritual truths that you can see very clearly in your life. And he likens the belt, the girdle is another way to translate it to truth. And the reason he does that is because the girdle or the belt on the Roman armor would actually hold everything else up. If he does not have the belt on, it is not going to hold the pants up that the shoes are even connected to, and it is not going to hold the breastplate in the proper position. So he starts with the belt because everything in the Roman armor comes from the belt. You do not have a belt on, nothing works in the armor. And he starts with that and says that belt that you very clearly know that you have to have if you are going to wear complete armor, that is truth. You need to be dedicated to not what feels good, not what you think, not to man's opinion, not ultimately to traditions. You need to be enslaved to the truth. that is what he is saying. Fasten on the belt of truth. Truth at all costs. Peace if possible, as Martin Luther said. And as J.C. Ryle was fond of saying, never sacrifice truth even on the altar of peace. You cannot try to be at peace with people by sacrificing truth. Truth at all costs. that is what he is st that is what he is saying here. If you are going to stand against the schemes of the devil, you need to understand and be enslaved by what is true. Your question should not be how does this feel or what would the result of that be all all of those can okay later but first of all the question should just be what is true I want to know the truth and beloved the truth is clearly revealed in God's word that is the foundation of truth so you need to fasten on the belt of truth It holds everything else together. If you do not have on the belt of truth, you cannot live a righteous life. If you do not have the belt of truth on, you cannot hold up the shield of faith because your faith is not founded in the truth of the promises of God. If you do not have the belt of truth on the sword that you may be wielding and calling it the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, if you are not committed to and know and bend and bow to the truth, then that sword you are swinging is like a rubber sword. it is not based on the truth of God's word. So, what point is that? Of

what use is that? So, there is the first thing. you have got to be dedicated to understanding, applying, submitting to, being enslaved by simply what is true. Secondly, look, he says, "Put on the breastplate of righteousness." Remember, this is how you would stand in the evil day and stand firm in the faith. Put on the breastplate of righteousness. Having put on the breastplate of righteousness is what he says. Now look at me. This is I think the biggest mistake made in this armor passage. The breastplate of righteousness is not the imputed righteousness of Christ by which you are saved. That is not what he means here. The helmet of salvation is dealing with your personal individual salvation. The breastplate of righteousness is dealing with your everyday life, your personal active outworking righteousness or your personal holiness. it is not simply the imputed righteousness of Christ. What I mean by that is the armor is not simply do nothing and just like trust in Jesus and then do nothing and it does not matter what you do. No, the first one is truth. You need to know it. You need to be captivated by the truth. Your conscience needs to be bound to the truth. And the second one is you must live a holy life in Christ Jesus. And you living a righteous life in Christ Jesus by the strength he supplies is like a breastplate that protects you against the schemes of the devil against the devices of the enemy. This is something that Christians I think in general in our day have just lost

the value of living a godly life in Christ Jesus. it is like a breastplate that covers all of those vital organs living above reproach. it is like people want to fire arrows at you. People want to try to stab you. If you have a belt breastplate of righteousness, it is like no, I am fine. You can say whatever you want. You can throw whatever you want against me. But when you labor with others help ultimately with God's strength by the spirit to live a righteous life. it is like a breastplate. Your vital organs are covered. Put on the breastplate of righteousness. Gurnall points out, "Now righteousness and holiness defend the conscience from all wounds and harms from sin, which is the weapon Satan uses to give the conscience a deadly stab. You know what it is like to have a clear conscience, even when people speak evil against you, but when your conscience is clear, it is like someone has tried to hit you, but all they hit was the breastplate." Like, I am fine. When you take your breastplate of righteousness off and you are walking in unrepentant sin and people come against you, even if it is not related, they attack you in some way. You know what it feels like to have a guilty or a wounded conscience because you have taken the breastplate of righteousness off and set it aside. You may have the helmet of salvation on. You do belong to Jesus. You are forgiven of your sins. you are counted righteous. But when you take the breastplate off and only wear the helmet, then you are open up for all sorts of attacks. Attacks that will actually harm you.

Gurnall again says, "A man may outlive many wounds received in the arms or legs, but a stab in the heart or other vital parts is the certain messenger of death approaching. Thus righteousness and holiness preserve the principal part of a

Christian, his soul and his conscience. You have to fasten on the belt of truth and by the strength that God supplies, laboring diligently using the ordinary means of grace need to put on the breastplate of righteousness.

Another book that I would recommend to you is *Heaven Taken by Storm* by Thomas Watson. that is I think the best book I have ever read and it is like a hundred pages. The best book I have ever read on the diligence in our use of the ordinary means of grace. those ordinary things that God has prescribed, prayer, scripture, meditation, Christian fellowship, killing sin, all of those ordinary means of grace by which God sanctifies us. That book, I think, is the best. So, I would encourage you to get that as well. It will help you think, how can I keep the breastplate of righteousness on? So, you need the belt of truth. You need the breastplate of righteousness. And then thirdly, look at verse 15. He says, "And as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace."

as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. So your shoes are likened to not the gospel, but the readiness and willingness to march into the fray because of the gospel. Because God has made peace with you in Christ because your sins are forgiven. Because you are counted righteous. Those are like shoes. that readiness that you have, that fearlessness that you can have because I am accepted for Christ's sake. So, I can go into any danger. I have got the gospel of peace that is true for me. I can go and tell other people the gospel no matter what they are going to do to me. I can stand against the schemes of the devil because the gospel is true and God has forgiven all of my sins. Notice the shoes are not the gospel. The shoes are the readiness, the willingness to obey Christ, to speak up for Christ, to live for Christ's glory that is given by the gospel of peace. So put on the shoes of gospel readiness, ready and willing to obey Christ no matter the cost because out of grateful joy for what God has done for me and the peace that I have with God through Christ Jesus. Then what he says next is the fourth piece of armor and this is in verse 16. Take up take up the shield of faith in all circumstances. Take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one. So if you want to withstand in the evil day and stand firm in the faith, you need to take up the shield of faith. Simply that is trusting in the promises of God that are secured for you by Christ. that is what the shield of faith is. Faith trusting in the promises of God that are secured for you by Christ. And the reason you have to take up the shield of faith, he says, so that you may extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one. Boys and girls, what is more dangerous to be shot at you? An arrow or an arrow that is on fire?

Fire, right? Okay. Say an arrow is shot at you and you have a big wooden shield, just a normal arrow. You can block the arrow, right? Maybe it comes through a little bit, but you blocked it. What if that arrow is on fire?

Well, then your shield is on fire. And Paul is saying when the devil tries to attack

you, he is trying to attack your faith, to get you to disbelieve the promises of God, to get you to sin against God, to get you to doubt God's goodness. He says your faith, your trust in Jesus and in his promises, the promises of Jesus, it is like a shield that even in Roman times, they would soak the exterior in water so that when flaming darts are shot at them, they would not only stop the arrows, but the fire would be quenched. he is saying your trust in Jesus and his promises is like a shield that you cannot only block but extinguish the fire of those arrows that Satan shoots at you. Boys and girls, you are going to be tempted in your life to say, "I do not know if God really cares that much for me." you are going to suffer in some way. something is going to happen and you are going to be tempted in some way to be like, man, if God cared for me, maybe this would not be happening. that is a that is a lie. God does care for all of us who are in Christ Jesus. And he even causes and allows suffering to come upon us and uses it to make us more like Jesus, to make us more ready for heaven. But that temptation to say, "God must not care for me." that is a flaming dart, an arrow on fire, shot against you, and the only way you can put it out is with the shield of faith, blocking it, extinguishing it, and saying, "No, I trust that he who began a good work in me will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ." No, that is not true. that is a lie. I trust that for those who love God and are called according to his purpose, all things work together for good. I trust that though my outer self is wasting away, my inner self is being renewed day by day. that is the shield of faith. Trusting the promises of God secured for you by the Lord Jesus Christ. it is like a shield soaked in water that cannot only block but extinguish all the flaming darts of the enemy of the evil one. So beloved, take up the shield of faith. That means you need to know the promises. You need to memorize the promises. You need to know specific things to cling to and just say, "Nope, blocked, extinguished." Uh-uh. God says this. that is the shield of faith. Then he says, "Fifthly, look at verse 17, the beginning of it." He says, "And take the helmet of salvation. Receive it. Accept it. Take it. The helmet of salvation." And this is the helmet that we wear by which we are saved. This is the helmet of salvation, meaning the salvation of our souls. Because Christ died for our sins, were forgiven. Because Christ lived without sin, we who trust in him are counted righteous. Because Christ arose from the dead, we have a living and active eternal savior who will never leave us nor forsake us. He will come back and take us to be with him. So this is the helmet of salvation. And it is more than just you have got the helmet. It belongs to you. But he is like, you better put the helmet on. You have to constantly remind yourself in this context, putting on the helmet of salvation would not only mean trusting in Jesus alone for your salvation, but also preaching the gospel to yourself every day. Living in light of the salvation that Christ has purchased for you and promised to you. Take receive the helmet of salvation. Put it on. Then he says sixthly, take the sword of the spirit. This is the last piece of the armor. Take the sword of the spirit. that is implied because he says "and take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit." This the word take that verb is receive it. Accept it mostly to communicate that its origin is in no way from you. Receive the helmet of salvation that God freely offers you. Receive

the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. And just so you know, adults, the only offensive weapon that you and I are given is the sword of the spirit, which is the scriptures, the word of God. That is our offensive weapon. Stand. Therefore, he is saying, take the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. So you and I must be strong. We must armor up and we must take up the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, and train with it. If you do not know the scriptures, how can you use the scriptures offensively to fight against the schemes of the devil? The answer is you cannot. You must not only know the scriptures. You have to have armor. You have to be strong. But you have got to know the scriptures. Metaphorically, you have got to train with this sword to know how to wield it to fight against the enemy so that you can withstand in the evil day and stand firm. So again, I exhort you, devote yourself to the scriptures in private worship. Men, devote yourself and your family to the scriptures, to training with and understanding and wielding the sword of the spirit in family worship. Devote yourself to wielding to taking up the sword of the spirit in public worship. As you listen to and labor to apply the written word of God, you got to have the sword, the helmet, the shield, the shoes, the breastplate, and the belt. And lastly, he reminds us that we must pray. You could think of the prayer at the end of this like the oil by which you would keep your armor fresh. Pray at all times. He says in verse 18, praying at all times in the spirit, by all times, Calvin says, I think he is talking about praying in adversity and in prosperity. Like no matter what is going on in your life, when things are going really well, you are tempted not to pray. When things are going really badly, you pray a lot more. he is saying, "No, no, no. At all times, not just when things are bad, not just when you are really aware of the schemes of the devil coming against you. No, at all times, praying in the spirit with all prayer and supplication." that is asking God for things. to that end through prayer keep alert with all perseverance making supplication not only for yourself he says making supplication for all the saints pray at all times devote yourself to prayer so let me just conclude with two quick exhortations first make sure to get strength from Christ and put your armor on you individually Secondly, help your brothers and sisters in Christ, especially those who are younger or less mature in the faith than you. Help them learn how to get strength from Christ and put their armor on. we are not just individual soldiers. we are a part of an army. And soldiers have to help one another. So, help others learn how to get strength from Christ and take up the whole armor of God. So I ask you again in conclusion, do you want to be mightily used by Christ? Do you want to be a part of a church that is mightily used by Christ? Then get ready to be hated by Satan and his confederates. Get strength from Jesus and make sure you take up the whole armor of God. Labor, beloved, especially in this year as we move into it. labor to be a Christian in complete armor for God's glory. Let's pray. Our father in heaven, we thank you for your word. We ask you to help us understand Ephesians 6:10 through 18 and to apply it. We ask you to help those even now take up the helmet of salvation who are not yet trusting in Christ alone.

Help us all to take up the whole armor of God to be strong to get strength from Jesus. We ask you to strengthen us because apart from Christ, we can do nothing and we can do all things through him who strengthens us. Give us strength through Christ Jesus. We need it to withstand. Help us to not fear any enemy. We ask for those who are suffering that you bring them comfort. You help them to stand in that evil day. For those who are straying from you, we ask that you grant them repentance.

Help them to see the schemes of the devil that they are falling prey to. Those who are sick in that evil day, we ask you to heal them. and those who are striving forward in faith. We ask you to continually strengthen them and help them take up the armor that you have prescribed. Help us all to trust in the God of our armor and not in the armor that you give. We trust in you. We ask you to receive all of our songs and prayers, even the preaching and listening to your word, our offerings, the Lord's supper. receive all of these for Christ's sake.