

LESSON AIM: The Bible teaches that we are in a spiritual war. It also says that those who fight on the side of Jesus Christ are victorious and will prevail!

KEY SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 6:10-18

REVIEW QUESTIONS: (*“Ok, who remembers from last week’s lesson...”*)

- 1) What was the name of man that used to persecute Christians?
- 2) What happened that made him change?
- 3) Can someone explain last week’s Bible verse in their own words?

INTRODUCTION:

Do you know what armor is? (Print the word for the class to see. Give an opportunity for response and build on student’s answers.) Armor is a special kind of suit worn for protection. Today deep-sea divers wear a kind of “armor”. Spacesuits can be considered armor. Even football players wear a type of armor.

During the time the New Testament was written, Roman soldiers wore armor to protect themselves in battle. In Ephesians 6, the pieces of a Roman soldier’s armor are used as an object lesson to help you and me understand the protection God offers us in our battle against Satan.

LESSON:

Satan is not as powerful as God, but he is a strong enemy. He is more powerful than you and I. The only way we can defeat him is to fight God’s way. We are soldiers in God’s army—an army that isn’t fighting against other soldiers—that’s what “flesh and blood” means (v. 12). Rather, we fight against Satan and his armies—“spiritual *hosts* [armies] of wickedness in the heavenly *places*” (v. 12).

How can we ever protect ourselves against Satan and his armies? How can we win the battle? God, our Commander-in-Chief, tells us exactly what to do, and that is where the armor of God comes in. God has provided this “suit of armor”—wonderful protection to defend us (v. 13) and an offensive weapon which, if used correctly, will defeat Satan in every battle.

There’s a command in verse 13. Can you find it?

“Take up the whole armor of God.” God has provided the armor we need, but it’s up to us to take it up. “To take it up” means to put it on—and use it. Learn to put your armor on each day. Your quiet time with God is a good time to do it.

God makes us a promise: He says that if we will take up His armor—the special protection He’s provided for us—we will “be able to withstand in the evil day.” When Satan attacks us with temptations, we will not give in and sin. We will be able to stand and not fall before the enemy.

A. THE BELT OF TRUTH

“Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth” (Ephesians 6:14a)

First, we are to put on the belt of truth by learning as much as we can of the Bible’s truths. When Satan tempts you to doubt God’s goodness, the belt of truth will help protect you because you can remember what you have learned about God and His promises. Another way you can put on the belt of truth is to be sure that you are always truthful in everything you do. The Lord Jesus called Satan the “father of lies” (John 8:44). Satan is happy when you tell even a small lie. Jesus said, “I am the... truth” (John 14:6). Jesus is your protection against

Satan's temptations to lie. As Him to help you tell the truth (Psalm 19:14; 119:29). When you have a clear conscience because you've put on the belt of truth, you can face the enemy without fear and be confident of victory!

THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

"Stand... having put on the breastplate of righteousness" (6:14).

In human armor a breastplate covered the soldier's body from his neck to his waist—in front and back. It was made of metal plates or chains so that no sword or arrow could go through it. What is the most important part of your body that the breastplate covers? Your heart! As Christians, you and I need protection for our hearts. And that protection comes from our righteousness. From the moment you are saved, you are accepted by God the Father; for when He looks at you, He sees the righteousness of his Son (Ephesians 1:6).

That doesn't mean you don't ever sin again. You and I will fight sin as long as we live on this earth. The battle against sin is one of the hardest for Christians to win, and in this fight against sin, God wants us to wear the breastplate of righteousness by living our lives as "rightly" as we can. Choosing to tell the truth instead of lying. Choosing to be kind instead of hateful. Choosing to obey instead of disobeying. God gives us power to choose right and do it. The kind of life you live is important. It will either make it easier for Satan to attack you or harder for him to defeat you. Ask God to help you choose right each day.

THE SHOES OF THE GOSPEL

"And having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace" (6:15).

God says our feet should be covered with the gospel of peace. The Bible says that "He [Jesus] is our peace" (Ephesians 2:14). We strap on the shoes of peace when we gain peace with God by accepting His gift of salvation (Romans 5:1) and begin to live in a way that is pleasing to Him. First, we can have peace with ourselves by seeing ourselves as God sees us—loved by Him (Jeremiah 31:3), forgiven (Ephesians 4:32), and accepted forever as a member of His family (John 1:12). Then we can have peace with others—being kind to them, forgiving them, doing our best to build them up and not tear them down. And we show that we are walking through life with the shoes of peace when we share God's love with those who do not know the Lord Jesus (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 5:20)

THE SHIELD OF FAITH

"Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one" (6:16).

The Roman soldier's armor also included a large shield made of wood. It was about 2 ½ feet across and 4 feet long, so it offered double protection for almost every part of the soldier's body. To get to him, the enemy's arrows had to get past the shield first and then pierce through the armor that was worn on the soldier's body. The sides of the shield were made to hook together with the shields of other soldiers so that an army could use them to form a wall of protection. Knowing the soldiers' shields were made of wood, the enemy often set their arrows on fire before they shot them. Roman soldier's covered their wooden shields with cloth and tough leather, then soaked them in water so that when a flaming arrow landed on the wet shield, the fire would immediately go out.

Satan shoots "flaming arrows" or as the Bible calls them, "fiery darts", at us, too. Some of the darts Satan shoots are lies, hateful thoughts about people, or the desire to sin. Satan wants us to doubt God. He wants us to doubt God's promises, His faithfulness, His goodness, and His power. Hold your shield of faith high by trusting the truths you know about God. Even when things seem to be going wrong, believe that God is your always present, all-powerful, loving Father, working in your life for your good—even when your feelings tell you something different. Faith is acting on what you believe even when you have doubts.

But, no matter how much armor you have for your body, it will do you no good unless you protect your head....

THE HELMET OF SALVATION

“And take the helmet of salvation” (17a)

Whom do you know who wears a helmet? (Football players, skateboarders, bicycle and motorcycle riders, soldiers...) They all wear helmets for one reason—to protect their heads. Satan wants to attack the mind of the Christian. We need to let God control our minds so Satan can't lead us astray. That means we have to be careful about what enters our mind. We have to be careful about what we think about, what we read, what we watch on TV, or what we listen to in music.

A soldier's helmet protected his head and gave him confidence that he was safe from the enemy's attack. You put on the helmet of salvation when you believe the Lord's promises of salvation—past, present, and future—and confidently expect Him to deliver you (1 Thessalonians 5:8). Remember, the Lord Jesus is more powerful than Satan (1 John 4:4). Satan cannot possibly win when you put on the helmet of salvation and guard your thoughts.

Finally, we are completely covered from head to foot! However, we now need something with which to fight back when Satan attacks...

THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

“Take... the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (17b).

With our armor on, we're ready to pick up our swords and go into battle. Our sword isn't made out of sharp steel because we're not fighting against flesh and blood. We're fighting a spiritual battle—one that can only be won in God's power.

Our sword is the word of God. This sword is different from metal swords. The more you use a steel sword, the duller it gets. But the more you use God's Word on the battle of life, the sharper and more effective it becomes. That means we should be learning verses from God's Word so the Holy Spirit can bring them back to our memory when we are tempted to do wrong. Each verse that you put into practice is a powerful weapon that God can use to attack Satan and put him on the run.

The last thing that we need is...

PRAYER AND WATCHFULNESS

“Praying always... being watchful to this end with all perseverance” (6:18).

A good soldier is always in touch with his commander. He doesn't act on his own. As good soldiers in God's army, you and I need to be in constant communication with the Lord. We need to ask for His direction and follow His orders. Prayer is something that should come naturally to us.

We are soldiers in God's army. God has given us everything we need to be victorious. But we must take up the whole armor, stay in touch with our commander, and be ever alert for the enemy's attacks!

MEMORY VERSE:

“Put on the full armor of God so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

Ephesians 6:11