

Put on the Full Armor of God

By Pastor Bren Gibbs

Hello Victory family and friends!

It is great to be back together for another quarterly fast. I love our culture and how much joy and anticipation you all have preceding our fasts.

Well, we are back in Ephesians, just as we were during our Spring Fast. Our focus for spring was "Speaking the Truth in Love," and now we return to the book of Ephesians with the emphasis of "Putting on the Full Armor of God."

Let's begin by reading our Ephesians passage of scripture where our theme comes from.

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints. (Ephesians 6:10–18 NKJV)

Did you know scripture often uses clothing to represent someone's spiritual condition or character? Let's read just a few examples of the many scripture references that portray this.

Isaiah 61:10 (NKJV) says, "For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness."

Job says of himself in Job 29:14, "I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; My justice was like a robe and turban."

Revelation 19:8 (NKJV) says of the wife of Christ, "And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints."

Even the Lord speaks of His own character and acts as representing clothing. Now this is where it gets interesting, because Paul uses the same verbiage in Ephesians as the Lord does in Isaiah to describe what He Himself puts on as clothing. Isaiah 59:17 (NKJV) reads, "For He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on His head; He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak."

Paul uses the exact same imagery of clothing for us as the Lord uses for Himself. Why is Paul doing this? Let's go back to our Ephesians scripture. What is Paul telling us to do?

Ephesians 6:10 tells us where Paul is going with this passage. He says, "Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might." Paul is not telling us to be strong in ourselves, but to be strong in the Lord. We are not to be strong in our own selves, but we are to be strong in Christ and in His power. That is why it is called the armor of God. It is not our armor; it is God's armor.

Some might think, "Isn't putting on God's armor the same as David putting on Saul's armor? It is too big; it won't fit!" Well, in a sense, that is true. What Paul is describing here is that we are to put on the likeness and character of God. We know we cannot put this incredibly massive, powerful suit on ourselves. Only God can truly carry the weight of what we are talking about in character and nature.

The only way we can put on the weightiness of righteousness, salvation, truth, and all the other articles of clothing that represent the armor of God is by putting on the Lord Jesus Himself—rather, by being “in Him.”

Paul says it in Romans 13:14 (NKJV) like this: “But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.” Remember, our passage of scripture itself says to be strong “in the Lord.” Do you remember that during our last fast the scripture we were meditating on of speaking the truth in love is all about being in the body of Christ? It is all about us being “in Him” and a part of Him.

Paul is adamant about making this point of being “in Him” close to 35 times in Ephesians alone. He is building understanding to the Ephesians and us, of first, our position in Christ, that leads to our lifestyle in Christ and ends with our strength in Christ.

Being “in Him” is so important and key for this passage of scripture. First, being in Christ and in His character is what will keep you from the schemes of the enemy. Think about what He clothes us with: truth, righteousness, the good news of peace, faith, salvation, and the word of God. His truth will keep us from the enemy’s lies. His righteousness will keep us from walking in the flesh. His faith will keep us from discouragement. His salvation will keep us from condemnation. Time and again His armor is there protecting us from the crafty designs of the enemy.

Not only that, but it will also keep you from being overtaken by the enemy in the evil day. Being in Christ will be the only safe place in the day of evil. Nothing or no one else will be able to protect you from it. I encourage you to read Psalm 91 again with the perspective of “the evil day” in mind.

In closing, let’s read a few more verses of Isaiah 59, verses 16–19.

He saw that there was no man,
And wondered that there was no intercessor;
Therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him;
And His own righteousness, it sustained Him,
For He put on righteousness as a breastplate,
And a helmet of salvation on His head;
He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing,
And was clad with zeal as a cloak.
According to their deeds, accordingly He will repay,
Fury to His adversaries,
Recompense to His enemies;
The coastlands He will fully repay.
So shall they fear
The name of the Lord from the west,
And His glory from the rising of the sun;
When the enemy comes like a flood,
The Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him.

God’s character and nature first intercedes to bring salvation and righteousness for whom it is intended and then brings justice and vengeance where it due, because there is “the acceptable year of the Lord,” as well as “the day of vengeance of our God” (Isaiah 61:2 NKJV).

Again, being “in Him” is the safest place in the world to be, because if you are not in His righteousness, truth, and salvation, then you are on the receiving end of His fury and vengeance. The day of the Lord is coming and those who are found in Him will partake of His glory, while those who are not will partake of His wrath.

Lastly, being “in Him” allows us to be watchful and prayerful, interceding for all those who are in Christ. This is our form of intercession in Christ, just as the Lord interceded for us and always lives to make intercession for us who come to God through Him. This is another way of becoming like Him and being “in Him.”

As you meditate on the armor of God this week, I pray you see the Lord wrapping Himself around you and clothing you with Himself. May you see yourself not just putting on certain characteristics like God, but putting on the very essence and presence of the Lord Himself. May you find yourself surrounded by the Lord on all sides and hidden in Him, so that all the enemy can see is the power of Christ and what He has done for the one He loves. May the Lord be your covering, your armor, and your strength.