

As, when I was a little kid, my parents would sometimes entertain company and I figured it was my job to do the entertaining. And so, they had a serious little dinner party going on, and I just knew while I was in my bedroom that they needed an appearance from Batman. And, and so I put on my gloves, and I put on my hat, and I put on the cape. That was all I had, but it was also all I had on. Important, at least remaining dressed for company.

I know that now. I've come a long way. Dressing for a battle is not just important, it's critical. Because when we get dressed for a battle, what we wear will matter. We're in a battle all around us and too many people are walking wounded.

Last week in Ephesians 6, we learned we are fighting against Satan and his demons in this present darkness we're in and we were called to stand. And today, we're gonna take a look at the armor that God gives us as we stand. We're gonna learn how to dress for battle. Would you please turn to Ephesians chapter 6 and would you stand with me for the reading, please. Ephesians chapter 6 will begin again in verse 12.

For we are not fighting against flesh and blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle, you will still be standing firm. Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God's righteousness. For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the good news, so that you will be fully prepared.

In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil. Put on salvation as your helmet and take the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. Let's pray together. Father, we come to your word and we know that you wrote these things for us. And so we ask you through your spirit to speak into our hearts, to help us to understand and apply this to our lives, father.

I pray that we would be wiser. We would be stronger because we understand you better and our faith is placed in you. In Jesus' name, amen. Thank you. Please be seated.

Satan is always looking for a way in. I don't know if you ever got in a dirt clod fight when you were a kid, but if you did, you were poor like us. You know, we we picked up, we found our toys laying on the ground, and there were rocks and dirt clods. When you get in a dirt clod fight, and you, somebody's hiding behind a tree, you start looking for an opening. You kind of time them, so that when they poke out from the tree, your dirt clod arrives at just the right time.

Well, Satan is a much better shot than we are. He is always looking for a weakness he can exploit, and all too often he finds those areas in places where we have neglected to dress ourselves or prepare ourselves by putting on the armor God gives us. Three times in Ephesians, God tells us to stand. Stand our ground against Satan. He doesn't tell us to defeat Satan because we can't.

He's already done that on the cross and he will do that finally at the end as he cast Satan into the pit of hell, but we are told to stand our ground and to be able to stand our ground, God provides some armor. He said in verse 14, stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God's righteousness. The belt in that day and the and the soldiers' armor, they would take their robe and tuck it into the belt so it wouldn't tangle up their legs as they were getting into battle. They would take their body armor, would tuck into the belt from on top to hold the body armor in place, and their sword would be slung from the belt as well. So the belt was a very important piece that held all these things together.

The truth for believers holds us together. It holds the armor together in place, and if we give up the truth, then we give up the armor. As we look today at all the lies that are being told all around us, You see people that have to backtrack or or become aggressive in order to defend a lie, but the truth allows us to remain standing. The truth means we never have to back up and we never have to charge because the truth stands on its own. We stand in the truth.

Can stand in the peace and confidence that we stand on the solid rock of God's word and it cannot be moved. Last week, I was, on this online forum. It was a young or young earth creationist forum and, I saw a pastor on there. He said, I've been a pastor for 30 years, and the one thing that drives more people away from God than anything else are people that believe the Genesis account of the Bible. I'm like, well, you know me well enough to know that I responded to that and and I said, well, not only do I disagree with

you, but I believe that that God created and and obviously Jesus believed that as well as He referred back to Adam and the Bible corroborates that, and I believe the evidence does too.

And as we had this conversation, the next day I came back on. I was gonna log in and see what he said, but they had kicked me off the forum. Apparently, not accepting others' opinions is not a popular thing, even if it is not the truth. You see, our culture values diversity over truth. It values opinions over truth.

It values emotions over truth. So many things are put ahead of what actually is the truth that you and I now have the opportunity to stand out, to stick out from the culture that we're in because we simply say, thus saith the Lord. Once a believer begins to allow enemies, lies to replace the truth, then we lose our armor pretty quickly and we cannot hope to stand against the enemy's lies or the world's propaganda. The body armor of God's righteousness is referring to a very heavy covering that was worn over the body to protect the vital organs, went from the neck to the waist. It was usually made of layers of hardened leather and it was designed to stop a sword strike or a or a knife blow and and they were bound together front and back by leather straps on the sides.

Sometimes they would even have chinks of metal or pieces of metal, maybe circles of metal like chain mail, and it was designed to protect your core. Says that we dress in the body armor of God's righteousness. We don't dress in our own righteousness. We dress in his righteousness. We've been given the righteousness of Jesus Christ to wear as body armor.

In other words, if you and I were to stand before people and they said, well, how good are you? Let me know all your past. Let me know your sins. Let me see your thoughts and you'd be going, well, my body armor is pretty weak, but guess what? I don't put on me.

I put on Jesus. 2nd Corinthians 5:21 says, for God made Christ who never sinned to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ. Our past sin is forgiven because of what Jesus did on the cross. However, if you and I continue to sin, if we remove that body armor of Christ's righteousness, we start living in sin and Satan's gonna slip past and attack. The way we live matters.

Our choices matter. And he says, for shoes, put on the peace that comes from the good news so that you will be fully prepared. And it, doesn't make a lot of sense to us how that translates to translates to shoes, but the soldiers in that day would wear those sandals and they would be tied around their ankles and the top of their foot and on the bottom of the sandals, a common soldier would have nails sticking out, hobnails, if you will, sticking out the bottom of their shoe to give them grip, much like we use cleats today in sports. Those shoes that gave them a good footing, that allowed them to get a grip are compared to the good news. The good news is this, Romans 5:1 says, therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ, our Lord, has done for us.

We have peace with God. When you and I are right with God, the rest of the world can come against us, and it doesn't matter.

When we're we have peace with God, we don't have to fear the attacks of Satan. When you and I have peace with God, we can stand against the opinions of the world. We can stand firmly on God's love and promises, but those shoes also mean that when we have the good news, we share the good news.

In addition to all these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil. The shield referred to was a large shield about 4 feet tall and about 2 feet wide. It was designed to cover almost the entire body as they crouch behind their shield. And that shield would also be made of wood, usually covered with, leather and sometimes they would soak that leather in something shoot them at the opposing army. And if it's not bad enough getting hit by an arrow, getting hit by an arrow that's on fire would make it a little bit worse.

And so, they would stop those fiery arrows coming at them and whatever substance they'd put on their shield would help extinguish the flame. The shield of faith is referred referring to faith in the power and the promises of God. In other words, when Satan fires a dart at us, and we hold up our shield of believing and having faith in God, That when Satan fires that doubt and it hits our faith, we allow our faith to extinguish the thought from the enemy. We allow our faith to answer the parry from the enemy. Satan shoots those fiery darts at our minds.

He shoots them into our hearts. He shoots temptation, lies, evil thoughts, lust, greed, gossip, division and flaming desires, trying to get us off track and here's what he wants us to do. When a soldier improperly prepared their shield or when the shield was

overwhelmed, it would catch on fire and as it caught on fire they would have to abandon their shield and when you abandon your faith, then you were left defenseless against the enemy. We have to have faith that God has commanded, and what God has promised us is more than what the enemy is offering. In other words, when Satan says, oh, look over here.

Look what I've got for you, and then our faith says, my God has given me so much more in Jesus Christ. When Satan says, oh, but look what you can have if you just walk over here, and we say, oh, but look what God's given me when I get there. Our faith answers and quenches those fiery darts from the enemy. Faith in Jesus is that fireproof barrier that answers the fiery arrows of the enemy. He says in verse 17, put on salvation as your helmet and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Now that's explained a little easier to understand in 1st Thessalonians 5:8. It says, but let us who live in the light be clear headed, protected by the armor of faith and love, and wearing as our helmet the confidence of our salvation. When we put on the helmet of our salvation, we are having confidence in what Jesus Christ has done for us. Satan loves to attack our minds. He loves to bring doubt and fear and worry and anxiety, and that's a tactic he used for Eve in the garden.

Well, Eve, did God really say this? But you know that this is gonna be so delicious. It's gonna make you like God. And as Satan put those thoughts in her mind, she gave in. Satan tried the same trick on Jesus in the wilderness as Jesus was fasting and and as he was praying.

He'd been without food for a long time and Satan comes in and he tries to get through. He tries to introduce those lies into the mind. The helmet of salvation represents a mind that has been renewed by Jesus Christ. Our old desires are no longer a roadmap. Our desires are his desires.

Our minds have been purchased. When our minds are on Christ and his truth, then we can have confidence in what Jesus Christ has done and Satan can no longer easily deceive us. Then with all the defensive armor in place, when we have our helmet and we have our breastplate, we have our belt holding it together, wearing the shoes of the gospel, and we are holding our shield of faith, then God hands us a sword. The sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. Hebrews 4:12 says, for the word of God is alive and powerful.

It is sharper than the sharpest 2 edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires. When Satan came up to Jesus and he began to say, well, here's the scripture. It says if you can turn bread into a stone into bread. And Jesus answered with another scripture, thus saith the Lord.

When He said, come down here, look at this, every time, 3 times, Jesus said, thus saith the Lord. Satan can twist scripture. Did you know that? The world twists scripture all the time. They love to take a piece of it out of context and here, Christian, take that.



And what we do is we say, no, that's not what it says and that's not what it means. Jesus used the word of God to parry the enemy's sword and so should we. The word is not to wound the body. It is to cut through the pride. It's to cut through our arrogance, our hardened hearts to heal and to teach us.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Peter used a sword to try to fend off the crowd that was coming for Jesus and he slashed the high priest servant's ear off and Jesus put it back on. He's like, put away your sword. But that same Peter, when he lifted up the the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God at Pentecost, He saw the sword of the Spirit cut through the hearts of those same people who had shouted, crucify him. The same people in Jerusalem who'd who'd called for his death now stood before the word of God as Peter preached and 3,000 men gave their hearts to Christ that day. Peter saw what happens when the sword of the spirit cuts.

The word of God is alive and powerful. Not able only just to defend us, but also to cut the chains of slavery that are keeping people all around us captive. Warren Wiersbe said, the Spirit wrote the word, and the Spirit wields the word as we take it by faith and use it. A physical sword wounds to hurt and kill, while the sword of the spirit wounds to heal and give life. If you're going into a sword fight, you're gonna need some practice.

Satan loves to try and confuse us with bits and pieces, improperly used pieces of scripture. And the more you know the Word of God, the easier it is to stop those attacks of the enemy and get God's point across. This this whole armor thing, this idea of the

armor is a picture and I want you to get this in your mind because if we focus just on the armor and the Roman soldier, then we lose the point. This picture of armor is a picture of us putting on Christ. It is a picture of you and I being in Christ that Jesus is the truth of John 14:6.

He is our righteousness in 2nd Corinthians 5:21. He is our peace in Ephesians 2:14. He is our salvation in Luke 2:3 and he is the word of God in John 1 and 14. Jesus is our armor. Jesus is our weapon.

He is the one in whom you and I trust. One of my favorite people in the Bible is a young shepherd boy named David. He'd been in battles with lions and bears and as a young boy when I was reading his story, it was fascinating. Just seeing this young guy who was stuck out, because you know, we all have those moments when we feel neglected by the world, shoved aside and he was shoved aside in the pastures with the sheep. And there, he'd been in battles with lions and bears who had come to take his father's sheep.

And all he had was his linen garment that he wore and his little club and he had no physical armor, but yet he was protected from their claws and their teeth. And he defeated about. David had the armor that this armor is speaking about. Young David was well dressed for his battle with Goliath, even though he didn't wear the king's armor. He said, no, I can't move in this stuff, and he shoved the armor aside.

It's probably the finest armor in all of Israel. But David had an armor that was far better than that. He had faith in the Lord his God. David was an incredible warrior. He became king of all Israel and as king, he led his soldiers into battle after battle, victorious every time.

Until one day, David decided not to go to war. 2nd Samuel 11 1 says, in the spring of the year when kings normally go out to war, David sent Joab and the Israelite army to fight the Ammonites. They destroyed the Ammonite army and laid siege to the city of Reba. However, David stayed behind in Jerusalem. David opted out of war that year.

He sent others off to fight the battle, and he stayed home. I wanna tell you something. When King David took off his armor and stayed home, he was in far greater danger than he was on the battlefield. Too many Christians are deciding to stay out of the fight. Too many Christians are deciding to stay home or to stay what they think is safe by sitting out the battle.

They sit in comfort, not realizing the real enemy followed them home. The real enemy is not stopped when you leave the battlefield. The real enemy is not waiting for you to be quiet. The real enemy is all too happy when you take off your armor and sit at ease and comfort on a couch. He can attack you there even better than he can attack you on the battlefield.

When we're not standing against Satan dressed in the armor of God, which is Jesus Christ, we are deeply vulnerable to Satan's attacks and schemes. Says in verse 2, late 1 afternoon, after his

midday rest, David got out of bed and was walking on the roof of the palace. As he looked out over the city, he noticed a woman of unusual beauty taking a bath. We all know the story and what goes on. After his nap, David was walking around.

Not only was David not in the battle, he wasn't even busy. David was bored. He took a nap. He got up and walked around on the roof of the palace. And since his palace was taller than everybody else's houses, he could see everywhere and he saw that woman and began a chain of sinful events that would change the course of David's life, change the course of several people's lives and cost 2 people their lives.

When we're in our spiritual pajamas instead of in our battle gear, we're in danger and not only are we in danger, but everybody else around us is in danger too. Fathers, when you're in your spiritual pajamas, when you're not staying in the Word, when you're not ready and you're not in prayer, you're not defending your family, I wanna tell you something. Satan's coming after your marriage. He's coming after your children, and you're called to stand. Mothers, the same thing for you.

Children, the same thing for you. Nobody needs to be the weak link where Satan gets in, because it doesn't just affect us. Sometimes we take off the breastplate of God's righteousness. I don't really want to act like Jesus today. I don't want to be like Jesus today and we take it off and we're left with our own righteousness.

Too many people I talk to, they ask, you ask them how you're gonna get to heaven and they say, well I'm a pretty good person. We've all heard that many times. I'm a pretty good person. I'm better than Hitler. I'm better than most people.

I'm better than my friends. The problem is they're still full of pride. They're still full of sin. Being less lost is still lost. There is no less dead.

There's just dead and alive. You can't be less dead than other people. If you're dead, you're dead and you need Jesus. The breastplate is God's righteousness, the goodness of Jesus Christ. It is His goodness that the enemy has nothing to say about.

And without it, we're left with our own weak morality, our own lust in sin. And Isaiah tells us, our righteousness, you and I, our goodness is like filthy bloodstained rags when God looks at it. We need the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Sometimes we take off the helmet of salvation. We forget whose we are.

We forget what it was done to purchase our salvation and we act like we're lost and we lose that armor and our minds begin to crumble. Sometimes we take off the shoes of the gospel of peace as we fail to not only remember that we have peace with God through Jesus Christ, but we fail to give the gospel to other people. We're called to be on mission, to reach people for our king, to represent him. When we forget our purpose, when we start forgetting who we represent, we start representing ourselves. And that's when we get in trouble.

David fell into that trap. David fell into the trap of believing God had already blessed him, and then he was at ease, and he could do what he wanted to. And it turned out horribly and led to problems for the rest of his life. When that happens, we begin accepting lies, compromise. We even accept our own emotions as substitute for truth.

We start rationalizing our thoughts until we agree with Satan instead of agreeing with the Lord. When we stop leaving off the truth of God's word, we're defenseless. A pastor had supper at a lady in her husband's house, and as they were sitting there, they commented on the fine silver that was used at the supper and and, he said this beautiful silver. And when he was gone, she noticed one of her spoons was missing. And she thought, I wonder if the pastor took my spoon.

And so she asked her husband, I think the pastor took the spoon. And and so you she just bubbled about it, and a year later, they invited the pastor over to eat again. And, finally after they she sat there, she just couldn't stand it. She said, okay. I just got a note.

Did you steal my spoon? And he said, no, I put it in your Bible. We need to stay in touch with the Lord in the word and in prayer, because some of y'all, the spoon would still be there. It's time to emulate the shepherd boy, to take up the sword, and take up your Bible to know what God says, to be in prayer, to put on Christ, to emulate that little shepherd boy who stood before lions and bears and giants and said, my God is the one you're coming against. My faith is in him.

I don't care about the armor. I don't care about how big you are. I don't care about how many teeth you have, how many claws you have. I don't care how huge the army. My god is still bigger.

When we stand like that little shepherd boy, we stand on a rock that can't be moved. In Jesus, we are safe, even if we're wearing a tunic and carrying a little club. John 10:28-29 says, I came to give them eternal life and they will never perish. No one can snatch them away from me, for my father has given them to me and he is more powerful than anyone else. No one can snatch them from the father's hand.

This morning, we're gonna take the Lord's Supper. As we take the Lord's supper, Jesus commanded us to do this, commanded Christians to remember and to do this. And as we do this, it is a picture of us again remembering what was done to purchase our freedom. It's a time to put our armor back on, to raise our shield of faith again, to reject the lies that satan has put in our hearts, the compromise that we've accepted and come back to his truth. As we pass the elements of the Lord's supper, I'm gonna ask you to confess your sin to the Lord and to be grateful for his righteousness that covers you and I ask you to stand with joy on the good news.

You have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ did. I'm gonna ask you to raise your shield of faith and to trust God with whatever you're going through right now. Whatever situation there is, in faith you can say, Lord, I am placing my life in your hands. I'm gonna trust you for the outcome. I'm gonna ask you to take up

the sword of the spirit, the Word of God and to resolve in your heart to let that be your guide.

As the elements pass, I want to encourage you to go through those steps, as we wait on everyone to receive them that you are doing business with the Lord. If you're not yet a follower of Jesus, if you're here and you're checking all this out, that's okay. We love the fact that you're here. If you would, when those elements come to you, would you just pass them along until the day you're a Christian and you can celebrate with us? I'm gonna ask our deacons to go ahead and come on up.

Let's pray together. Father, we are about to embark on a mission. We're about to go into a world that so desperately needs you. It's the mission you gave us, the commission you gave us. And as we do, we remember the cost of our freedom.

The blood and the body of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ. We thank you for that sacrifice, and we pray that you would help us, father, to do this in a way that pleases you. In Jesus' name. Amen.