

THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

“Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place...” — EPHESIANS 6:14

Considering Paul was in prison under false charges when he wrote his letter to the Ephesians, one might expect him to say our struggle is against flesh and blood, but he sees beyond that, and in Ephesians 6:12 says it's against the rulers, authorities and powers of this dark world. Though they may work through flesh and blood, they are spiritual; not tangible, nor visible, and they're out to destroy everything that comes from God, including those who are in Christ.

In Ephesians 6:10-11 Paul writes, “Be strong in the Lord, and in His mighty power. Put on the full armour of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.” It's a battle we're all involved in, and to combat it, we need to know the power and sufficiency of our Lord, and we need to know the armour He's equipped us with. Paul tells us to put the ‘breastplate of righteousness’ in place.

A modern day idiom for ‘breastplate of righteousness’ would be ‘bulletproof vest of righteousness’ because it protects the vital organs, and the way in which Satan will seek to destroy us and our effectiveness as Christians will be to attack our righteousness and standing before God. The devil is a liar, but he doesn't have to lie when he talks about our sin and we know that. When he speaks to us about our sin, he condemns us, but when the Holy Spirit speaks to us about our sin, He convicts us. The difference is that condemnation sits like a heavy, wet blanket on us and we're unable to move out from under it, but

conviction makes us aware of our sin and of a way out. The Holy Spirit's purpose is never to humiliate us, but always to cleanse and liberate us.

Isaiah 64:6 says, "All our righteous acts are like filthy rags," but the Lord says He has taken away our sin and will replace our filthy rags with rich garments. "My soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness..." (Isaiah 61:10). That is why we need this bulletproof vest of righteousness, because the devil will use any weaponry he can, which often includes inflicting guilt of past sins upon us to make us question and doubt our standing before God. No matter what the devil whispers to us, if we are in Christ, then in God's eyes, we are out from under that condemning blanket, and are standing before Him from a position of righteousness.

PRAYER: Dear Lord, Thank You for freeing me from the condemnation of sin. Help me to keep the breastplate of righteousness in place, so that I am equipped against the devil's accusations.

TO REFLECT UPON: Am I sitting under the condemnation of past sins or enjoying the liberty of freedom from sin in Christ?