

SUITED UP | GET DRESSED

SERIES SCRIPTURE:

Romans 13:11–14 NIV

¹¹ And do this, understanding the present time: ***The hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber***, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. ¹² The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. ¹³ Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. ¹⁴ ***Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ***, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.

- It's time to get up and get dressed.
- Through the series we've been developing the ideas around getting dressed—putting on Christ, as Paul has mentioned here in [Romans 13:14](#):
 - RISE (several ways I've noted that we are to put on Christ')
 - Righteousness (the clothes we wear to stand before God — his righteousness)
 - Identity (who we are in Christ)
 - Strength
 - Ethics (or everyday living)

INTRO:

There are a number of ways that Christ (or more generally stated, God) strengthens us.

- Strength for every circumstance (contentment) — [Philippians 4:13](#)
- Strength in weakness — [2 Corinthians 12:9–10](#)
- Strength for spiritual warfare — [Ephesians 6:10](#)
- Inner strength through the Holy Spirit — [Ephesians 3:16](#)
- Strength for endurance and patient perseverance — [Colossians 1:11](#)
- Strength that renews the weary — [Isaiah 40:29–31](#)
- Strength as our refuge in trouble — [Psalm 46:1](#)
- Strength as our rock and refuge — [Psalm 18:1–2](#)
- Strength to stand firm and be established — [1 Peter 5:10](#)
- Strength for ministry and faithful service — [1 Timothy 1:12](#)
- Strength through the Lord's presence — [2 Timothy 4:17](#)
- Strength through God's promise and help — [Isaiah 41:10](#)
- Strength as our shield and helper — [Psalm 28:7–8](#)
- Strength from the joy of the Lord — [Nehemiah 8:10](#)

I'm only going to focus on one of those areas/passages today, although the list provided would make a great devotional study for you throughout the week: Strength for SPIRITUAL WARFARE ([Eph 6:10-17](#))

- [Ephesians 6:10-17](#) is the only passage in that list that uses a 'put on' metaphor that connects with our series (Get Dressed).
- In fact the same greek word used by Paul in [Romans 13:14](#) for 'clothe yourselves' with the Lord Jesus Christ is the same word used throughout the [Ephesians 6](#) passage for 'putting on' the armor of God... which we'll see in a few moments is how we are strengthened in the Lord.
- The relevance to our series is this: Wake up and Get dressed.
 - Put on Christ as your righteousness (and salvation)
 - Put on Christ as your identity
 - Put on the armor of God as your strength because we're in a fight.
 - We don't always see it or recognize it, but scripture makes this absolutely clear.
 - We're in a battle and its not against people, but rather the devil and the spiritual forces with him
- There are some places in the world (even in our country) where the spiritual battle is more clearly seen and felt.
 - I think part of the reason in those locations has to do with a lack of gospel preaching and Christian presence.
 - Show me regions/areas that have never had the gospel of Christ (or very limited) and the accompanying Christian presence AND you'll likely find a darker spiritual atmosphere.
 - You'll likely find not a lack of religious expression, but rather a counterfeit one, whose power and influence comes from the evil one.
 - For example:
 - Recently when a few of us were in India, we visited a particular Hindu temple
 - It sat on top of a mountain, high place, that we had to climb up.
 - At the top there was one main temple to a particular deity, a mother goddess, that many many people were in line waiting to worship and receive blessings from.
 - Surrounding the main temple were smaller houses to several other gods that were worshiped at this high place as well.
 - The whole area had a presence to it.
 - As a Christian visiting this site, my reaction was twofold
 - 1: Quietly praying in my spirit for these people to come to know the truth and freedom in Christ
 - 2: I wanted to leave. It agitated my spirit and I was uncomfortable.
 - What was that uncomfortable, dark presence?
 - Spiritual darkness
 - Spiritual forces of wickedness
 - Demonic spirits
 - We never made it inside the main temple, the lines were too long, and we were all itching to get down/out of there.
 - But we could hear someone being oppressed on the inside.

- It was a woman screaming in fear
 - Meanwhile, no one blinked an eye, in fact its celebrated there when someone is possessed by a spirit or god (we know to be demonic).
- Over the years of ministry
 - I've seen and ministered to people actually demonized (possessed/oppresed) - different voice and personality speaking through someone.
 - I've talked with people who had been experimenting with occultic practices/games and were being tormented/haunted in the aftermath.
 - I've also seen them find freedom and peace in Christ.
- I say all this to say
 - We live in a supernatural world.
 - There are beings that serve the devil and beings that serve the Lord Jesus.
 - There is warfare over the souls of men.
 - Not everything is spiritual warfare... but not everything is the pizza you ate last night.
 - Have you ever noticed that when you start taking steps of faith that you seem to get hit hard in another area that discourages you?
 - What is that about?
 - Could be random coincidence... but it very well could be spiritual warfare.

So today, I'm not trying to lay out all the reasons why we know spiritual warfare exists or a full thesis of how the devil works.

- I've recently alluded to a number of ways that the enemy tries to work and attack believers (Don't let the monkey in).

Rather, today my aim is to:

- Teach you what the Word says *about* this fight, encourage you to *receive (put on) Christ's strength*, and the *armor* that God provides for us.
- This is by no means a thorough breakdown of spiritual warfare, offense vs defense, the role of the church and the gospel, how to pray through, explain deliverance, etc...
- Here's one passage, relevant to our series, that introduces the topic and Christ's provision for us that we are to 'put on.'

SCRIPTURE:

Ephesians 6:10-17 NIV

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹³ Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may

be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

We could outline the passage the following way:

- WHAT: Be strong in the Lord (in Christ, with Christ's strength and power)
- HOW: Put on the armor of God
- WHY: So you can stand against the enemy

1: WHAT: BE STRONG IN THE LORD

Ephesians 6:10 “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.”

BE STRONG:

- The greek grammar would indicate the following renderings:
 - Be strengthened (in the Lord) OR Be made strong.
 - NOT: Strengthen yourself
 - This indicates that the power comes from an external source (the Lord) and not the believer
 - It's an ongoing action, call to receive God's strength.
 - NOT: a one time action
 - Therefore, everyday be strengthened in Lord, receive His strength.

IN THE LORD

- This is a clear reference to Jesus Christ
- This makes it explicit that the strength belongs to Him and comes from Him.
 - Again, not just a 'toughen up' in your own strength message
- Further, this shows how his strength is received: THROUGH RELATIONSHIP
 - It's by being connected to Christ that we receive his strength
 - A phone doesn't conjure electricity by itself in order to work — it has to be plugged into a power source and charged — receive power on a regular basis, otherwise it runs out of power and shuts down.
 - If a believer doesn't remain connected to the Lord, we can only operate so long in our own strength before experiencing a power failure and shutting down.
 - A phone with a dead battery is useless until its recharged
 - A christian disconnected from the Lord will become useless rather quick...until they reconnect.

IN HIS MIGHTY POWER

- There's two greek words for power and strength used here - kratos & ischys - they are defined similarly, but related or used differently.
 - κράτος: strength, power, might - "always in reference to supernatural power" (Hoehner)
 - ἰσχύς: strength, might, power - "inherent strength that one might possess" (Hoehner)
 - The phrase together:
 - *"It is supernatural power or might that has its source in the Lord's inherent strength... Therefore, the believer is exhorted to be strengthened in the Lord, that is, in the might of the Lord's inherent strength."*
 - (Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 821.)

ALTOGETHER PAUL IS WRITING TO THE CHURCH:

- To be strengthened in the Lord's mighty, supernatural, inherent strength by way of remaining or abiding in Christ ([John 15:5](#))
- Do this on an ongoing, everyday basis
- DON'T rely on your own strength (alone—its not enough).
 - Why? He'll answer that in a moment
 - How? Put on the armor of God

2: HOW: PUT ON THE ARMOR OF GOD

[Ephesians 6:11](#) "Put on the full armor of God..."

[Ephesians 6:13](#) "Therefore put on the full armor of God..."

- Immediately after calling the Ephesian church to be strong (strengthened) in the Lord, he tells them to put on the full armor of God.
 - Therefore, we make the connection that we receive God's strength BY putting on what he has provided for us — his strength in/through his armor.
- Note something quick before unpacking the individual pieces:
 - There's a repeated call to stand, having put on - this terminology is defensive rather than offensive.
 - That's not to say that there isn't offensive spiritual warfare, there is, but that's not this passage — and frankly I think that happens mostly at a church-wide corporate level. Individual soldiers wage war as part of a greater army.
 - Here the call to stand is a defensive posture of holding the ground/territory that Christ has already won.
 - We'll talk about the standing further, once we address the armor to put on.

Ephesians 6:14-17 NIV

¹⁴ Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

- The armor as listed here:
 - Belt of truth
 - Breastplate of righteousness
 - (Shoes) - feet fitted with the readiness from the gospel of peace
 - Shield of faith
 - Helmet of salvation
 - Sword of the Spirit
- Remember, in putting these pieces on or taking them up — we receive the strength of God to stand and fight.

BELT OF TRUTH

- Roman soldiers wore a leather apron/thong belt under the armor — not decorative, but functional: it secured other gear and allowed freedom of movement.
- Truth here is likely both objective truth (the gospel/reality as God defines it) and subjective truth (the believer's own integrity, reliability, faithfulness).
- This truth is foundational as in truth and trustworthiness underlie every other quality believers need; everything else is fastened to this piece.

BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

- Protected the chest/vital organs — either a metal plate or coat of mail.
- The grammar here implies that the breastplate is righteousness.
 - Therefore the righteousness described here is primarily the sanctifying/practical righteousness (righteous daily living), not justifying righteousness (legal standing before God) — though the sanctifying is rooted in the justification.
- Put plainly:
 - When we obey God and allow him to sanctify us — we become righteous, as in we're doing righteous things
 - Remember, God already declared us righteous through his works, but this speaks of the being transformed.
 - So when we live righteously in alignment with God's word, that righteous daily living acts as a breastplate that guards our vital organs.
 - Obedience/righteousness actually serves to guard our hearts and inner man from the weapons of the enemy.
 - Living unrighteously (in sin) in this sense is exposing ourselves to the weapons of the enemy.
 - Righteousness protect you. Sin exposes you.
 - Righteousness/obedience is for your good, sin/disobedience is bad for you.

FEET FITTED WITH READINESS OR PREPARATION FROM THE GOSPEL OF PEACE

- Roman soldiers wore heavy, hobnailed sandals designed to dig in and hold ground — not for running, but for standing firm.
- Note:
 - The verse says "readiness that comes from the gospel," not "proclamation of the gospel."
 - The whole context is defensive, not offensive (evangelism would be an advancing/offensive act).
 - The main verb throughout is "stand," not "go" or "advance."
- Therefore in context with the passage (standing firm) and the metaphor of Roman infantry sandals, the readiness of the gospel of peace is probably NOT 'being ready to preach the gospel.'
- Rather, this means that to have feet fitted with the readiness or preparation of the gospel of peace includes:
 - being prepared or made ready by being 'surefooted' in the gospel of peace
 - We have been reconciled unto God - we have peace with him
 - Through the gospel we have peace with men. In christ the dividing barriers have been torn down.
 - This gospel of peace gives us inner stability, security, and peace
 - This keeps us surefooted and stable when attacked by the enemy.

SHIELD OF FAITH

- The shield used here (thyrios) was the large, door-shaped Roman shield (not the small round buckler) — covering the whole body, layered wood covered in canvas and hide, and soaked in water before battle so it would smother flaming arrows rather than catch fire.
- "In addition to all these" signals this shield covers/protects the other pieces already put on.
- Grammar again implies that the shield is faith.
 - We can understand this as the believer's ongoing, resolute trust in God
- Function: extinguishes, not just deflects, the enemy's "flaming arrows."
 - Rendering the attacks fully useless, not merely attacks that are survived.

HELMET OF SALVATION

- Roman helmets were the last piece put on, right before imminent danger because they were hot, uncomfortable, only worn when the fight was close.
- Once again the grammar states that the helmet is salvation (not from or of, but is).
- It's the felt security that steadies a soldier's mind mid-battle.
 - As a roman soldier would throw on his helmet right before he engaged in combat, the believer throws on the assurance of our salvation.
 - It gives us a freedom to fight, knowing that we are ultimately protected in Christ's salvation.

SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

- The sword mentioned here was a short sword/dagger which was a close-combat weapon, not the large broadsword pictured elsewhere.
- The sword is the only offensive weapon in the list — but probably is still used defensively in this context: to resist attack, not to advance new territory.
- The Sword is “of the Spirit” = describing its source, it is the sword supplied by the Holy Spirit.
- Interestingly, Paul uses the word rhema (the spoken/proclaimed word), not merely logos (word/message in general).
 - This emphasizes the sword/word (rhema) as an actively spoken word used in real-time confrontation.
- Modeled by Jesus in the wilderness temptation ([Matt 4](#)) — quoting specific Scripture back at the devil in the moment of attack.

All together this armor of God

- Is that which is supplied by God
- Gives us the strength to stand and fight against the enemy
- Note in v13, Paul reiterates to put on the armor of God, but adds ‘full’
 - As in, don’t lay aside certain pieces.
 - We need all of it
- Also worth noting is v18’s call to pray in the Spirit and be alert.
 - This is how we’re to put on the armor - through prayer.
- But this ‘fight against the enemy’ is the ‘why’ we must be strengthened in the Lord

3: WHY: SO YOU CAN STAND AGAINST THE ENEMY

[Ephesians 6:11–13](#) “11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.”

STAND AGAINST THE DEVIL’S SCHEMES

- The strength called for is to empower us to withstand the devil’s attack upon our faith and lives
- The fact that Paul uses the term ‘schemes’ for the devil’s warfare means
 - His attacks aren’t random
 - They are purposeful
 - They are timed
 - They are deceptive
 - They are effective if we’re not prepared.

- [2 Corinthians 2:11](#) “in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.”

OUR STRUGGLE

- The word for struggle often gets translated as ‘wrestle’ or ‘grapple’
- This implies the fight is close combat, not at a distance
 - And wrestling isn’t just a duel of strengths, it also requires discipline, knowledge and technique.
 - This also relates why wearing all the armor is important
 - The enemy fights dirty and will use any tactic or opening to his advantage
 - The shield might put out a flaming dart, but if you’re wearing the wrong shoes or forget your helmet, you’re unsteady and insecure at the worst opportune moment.

THE DEMONS WE FIGHT

- Paul writes that our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against...
 - We focus on the human faces or appearances of our struggle
 - But behind the veil there are spiritual forces at work
 - The people we get entangled with are the not the enemy, but those under the influence of the enemy.
 - They are our mission — to set those captives free — to share the gospel with them.
- Rulers, authorities, powers of this dark world, spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms
 - To be clear some of these terms can also be used of human rulers, but context makes it plain he’s warning us of the devil’s strategy and teammates.
 - In the list we see that there seems to be structure and organization
 - It’s just a glimpse of what is happening behind the veil of what we can see, but very real
 - Satan is described as the god of this world or age
 - Christ defeated him on the cross, and stripped him of his authority
 - However final judgment remains future
 - Today, he still holds influence and authority over all those not ‘in Christ’
 - be that nations, territories, people groups, false religions, and individuals
 - The forces aligned with him are at work in resisting God’s kingdom and trying to destroy God’s people
 - Therefore they must be resisted (in the sense of our text today) and elsewhere driven out by gospel proclamation.

THE DAYS OF OUR STRUGGLE

- On a final note, what does Paul have in mind when he says ‘when the day of evil comes’?
 - Is it a future day of great tribulation?
 - Is it a general sense of temptations, testing, attacks and trials that all believers face throughout their lives?

- Is it referring to those awful days of personal temptation and/or tribulation?
- I'd say its all of the above.
 - There are general days and seasons
 - There are great days of battle
 - There's a future day/season of great tribulation
- We are to be prepared for it all, by putting on God's strength.
 - If we could handle it ourselves, we would've already... but we've failed.
 - But God is good and Christ is gracious to supply us with everything we need to be victorious
 - We just need to 'put it on'

RESPONSE:

[Romans 13:14](#) "Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ."

[Ephesians 6:10, 11, 13](#) - Be strengthened in the Lord & Put on the armor of God

- We do this by grounding ourselves in His word
- We do this by remaining in Christ through relationship - prayer
- We do this by trusting in Christ for salvation, that he is our righteousness
- We do this by finding our identity in Him and in His word
- We do this by receiving his strength and armor