

The Breastplate of Righteousness

Intro

- **We are continuing our study through Eph 6:10–17 to understand...**
 - How to operate in God's strength, rather than our own
 - Today we are going to talk about what it means to put on the Breastplate of Righteousness

Today's Scripture

Ephesians 6:14 CSB

¹⁴ Stand, therefore, with... righteousness like armor on your chest,

- What does a breastplate do? It protects your vital organs
- In the same way, our security and defense must be based on what Jesus has done, not on what we have done – His righteousness not our righteousness

Our common problem...

- **There are all kinds of attacks that are aimed at our heart**
 - Attacks on your worth
 - Attacks on your identity
 - Attacks on your hope
- **We try to defend against those attacks by affirming ourselves**

- We work and struggle to prove ourselves
- We compare ourselves to others
- We try to be perfect and never make mistakes
- **Our defense fails when our weakness and imperfection is exposed**
 - We mess up and seem to affirm the attacks against us
 - We can't endure constantly having to prove ourselves
 - eventually we accept the claims against our identity, worth, and hope

We must instead rely on Jesus' identity, worth, and hope to define us and defend us

- Ephesians 1:3–5 *“Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavens in Christ. 4 For he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless in love before him. 5 He predestined us to be adopted as sons through Jesus Christ for himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,”*
- Galatians 2:20–21 *“I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. 21 I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died for nothing.”*
- Romans 3:21–22 *“But now, apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been revealed, attested by the Law and the Prophets. 22 The righteousness of God is through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe, since there is no distinction.”*

- **So the righteousness that we have in Jesus, which we can wear like armor to guard our hearts from attacks, is an identity and value based on**
 - What Jesus has done, rather than what we have done
 - Jesus' value, rather than our value
 - The hope we have in Him, rather than the hope we have in ourselves

So we must reject security that is based on self-estimation

- Instead we must stand in the security that is based on the person and work of Jesus
- It doesn't matter if I'm good enough, talented enough, liked enough – I have already been made perfect and complete in Jesus

Today's challenge

- **Identify what you are using to feel secure, to provide a sense of identity and belonging, and to establish your value.**
 - What would make you feel worthless/useless if you lost it?
 - What insults or accusations are the most effective against you?
- **Accept that those things cannot define you or defend you**
 - Receive the value and identity given to you by God's grace

If we all did this

- We would be more confident and more humble
- Less worried and distracted by what other people think

- More free and bold to do what God has called us to do

REFLECT

Let's take a moment to pray

Ask the Holy Spirit to guide our attention and lead our conversation, helping us see and understand what He wants us to apply in our lives.

APPLY

Process the passage together with these questions:

- What does Paul mean in Galatians 2:20 when he says, "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me"?
- How does trying to maintain an image of perfection actually make us more vulnerable to spiritual attacks?
- How does accepting Jesus' righteousness change the way we react when we make a mistake or fail?

Where we want to "land the plane"

- We often try to protect our hearts by proving our worth through our achievements, reputation, or moral performance, but this defense inevitably fails the moment we make a mistake. To survive spiritual attacks on our identity, we must stop relying on our own self-estimation and instead put on the Breastplate of Righteousness. This means finding our ultimate security and value solely in what Jesus has done for us, rather than what we can do for Him. When we rest in His righteousness, we

become immune to the enemy's accusations and free to live boldly without the crippling fear of failure.