



THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD



ROBERT WILLOUGHBY
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The verses in question

[Ephesians 6:10-18]

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.
11 Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.
12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.
13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand.
14 Stand therefore, having your **loins girt about with truth**, and having on the **breastplate of righteousness**;
15 And **your feet shod** with the **preparation of the gospel of peace**;
16 Above all, taking the **shield of faith**, wherewith ye shall be able to **quench all the fiery darts of the wicked**.
17 And take the **helmet of salvation**, and the **sword of the Spirit**, which is **the word of God**;
18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

Initial thoughts

We are called to wear the armour of God in our fight against the forces of evil. Here's a breakdown of the key points:

- 1. Strength in the Lord** (v. 10): The passage begins by urging us to find our strength not in ourselves, but in the Lord and His mighty power. This sets the foundation for the importance of relying on God in the spiritual battle.
- 2. The Armor of God** (v. 11-13): we are instructed to put on the complete armor of God, which symbolizes various spiritual qualities that protect against evil. This emphasizes the need for a holistic approach to spiritual warfare. And our daily fight against Sin
- 3. The Enemy: Not Flesh and Blood** (v. 12): The passage clarifies that the true enemy is not human, but spiritual forces of darkness, including principalities, powers, and rulers of the darkness. This highlights the seriousness of the spiritual battle and the need for God's protection.
- 4. Specific Pieces of Armor** (v. 14-17): The passage then details specific pieces of the armor and their corresponding virtues:

Belt of Truth: Commitment to truth in thought and action

Breastplate of Righteousness: Living righteously, aligning with God's will

Shoes of the Gospel of Peace: Sharing the message of peace and reconciliation with others

Shield of Faith: Trusting in God's promises and protection

Helmet of Salvation: Assurance of salvation and protection from spiritual attacks

Sword of the Spirit: Using God's Word as a weapon against evil

5. Prayer and Perseverance (v. 18): Continuous prayer and supplication are essential for maintaining strength and vigilance in the spiritual battle. This emphasizes the importance of communication with God and relying on His grace.

Delving into each piece of armor and its significance:

Belt of Truth:

[DC 98:10f]

according to the moral agency which I have given unto them, that every man may be accountable for his own sins in the day of judgment.

[Ephesians 4:24-25]

24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor; for we are members one of another.

IMAGE: Imagine a sturdy leather belt cinched around your waist, holding everything in place.

MEANING: Truthfulness and integrity act as your foundation, anchoring your moral compass and guiding your actions. Committing to honesty in thought, word, and deed is crucial for spiritual stability.

Breastplate of Righteousness:

[Proverbs 4:23]

Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

IMAGE: Picture a gleaming breastplate of metal, protecting your vital organs.

MEANING: Righteousness signifies living in accordance with God's will and moral principles. It's the shield that guards your heart and mind from temptations and evil influences.

Shoes of the Gospel of Peace:

[Matthew 5:16]

Verily, verily, I say unto you, I give unto you to be the light of the world; a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.

[Proverbs 11:25]

The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.

IMAGE: Imagine sandals with soles made of the Gospel message, leaving footprints of peace wherever you go.

MEANING: Sharing the message of peace and reconciliation with others is not just passive; it's an active stance against negativity and conflict. Spreading God's love and promoting harmony are essential aspects of spiritual warfare.

Shield of Faith:

[Proverbs 3:5-6]

5 Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

IMAGE: Envision a large, sturdy shield deflecting fiery arrows.

MEANING: Faith in God's promises and protection acts as an impenetrable barrier against doubt, fear, and negativity. Trusting in God's unwavering love and guidance allows you to extinguish the "fiery darts" of the enemy.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego [Daniel 3]

Helmet of Salvation:

IMAGE: Picture a helmet of gleaming metal, safeguarding your head and mind.

MEANING: The assurance of salvation through Jesus Christ provides unshakeable hope and protection from spiritual attacks. Knowing you are forgiven and secure in God's grace grants you the confidence to face any challenge.

Sword of the Spirit (Word of God):

[Matthew 10:30]

30 Think not, that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword.

IMAGE: Imagine a double-edged sword, its blade inscribed with verses from the Bible.

MEANING: God's Word is the ultimate offensive weapon against evil. Wielding the scriptures with knowledge and understanding allows you to counter negativity, expose

lies, and proclaim truth. Studying and applying the Bible equips you for spiritual battles.

Prayer and Perseverance:

IMAGE: Picture yourself kneeling in prayer, surrounded by an aura of unwavering determination.

MEANING: Constant communication with God through prayer is vital for maintaining spiritual strength and focus. Perseverance and unwavering faith fuel your ability to stand firm in the face of challenges. Remember, the armor is most effective when used continuously and in conjunction with prayerful reliance on God.

Remember, the Armor of God is not just a physical metaphor; it represents the spiritual qualities we cultivate through faith and practice. By actively developing these virtues and relying on God's strength, we can stand firm against any spiritual adversary.

the need for a holistic approach to spiritual warfare.

Integrating faith into everyday life allows us to live with greater authenticity and purpose. It also allows them to share their faith through actions and not just words, potentially leading to a more impactful witness in the world.

We are complex beings with physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual needs. A holistic approach recognizes this interconnectedness and seeks to nurture all aspects of a person's well-being through faith practices, prayer, reflection,

Putting a holistic approach into practice requires time, effort, and sometimes sacrifice. Individuals may need to adjust their priorities, seek guidance, and develop sustainable habits to truly integrate faith into all aspects of their lives.

Transformation through the heart emphasizes emotions, intuition, and inner values. It speaks to the power of empathy, compassion, and inspiration to ignite change.

Transformation through the mind focuses on logic, analysis, and conscious decision-making. It leverages the power of understanding, planning, and goal setting to create lasting change.

Outer transformation (Good works)

Fruits of the Spirit:

[Galatians, 5: 22-23]

22: But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

23 Meekness, temperance; against such there is no law.

- Increased compassion and service towards others.
- Greater patience and understanding in relationships.
- More responsible and ethical decision-making.
- A commitment to forgiveness and reconciliation.
- Humility and willingness to learn and grow.
- A desire for justice and peace in the world.

Actions:

While internal changes are crucial, outward actions as integral to transformation.

Transformation is a process, not a destination: Don't expect immediate perfection. Growth and setbacks are part of the journey.

Focus on the heart, not appearances: True transformation involves motivation and intention, not just outward acts.

Different expressions: Expressions of transformation vary across individuals and contexts. Don't judge yourself or others based on a single standard.

Importance of grace: Everyone makes mistakes. Forgiveness, self-compassion, and continued effort are key.

1. Enemy's Multifaceted Strategies: The forces of evil rarely attack just one aspect of our lives. They might use temptation, doubt, fear, or even physical harm to weaken and manipulate us. A holistic approach recognizes this and equips us to fight on multiple fronts.

2. Interconnectedness of Spiritual and Physical: Our spiritual and physical selves are intertwined. Neglecting one weakens the other. A holistic approach integrates prayer, scripture study, and spiritual disciplines with healthy self-care, community support, and responsible stewardship of our physical well-being.

3. Importance of Inner Transformation: True victory in spiritual warfare doesn't just involve repelling external attacks, but also transforming our inner landscape. A holistic

approach emphasizes cultivating virtues like love, joy, and peace, replacing negativity with Christ-like character.

4. Recognizing Root Causes: Often, external struggles stem from internal battles. Unhealed wounds, unresolved anxieties, or distorted beliefs can leave us vulnerable. A holistic approach delves into the root causes of spiritual struggles, seeking healing and wholeness through prayer, counselling, and spiritual practices.

5. Importance of Community and Relationships: We were not meant to fight alone. A holistic approach recognizes the power of community and supportive relationships in providing encouragement, accountability, and practical support in spiritual warfare.

Holistic Strategies for Spiritual Warfare:

- Integrate prayer, scripture study, and spiritual disciplines into daily life.
- Practice healthy self-care habits like healthy eating, exercise, and sufficient sleep.
- Seek support and accountability from trusted friends, mentors, or a faith community.
- Identify and address any underlying emotional or psychological struggles.
- Cultivate virtues like love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
- Engage in acts of service and compassion, spreading God's love and light in the world.

Remember, a holistic approach to **spiritual warfare is a journey, not a destination**. It takes commitment, perseverance, and reliance on God's grace. However, the rewards are immense - a deeper connection with God, inner peace, and the strength to face any challenge with faith and courage.

The need for God's protection in spiritual warfare is undeniable.

Here's why:

Our Limitations: As humans, we are inherently limited in.

- our own strength,
- wisdom,
- and resources.

We are susceptible to

- manipulation,
- deception,
- and falling prey to the forces of darkness.

God, on the other hand, is all-powerful, all-knowing, and ever-present. His protection offers a shield against any threat we could ever face on our own.

The Enemy's Cunning and Power: The Bible and many religious traditions depict the forces of evil as cunning and powerful entities, capable of exploiting our weaknesses and

vulnerabilities. Without God's protection, we are exposed to their attacks and manipulations. God's power and wisdom, however, surpass those of any evil force, offering us ultimate protection and guidance.

Spiritual Attacks can be Internal and External: Spiritual warfare isn't just about external battles; it's also about the internal struggles we face.

- doubt,
- fear,
- temptation,
- negative thoughts.

God's protection extends beyond the physical realm, offering.

- peace,
- reassurance,
- guidance

in navigating these internal battles.

Hope and Strength in Vulnerability: Recognizing our need for God's protection doesn't signify weakness; it fosters humility and dependence on a higher power. This dependence opens the door to strength and courage, allowing us to face challenges with faith and confidence knowing we are not alone. Remember Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of God. opening ourselves up and recognising our need for god brings him to us when we have the most need.

the concept of "worthiness" when it comes to the Armor of God is important to clarify. In Christianity, salvation and the Armor of God are not earned through merit or personal worthiness, but rather offered freely through God's grace and acceptance in Jesus Christ. However, there are ways to prepare our hearts and receive the full benefit of the Armor's protection and power.

Recognize Your Need: The first step is acknowledging our vulnerability and limitations in the face of spiritual warfare. We are not immune to temptation, doubt, or negativity. Recognizing our need for God's protection and strength opens us to receiving the Armor.

Surrender and Dependence: The Armor of God isn't something we earn or wear on our own; it's a gift of grace received through surrender and dependence on God. Trusting in His power and guidance is key to effectively utilizing the Armor's potential.

Active Faith and Practice: Receiving the Armor is not passive; it involves actively embracing spiritual disciplines like prayer, scripture study, worship, and living a life aligned with God's principles. These practices strengthen our connection with God and make us more receptive to His protection.

Humility and Openness: Humility allows us to recognize our weaknesses and accept God's help. It also opens us to learning and growing in our understanding of the Armor and how to wield it effectively.

Continuous Pursuit: Receiving and utilizing the Armor of God is not a one-time event; it's a continuous journey of growth and deepening faith. As we learn, grow, and face new challenges, we continue to rely on God's grace and actively engage in practices that strengthen our spiritual armor.

Access to Spiritual Weapons: Through

- prayer,
- scripture study,
- and practicing spiritual disciplines,

we tap into God's power and receive the spiritual weapons necessary to fight in this unseen war.

God's protection doesn't make us passive; it empowers us to actively engage in the fight against evil.

Ways to Seek God's Protection in Spiritual Warfare:

- Develop a strong and consistent prayer life.
- Immerse yourself in Scripture and meditate on its teachings.
- Practice spiritual disciplines like fasting, silence, and solitude.
- Build a supportive network of believers for encouragement and accountability.
- Surrender your fears and anxieties to God and trust in His guidance.
- Engage in acts of service and compassion, reflecting God's love in the world.

Remember, God's protection is not a guarantee against hardship or challenges. However, it provides the foundation for resilience, hope, and victory in spiritual warfare. By actively seeking His protection and utilizing the spiritual weapons He offers, we can navigate the complexities of this unseen battle with faith and courage.