



Week 5: Sunday, July 5, 2020

Key Text: Ephesians 6:10- 20

How can we be strong in the Lord in a world of deception, condemnation, and false gospels? We do this by daily putting on the armor of God.

Setting the Scene: Ephesians 6:10-13

"Be strong in the Lord" refers to strength derived from God, not strength we humans have to somehow obtain. The words "be strong" describe the continual empowering of the Christian community. God's strength and his mighty power are part of the kingdom blessings available to God's people.¹

- The *panoplia*, or full armor, means complete equipment, head-to-toe protection, both defensively and offensively. This gear was for hand-to-hand combat, not for appearances²
- Paul wrote this letter chained to another guard.
- Standing firm is a military term that means resist the enemy, no surrender. Those who remain standing in the battle are the victors. Be ready at all times.

In the New Testament, it is not believers who tremble at the power of Satan, but demons who tremble at the power of God. Stephen Travis³

"Satan deals with confusion and lies. Put the truth in front of him, and he is gone." Paul Mattock

The Belt of Truth Guards against Deception. (Ephesians 6:14)

⁴³ Why can't you understand what I am saying? It's because you can't even hear me! ⁴⁴ For you are the children of your father, the devil, and you love to do the evil things he does. He was a murderer from the beginning. He has always hated the truth because there is no truth in him. When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar and the father of lies. John 8:43-44

- All the armor is tied to the belt. It is what holds the whole armor together.
- Wintertime, "Gird up your loins."
- The word truth means honesty, sincerity, and truthfulness. In this text, it is subjective and practical in the application of being open and honest in all things to God and his followers.
- His truth: He accepts us, redeemed through Him, and adopted in His family.
- Train our minds to God, others, and ourselves through the clear lens of what He says is true.
- It is a direct defense against the devil's number one strategy, which is deception. He deceives us by questioning God's goodness and then by getting us to question the accuracy of the truth of God's command. (Genesis 3) Did God really say? Will not die. (Deceit) Shame which causes us to hide from God. (Hide)
- Has your belt slipped in which you are blaming others, playing games, and hiding from God?
- Cast your burdens before God. Be completely honest.

Search me. O God, and know my heart; **test me** and know my anxious thoughts.²⁴ **Point out anything** in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life. Psalm 139:23-24

The Body Armor of Righteousness Guards Against Condemnation. (Ephesians 6:14)

The demons say one thing to get us into sin, and another to overwhelm us in despair. – John Climacus

- If you serve out of obligation and fear, you are **not** putting on the belt of truth. We do not have to be driven by guilt. This piece of armor is putting into practice what He has told us.
- The breastplate was often called the heart protector in the Roman army. It covered from the neck to midsection.

¹ Barton, B. B., & Comfort, P. W. (1996). *Ephesians* (pp. 127–128). Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

² Barton, B. B., & Comfort, P. W. (1996). *Ephesians* (p. 128). Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

³ Barton, B. B., & Comfort, P. W. (1996). *Ephesians* (p. 130). Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

- Righteousness means uprightness, right living, and integrity in character. It is rooted in the object of our righteousness.

¹⁰Then I heard a loud voice shouting across the heavens, "It has come at last—salvation and power and the Kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ.[a]For the accuser of our brothers and sisters has been thrown down to earth—the **one who accuses them before our God day and night**. Revelation 12:10

- The Holy Spirit will convict
- The enemy will condemn

⁹But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness. 1 John 1:9

"In Christ, we are righteous, and in practice, we are being conformed to His image." - Chip Ingram

- There is a clear danger to our faith when we turn from the truth and choose self-dependency over God-dependency.
- Responding to His truth will lead to righteous living.

¹⁷Remember, it is a sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it. James 4:17

The Shoes of Peace Give a Foundation of Peace. (Ephesians 6:15)

- Roman sandals were tightly strapped to the entire lower leg and had nails protruding from them. They planted the Roman soldier for battle.
- "Fully Prepared" – Firmly planted contains the idea of a readiness to share the gospel, which brings peace with people and God. Find peace in the certainty of God.

⁷How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of the messenger who brings good news, the good news of peace and salvation, the news that the God of Israel[a] reigns! Isaiah 52:7

- Sharing your faith is the ultimate faith builder.
- Satan will cast doubt on every area of your life. Stand planted in the truth of Christ, guard your heart, and may that bring you peace of mind.

³But I fear that somehow your pure and undivided devotion to Christ will be corrupted, just as Eve was deceived by the cunning ways of the serpent. ⁴You happily put up with whatever anyone tells you, even if they preach a different Jesus than the one we preach, or a different kind of Spirit than the one you received, or a different kind of gospel than the one you believed. 2 Corinthians 11:3-4

- The gospel is rooted in truth and fact, and it is not based on our feelings.
- We are called to understand the gospel clearly and should look for ways to share it in word and deed on all occasions.

One Last Thought: Even though Satan is defeated by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we will be in a war until we face death or his second coming. In the mean time stand firm. Resist the devil and call on the name of Jesus, and he will flee from you.