

Put On Your Armor!

Praise the Lord Saints of the most high God! Praise the Lord everybody! Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is always a wonderful feeling to be in the house of the Lord. It is always a blessing to be with the children of the Lord. It is always a thrill to be in the presence of the Lord, to feel His presence, His anointing, His peace that passes all understanding.

There is nothing that I enjoy more than dwelling in the presence of the Lord. In taking the opportunity to join in fellowship with the saints, to partake in the offering of joint praise and worship to our Lord. That is exactly what we will be doing in heaven saints! That is exactly what we will be doing for eternity. If you don't like praising God down here, you aren't going to like heaven!

So let us take a few moments to pray before we get started on this message. Let us take a few moments to ask the Lord to anoint me as I attempt to bring forth His word. Let us take a few moments to ask the Lord to anoint our ears to hear the word and help us to apply it to our lives. **Let us pray!**

Pray for as long as the Lord directs:

Could we all please stand for the reading of God's Word.

Ephesians 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. **11** Put on the whole armour 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 armour 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; **19** And for me, that utterance may be given unto

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me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,

You may be seated

I will attempt at this time to explain this passage to the best of my limited human abilities. I am not God, nor do I desire to be God. That was what Satan did, he desired to be God, and that is what got him kicked out of heaven. I do not intend to make that same mistake. I told the Lord long ago that I wasn't interested in the job, not that He was offering mind you!

I believe that all of you are the same way, you've seen how much work it is just to take care of your own business and thus you've decided that ruling the world is just too much work. You've wisely decided that living for God with all of your heart, soul, mind, and strength is your life's calling. By so doing, you've retained your reservation in heaven and become the enemy of the devil.

Because we were wise enough to make the correct decision and he was not, the devil now hates those of us who live for God. He's declared war upon the saints of God and has committed acts of war upon our persons. Therefore it behooves us to prepare for battle, and thus the reason for this message.

Pause

Now, when a people go to war, they must have confidence in their leadership, both political and military. They must believe that the war is just, and that their leadership has the ability to pull them through. They must believe their military has the will and the firepower to defeat the enemy; otherwise the pressure is on to sue for peace.

So where does our confidence lie in this war with the devil? It lies in our leader. Who is our leader? Does our leader have the power to overcome the enemy on all fronts! I say emphatically, YES!!! **It says in:**

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Ephesians 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

I think this answers our question: the Lord God almighty is our leader! He's **omnipotent**, meaning all powerful. He's **omnipresent**, meaning everywhere at the same time. He's **omniscient**, meaning all knowing! No other leader in the history of the world has ever been as qualified to lead a people in war as the Lord our God!

Let's break this down just a little bit more. If you're all powerful, that means you are abundantly more powerful than any enemy you could ever face. No matter how many troops the enemy brings to the battle, no matter how many planes he brings, no matter how many tanks he brings, no matter how many missiles he brings to the fight, he still has no chance whatsoever to win!

If you're everywhere at the same time, you have the enemy in your sights at all times. You have him surrounded at all times. You're in front of him, beside him and behind him at all times. You can attack him from the front and sides, or cut off his supplies from the rear at any time you choose. He doesn't have a chance!

If you're all knowing, you know everything about your enemy. He can't pull any tricks on you, he can't sneak up on you, he can't spring a trap on you, he can't hide weapons or troops from you, he can't even hide his plans of attack from you. The enemy's tail is hanging out from behind a rock with a shotgun pointed at it!

But just because you have the enemy surrounded, that doesn't mean that you have to be foolish in how you attack his strongholds. **This brings us to our next verse:**

Ephesians 6:11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

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We have to put on the whole armor of God! Not just a part of it, but all of it. There was a book I read once called “Blackhawk Down”. One young soldier was trying to save the weight he had to carry on a mission so he removed the armor plate from the back of his vest. His thought was that he would never be running away from a fight so he didn’t have to worry about being shot in the back. Needless to say, he was shot in the back during the battle and he died. He didn't fully put on his armor and thus he paid the ultimate price.

Now let's look at our next verse:

Ephesians 6:12 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.

When you go to war with someone, you have to know your enemy. You have to know who you're fighting against. Are you fighting cavemen or are you fighting sophisticated soldier of a highly advanced military? It makes a difference in how you fight a war depending upon who you're fighting.

When fighting cavemen, you should be able to overpower them easily, but extreme care must be taken when fighting an advanced and highly trained enemy. If you don't respect your enemy, you can underestimate your enemy and fall into a trap that may condemn you to defeat, even to a loss of the entire war.

We're fighting against an enemy that is powerful, advanced, very knowledgeable, and highly motivated toward the goal of our total destruction. You see, the devil hates God with all that's with all that dwells inside him. The devil hates us because we're the children of the King. Since he can't kill the King, the next best thing is to kill the children of the King. So with all his heart he wants to kill us.

The devil is a skilled, experienced and committed enemy and we could never defeat him by ourselves, he's had way too much practice at deception for that. We have to rely upon the Lord God Almighty in order to win this

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battle. We have to put on His armor, not the physical armor of mankind. **It says in:**

Ephesians 6:13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

There's been some type of armor to protect soldiers for almost as long as there's been warfare. It started off with leather gloves and gauntlets to minimize cuts from edged weapons. Then it went to shields to deflect swords, knives, or spears. Then there was chain mail so that the effect of any weapon getting past the shield might be minimized or nullified altogether. Finally, there was a suit of armor that encompassed the entire body in a layer of metal.

With the invention of each type of armor, there has been the soon invention of a means of defeating that armor. Even today's modern body armor that our soldiers wear into battle can be defeated by the right weapon. But the armor of the Lord is invincible; we just have to be sure to put all of it on every day! We can never be lazy about it, or like the aforementioned young soldier, we might get shot in the back by the enemy's arrows!

So just what does the armor of the Lord consist of? Well let's just check the rest of this passage and find out. **Let's start with:**

Ephesians 6:14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

Your loins are the waist area of your body. Everything in that area must be covered and secure. A blow to this area can deny you the ability to defend yourself further. The devil's greatest weapon is that of deceit. When you are encompassed with truth, a lie can never deceive you. You will never believe the devil's lies; you'll only follow the word of God.

The breastplate of righteousness covers your chest area. It protects your heart and other vital organs. The heart is one of the main targets of the devil. He tries to turn your heart away from serving and loving God and point it toward anything else but God! That's why it's so important that we keep God's

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word hid in our heart, so that our heart is protected from the attacks of the devil. **Now let's look at:**

Ephesians 6:15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

In a self defense class, one of the first places you're taught to attack is the feet. If a person can't stand or move easily due to problems with their feet, they are much easier to defeat in battle. You actually start with the shins and run the hard edge of the side of your shoe down the shin and stomp on the arch of the foot.

I don't know if any of you have seriously scraped your shin, but trust me, it really hurts! I don't know if anyone has ever stomped on the arch of your foot but it can break the bones of your foot. Even if you miss and stomp on their toes it's going to hurt your attacker.

The devil tries to cut your feet out from under you spiritually. If you're not rooted and grounded in accurate biblical doctrine, the devil will try to distort the word of God to the point you don't know what you believe, much less why you believe it! Pretty soon you won't believe anything except his lies...

When you're rooted and grounded in the word of God, you're unmovable in your faith! Remember I said "rooted", when a tree has deep roots in the ground, it is not easily blown over. Only when those roots have died can it be blown over. That's why it's so important to feed your spirit the word of God, so that your roots stay strong and deep!

The Giant Redwood trees are the largest trees in the world by volume, but they have shallow roots. The greatest danger to these trees is not fire, but toppling. If the root system gets damaged, they can get blown over by a strong wind. As long as their roots are strong; even though shallow, they can live for thousands of years.

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We need to develop strong roots of faith through the reading and hearing of the gospel of Jesus Christ so that we are able to stand against the attacks of the enemy of our souls. **It says in:**

Romans 10:17 So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

How are we to have our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel if we are hearing the gospel, or reading the gospel? If we aren't reading the word, and if we aren't hearing the word taught, or preached then we are leaving ourselves vulnerable to attack. We haven't put on the whole armor of God! **Now let's look at:**

Ephesians 6:16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

It's not always enough to wear armor that covers the body. Some weaponry can pierce through that armor, and thus we need to have an auxiliary layer of armor for added protection. That auxiliary layer is just what a shield provides. It slows down anything that may be approaching at a high enough velocity to pierce our body armor and slow it down enough so that if it passes through the shield, it won't have enough velocity left to penetrate our body armor.

Those fiery darts that the devil will throw at us are the spiritual equivalent to a javelin. It's not as long or as heavy as a spear and thus it can be thrown harder and so achieves a higher velocity. Without the shield to block or deflect the javelin, it might pierce our soul and cause irreparable damage.

We've already talked about what it takes to develop faith. It takes hearing the word of God. But faith also comes through achieving victory in battle. The more we overcome the devil the more faith we develop to fight him with. Now that doesn't mean that we seek to do battle with the devil; because that would be foolish. Also, we should never get too lifted up when we have a victory over the devil, because the bible tells us that pride cometh before destruction.

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But we should always seek to give God the glory for any victory in which we are a participant. We do that because it's God who has given us the victory. We didn't defeat the devil, God defeated the devil, and all we did was sit back and pray for that victory. **Now let's look at our next piece of armor:**

Ephesians 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

As the old saying goes, cut off the head and the rest of the body dies too. The devil is more than willing to go for the kill at any time. He'll try to convince you that you aren't saved, that Jesus could never love you. He'll try to destroy your faith with petty little attacks, things that are annoyances more than hindrances. But he'll whisper in your ear that they're happening because God doesn't love you anymore and you just aren't good enough to be saved!

That's why it's so important that we know and understand what the bible says about salvation. What do the scriptures say that we have to do in order to be saved? Are we saved by our own works, or by faith in God? Can God; and does God forgive us of our sins when we ask Him? Knowing the answers to these questions is what the helmet of salvation is all about!

The sword of the spirit is the word of God; we maintain the effectiveness of our helmet of salvation through the study and usage of the word of God. If you've ever read the 4th chapter of Matthew which tells us the story of Jesus being tempted by the devil in the wilderness, then you know how he defeated the devil. He defeated the devil by quoting the word of God! "Thus sayeth the Lord", "It is written".

When we study the word of God it not only allows us to defeat the devil when he attacks us, but it also allows us to go on the offensive. **It says in:**

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: **4** (For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;) **5** Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

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Just in case you didn't know this, you don't pull down a stronghold if you are inside it. You pull it down if the enemy is inside it! We have power through the word of God, which is working in our lives; to pull down the strongholds of the devil! Not only shall no weapon formed against us be able to prosper, but the very strongholds of the enemy are in grave danger if we are studying the word of God each and every day!

Don't you like the thought of making the devil cringe? Every time you read the word of God, every time you pray and seek God's face you make the devil cringe. Every time you praise and worship the Lord freely and without reservation, you make the devil cringe! Every time you witness for the Lord, every time you tell someone your testimony, you make the devil cringe! I just love making the devil cringe instead of the other way around! Praise God!!!

But wait! There's more to armor than just the part of the armor. **Let's look at:**

Ephesians 6:18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

We have to remember to watch the back of our fellow soldiers! We can't let the enemy creep up behind our brother or sister. If we see our brother or sister leaning the wrong way, when we see the enemy creeping up behind them, we have to tell them. You don't have to tell me, but you need to tell them if they will receive it. **It says in:**

Philippians 2:12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

We have to watch out for ourselves as well, which is why we're told to pray with all prayer and supplication in the spirit. But it doesn't stop there; we need to pray for all the saints as well. We need to learn to be prayer warriors. That's why this church is named "Tabernacle of Prayer", because we are to be a praying people, a praying church! **We're commanded in:**

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1 Thessalonians 5:17 Pray without ceasing.

We can't rest on our laurels; we need to always be ready for battle. When Jesus needed to cast out a demon, He didn't say come back in three days after I've fasted and prayed. Jesus just cast out that demon or demons right then and there!!!

A good soldier is always ready for war, he never lets down his guard, he stays in shape, and he properly maintains his weapons. As Christians we need to do the same. I'm not talking about being able to run 30 miles without stopping, or being good with a gun. I'm talking about our spiritual weapons, our prayer life, our bible reading; our being faithful to church and to pay our tithes. We need to be on top of our game spiritually and be continually vigilant, always ready to do battle with the enemy of our souls!

Now we come to the final part of our armor. Regardless of the armor we're wearing, it does no good if we have poor leadership. That's where our last verse in Ephesians comes in. **It says in:**

Ephesians 6:19 And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,

Remember this verse is a continuation of **Verse 18**. We need to continually pray for those in our church that are in leadership positions. Do you recall my talking earlier about cutting off the head and the body will die? The devil will save his most evil attacks for those in leadership. He'll try to destroy the leadership in a church in hopes that it will destroy the whole church, and those within it.

Please, please, please always remember to keep your pastor in your daily prayers, because you are always in mine! If we could all rise at this time, Sister Jo, would you please close this service in prayer, asking God to help us apply what we've learned today, to our hearts.