

# Spiritual Warfare

*He (Jesus) disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him. Col 2:15*

*For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son Col 1:13*

*Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 1Pet 5:8*

*Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Jas 4:7*

*...if I have forgiven anything, I did so for your sake in the presence of Christ, so that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes. 2Cor 2:11*

*with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will. 2 Tim 2:25--26*

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist on the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having belted your waist with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having strapped on your feet the preparation of the gospel of peace; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Ephesians 6:10-17*

## **Belt of truth**

The belt of truth is listed first in the armor of God because the truth is vital to our Christian walk. By knowing the truth, we can abstain from listening to the lies of Satan and

the lies of the world. Satan is said to be the “father of lies” and that “there is no truth in him” (John 8:44). Since Satan is also the “god” of this age (2 Corinthians 4:4), we can know with certainty that he is constantly promoting his lies through the teachings of the world. Satan and his demons are constantly trying to make us fall, feel bad about ourselves, and hinder our walk with Christ. One of the best ways they can do this is by tricking and deceiving us with lies.

This is why it is vital for us to put on the belt of truth. Putting on the belt of truth means that we are believing the truth, learning about the truth, and abiding in the truth. Jesus is ultimately the Truth (John 14:6); therefore, we need to actively walk with Him in our daily lives.

### **Breastplate of righteousness**

The breastplate of righteousness is the righteousness given to us by Jesus by His death on the cross (2 Corinthians 5:21). At the moment of salvation, every believer receives the breastplate of righteousness to keep forever. This is not a physical breastplate that you can physically hold with your hands and see with your eyes. Rather, it is a spiritual breastplate of righteousness that we wear each day. Due to our own fallen nature, we are not righteous on our own. It is only by Jesus’ righteousness that we can be declared righteous.

The breastplate of righteousness does not automatically clothe us each day. We have to make the intentional decision to put it on. Just like a soldier has to put on a breastplate to protect him in battle, we as Christians have to put on the breastplate of righteousness each day in order to protect us from Satan’s lies and attacks. If we do not actively put on the breastplate of righteousness, we will be exposed to the attacks of the enemy. When we choose to wear the breastplate of righteousness, we can take our stand against the devil and his schemes (Ephesians 6:10-11).

### **Put on your feet the preparation of the gospel of peace**

Roman soldiers typically wore sandals which allowed them to move quickly during battle, and provided protection to their feet. Here Paul imagines the shoes as "the readiness given by the gospel of peace." Shoes made a soldier "ready" to run into battle, sharing it wherever they go (Matthew 28:18–20). Believers are given the gospel of peace in order to be ready for battle and to help others facing spiritual attack.

## **Shield of faith**

The shield does a lot more than take blows from arrows. The typical Roman shield could push back against the enemy and, when soldiers clumped together, could form a protective barrier.

Faith can not only protect us from the blows of the devil. It can help us push back against him. For instance, when Satan tempts Jesus, Jesus uses his knowledge of Scripture as an act of faith and pushes against Satan's taunts (Matthew 4:1-11).

Second, we can extinguish arrows. Not only can faith handle the impact of them, but it can extinguish false truths. People may say, "God is not really good." or "God is not all-powerful." But with our shield of faith, we can extinguish right away any lies we encounter.

Third, when we band with other Christians, it strengthens our faith. When we fellowship with believers and help each other through our doubts, we form a stronger barrier against the devil.

## **Helmet of salvation**

A helmet protects a soldier against damaging and deadly blows to the head. Spiritually speaking, the helmet of salvation provides hope and protects the mind against anything that would disorient or destroy the Christian, such as discouragement or deceit.

## **Sword of the spirit which is the word of God**

Logos vs Rhema

Logos refers to the total utterance of God, the complete revelation of what God has said. Rhema means a specific saying of God, a passage or a verse or revelation that has special application to an immediate situation. It is the Word of God applied to experience. Rhema is the word used here. The sword of the Spirit is the saying of God applied to a specific situation.

We are to use the Word of God to discern those thoughts and attitudes that are contrary to God's way and use that sword to bring those attitudes and thoughts into captivity.

## **The fruit of the Spirit and spiritual warfare.**

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Gal 5:22-23*

The key to winning in spiritual warfare is learning to live and move in the opposite spirit of the enemy. Let's look at how the fruit of the Spirit can be used to have victory over the schemes of the enemy.

### **Love:**

Jesus exhorts us to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us. The enemy would want us to lash back at our enemies. This would cause greater division and strife, which is exactly what the enemy desires. Jesus' exhortation to love requires us to move in the opposite spirit of what is coming against us. Remember, when we deserved the death penalty, God took the penalty for us. He loved us into the kingdom.

### **Joy:**

When the enemy tries to discourage us by pointing out how things are not going as they should be, we need to remember that the joy of the Lord is our strength. Joy is not determined by our circumstances but by our relationship with our heavenly father.

*I will rejoice and be glad in Your faithfulness, Because You have seen my misery; You have known the troubles of my soul, Ps 31:7*

### **Peace:**

The enemy is always trying to steal your peace. *The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. Jn 10:10* As we find peace in the midst of turmoil the enemy is pushed back. Peace is a weapon against the enemy.

*Peace I leave you, My peace I give you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled, nor fearful. Jn 14:27*

### **Patience**

Another tactic of the enemy is to sow division among us by encouraging us to be impatient with one another. We are all in different places of maturity in the Lord so we need to be patient with others as God works out His plan in each of us.

*Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with **patience**, bearing with one another in love Eph 4:1-2*

*I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living! **Wait** for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD! Psalms 27:13-14*

## **Kindness**

There are many reasons a person may act in an unkind manner, most being fueled by the enemy. Here is a short list. Being self-centered, envious of others, judgmental, insecure, jealous, lack of compassion, angry, discontent, afraid of intimacy, feel inferior, like attention, manipulative.

*But when the **kindness** of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we did in righteousness, but in accordance with His mercy Titus 3:4-5*

*Or do you think lightly of the riches of His **kindness** and restraint and patience, not knowing that the **kindness** of God leads you to repentance? Rom 2:4*

## **Goodness**

Looking at some of the antonyms of goodness sheds light on how the opposite of goodness reflects the nature of the enemy. Here is a short list: evil, wickedness, sinfulness, dishonesty, cruelty, harshness, injustice, viciousness, crookedness, meanness, ruthlessness, dishonor, abusive, callous, crudeness.

*The sorrows of the wicked are many, But the one who trusts in the Lord, **goodness** will surround him. PS 32:10*

*The Lord will send His **goodness** in the daytime; And His song will be with me in the night PS 42:8*

## Faithfulness

A major scheme of the enemy is to have the people of God break covenants. He is after the family unit, to destroy what God has created as the living stones of His house. Faithfulness is the key to strong binding relationships.

*Trust in the Lord and do good; Live in the land and cultivate **faithfulness**. PS 37:3*

*But as for me, I am like a green olive tree in the house of God; I trust in the **faithfulness** of God forever and ever. PS 52:8*

*Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, For His **faithfulness** is everlasting. PS 136:1*

## Gentleness

When we are filled with the Spirit's fruit of gentleness, we will correct others with easiness instead of arguing in resentment and anger, knowing that their salvation is far more important than our pride (2 Timothy 2:24-25). We will forgive readily, because any offense toward us is nothing compared to our offenses against God—offenses He's already forgiven (Matthew 18:23-35)

*You have also given me the shield of Your salvation, And Your right hand upholds me; And Your **gentleness** makes me great. PS 18:35*

*Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the **gentleness** of wisdom. Ja 3:13*

*but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, but with **gentleness** and respect; 1Pet 3:15*

## Self-control

When we lose self-control, we fall headlong into the enemy's trap. Our flesh takes control and this opens the door to many other attacks of the enemy.

*Like a city that is broken into and without walls So is a person who has no **self-control** over his spirit. Prov 25:28*

As we walk in the fruit of the Holy Spirit the enemy is discouraged and ultimately defeated in our lives.