

The background of the slide features a faint, stylized illustration of two fencers in a sparring stance. One fencer is on the left, leaning forward with arms extended, while the other is on the right, also in a dynamic pose. The overall tone is light and artistic, with the fencers rendered in a dark, almost black silhouette against a light, textured background.

EN GARDE!

A STUDY OF UNSEEN FORCES AT WORK IN OUR WORLD

JoLynn Gower

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217-493-6151

jgower@guardingthetruth.org

Lesson 5

VERSE FOR THE JOURNEY

- **Ephesians 6:10-13** Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.
- Struggle: *pale:* to wrestle; a close quarters combat
- Resist: *anthistemi:* withstand while opposing
- Stand: *histemi:* make a stand; be established

COVENANT MAKING GOD

- There are important ramifications of being in covenant with Jesus
- Examples of covenant begin in the Old Testament:
beriyth: an agreement between two or more persons groups; can be conditional or unconditional; can describe how one will treat the other or how they will treat each other

CONDITIONAL COVENANT:

- **Exodus 19:5-6** 'Now then, **if** you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, **then** you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel."

UNCONDITIONAL COVENANTS

- **Genesis 15:5-8, 17-18** And He took him outside and said, "Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be." Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness. And He said to him, "I am the LORD who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess it." He said, "O Lord GOD, how may I know that I will possess it?" ...It came about when the sun had set, that it was very dark, and behold, *there appeared* a smoking oven and a flaming torch which passed between these pieces. On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates:

OTHER COVENANTS

- Noah: unconditional
- David: unconditional
- Redemption Covenant: conditional
- New Covenant: unconditional for people in RC
- **1 Samuel 18:1-4** Now it came about when he had finished speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as himself. Saul took him that day and did not let him return to his father's house. Then Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, including his sword and his bow and his belt.
- Put me on; I will defend you; I will fight for you

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- **Romans 13:11-14** *Do this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to *its* lusts.*
- But we also have armor and weaponry because we are in covenant relationship with Jesus
- **2 Corinthians 6:7...** in the word of truth, in the power of God; by the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and the left..

NEW TESTAMENT COVENANT

- Covenant: *diatheke*: a last will and testament
- **Hebrews 9:16-17** For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it. For a covenant is valid *only* when men are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives.
- **Luke 22:20** And in the same way *He took* the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.
- Our covenant partner has given us what we need:
Put on Christ – “I will go with you”
- **Ephesians 6:11** Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

ARMOR AND WEAPONRY

- **Ephesians 6:12-13** For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.
- Put on; take up: we are provided with armor and weaponry but we have to take it up and use it!
- Rulers: *arche*: principalities; high ranking
- Powers: *exousia*: those with the ability to take action
- World forces: *kosmakratos*: those ruling the world system; a word strongly associated with pagan religions

ARMOR AND WEAPONRY (2)

- Spiritual forces of wickedness: *pneumatikos*: spiritual things or beings siding with evil
- **John 12:31** "Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out."
- **1 John 5:19** We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in *the power of* the evil one
- Wherever Satan is ruling, lies and trickery will prevail
- Satan's objectives:
 1. prevent people from being saved
 2. destroy unity among saved people
 3. entice people to sin
 4. lead people into false teaching
- First piece of armor: belt of truth

BELT OF TRUTH

➤ **John 14:6** Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

JESUS IS THE PERSON OF TRUTH

➤ **John 17:17** "Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.

GOD'S WORD IS TRUTH

➤ **John 16:13** "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH

➤ **1 Timothy 3:15**...but in case I am delayed, *I write* so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the **pillar and support of the truth**

SATAN'S STRATEGY

- Deceive; lead away from truth and righteousness
- **2 Corinthians 11:3** But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity *of devotion* to Christ.
- **1 Timothy 4:1** But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demon...
- These things cause us to fall away from our right standing with God; therefore:
- TAKE UP THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS
- **2 Timothy 2:22** Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love *and* peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

PREPARATION

- **Ephesians 6:15** ...and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE;
- This verse isn't about going to take the gospel to the world; the instructions are to stand firm
- **Ephesians 6:16** ...in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil *one*.
- This shield uses truth to counter the devil's lies and accusations; in order to take up the shield, you have to know truth
- **Ephesians 6:17** And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.
- The helmet protects our thoughts, which is Satan's favorite point of attack

RENEWING OUR MIND

- We are told to renew our minds; we know with certainty that we belong to Christ
- I have been saved; I am being saved—working out salvation with fear and trembling; I will be saved – the work that Christ has started will be completed and my redemption will be completed at the rapture
- **Ephesians 6:17** ...and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.
- Word: *rhema*: usually thought of as a spoken word
- When Jesus was tempted, He spoke the Word of God to Satan; I don't believe that Satan can read our minds even though he may introduce thoughts through an unredeemed body; therefore, it is important to speak the truth

PRAY

- **Ephesians 6:18** With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints...
- Prayer: *proseuche*: usually thought of as special times and/or places of prayer
- Petition: *deesis*: specific requests
- Realizing our position in Christ, we:
 1. confess known sin and ask for God's wisdom
 2. ask for discernment
 3. recognize the sufficiency of Jesus' name
 4. rely on the completed work of Christ
 5. rid ourselves of moral compromise or deception
 6. rid ourselves of the urge to exploit the weakness of others