

UNDERSTANDING THE ARMOR OF GOD

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Armor is military protection for soldiers. It is a protective clothing of metal or leather worn in battle by soldiers in former times. Anything that gives protection or acts as a safeguard is an armor. The Christian is a soldier in the army of the Lord, and he battles daily with the forces of darkness who seek to defeat him and enslave him again in the evil the Lord has delivered him from. The Christian is a soldier in the army of the Lord working tirelessly to expand and grow the Church of Christ, and as a result, he needs to be protected.

Many Christians think that the armor of God can be invoked in prayer in the name of Jesus and it will supernaturally come upon the believer to protect him for that moment. Many times they have been disappointed seeing that the enemy somehow succeeded in gaining the upper hand in their lives. The armor of God is a lifestyle that we live. The armor of God is the spiritual, godly attitude and character that we manifest that shields us from all evil attacks of the enemy on our lives.

Eph 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 you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. 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, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints--

NKJV

Be strong in the Lord

In his letter to the Ephesian Church, Apostle Paul in his final instruction, charged the believers to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. God does not want His people weak, He wants us strong so we can stand against the devil and win the battles of life. To be strong is to stand firm in Christ and be rooted in Him. It is to be unshaken by situations and challenges.

Ps 125:1

Those who trust in the LORD Are like Mount Zion, Which cannot be moved, but abides forever.

NKJV

Daniel in his prophecy reveals that knowledge of the person and power of God makes one strong, stable and victorious.

Dan 11:32

32 Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits.

NKJV

A deep understanding of the person of God and an intimate relationship with Christ will make the believer strong and able to firmly resist the devil and all his wiles. For this strong faith to be developed, one need to get rid of unbelief, fear, false doctrines, superstitious beliefs, traditions of men in your home town / tribe and the church, and ideologies that are contrary to the truth of God's word. Know and recognize the mighty strength and power of Jesus Christ that is at work in you, for you and through you the believer. You need to have faith in the power of the Lord to the point that you are so strong that nothing moves you.

Finally, be strong, (rooted, standing firm) always in the Lord. Always in all things and at all times, trust and depend on the strength and power of Jesus. Study more of your Bible to know God more. Read sound and good Christian books, and listen to sound teachings from the word of God so you can be strong in the Lord. By faith practice the principles you learn so that you can give God opportunity to prove His faithfulness to His words. His faithfulness will strengthen your faith and confidence in the living God and His Christ.

The whole armor of God

The "Whole armor of God" is necessary for one to be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. God does not want us to put on a few or some of the armor, but the whole armor of God. Not one should be left out. All are essential for full protection. With the whole armor of God in place, the believer is able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Wiles are schemes, strategies, attacks, tricks, deceits, and calculated offences of the enemy launched against the believer with the aim of pulling the believer down and making his life unbearable. The devil is a schemer and always deceitfully working against the believer, studying and looking for an opportune time to strike and win over the believer. You as the believer need to be observant and careful to make sure that you are not floored by the enemy. So, you must constantly be putting on the whole armor of God.

Engaged in battle with spirits

Verse 12 of Ephesian 6 reveals that we are not fighting against flesh and blood, but against spirits in four categories:

1. **Principalities** (Demonic princes that rule territories – nations, cities, towns and communities).

2. **Powers** (High ranking spirits that operate and control occult groups and kingdoms, cults and covens, idols and shrines, alters and sanctums, false religious groups and satanic societies).
3. **Rulers of the darkness of this age** (Spirits that control the mind and influence the words and actions of men. They influence, possess and oppress men.)
4. **Spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.** (Spirits that occupy and operate from the heavenly or air.)

For victory to be won over these evil forces, the believer needs to be clothed with the whole armor of God at all times. The whole armor of God is needed to help the believer to withstand the devil in the “evil day”.

Evil day is the day the devil programmed to attack you the believer after careful planning in order to pull you down. It could be in a time when you are idle like King David of Israel in the matter of adultery with Beersheba, or in a time of, or area of weakness. The devil strikes when he thinks he will win. You may be prepared or unprepared for the attack at that time. The devil does not announce his attacks before they come. They come when we are not expecting it. That is why the bible tells us to be careful even when we think we are standing.

1 Cor 10:12

12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

KJV

Be always prepared, for the enemy can attack you any moment unannounced. Be ready for him, so that when he comes, you will not be taken unawares. Having done all, you will still be standing. Make sure you are always clothed with the whole armor of God.

The whole armor of God

1. Truth as belt

Eph 6:14

14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness,

NKJV

Eph 4:25

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

KJV

God whom we serve is Truth. Jesus is Truth. In Him is no lie or deception. The Holy Spirit of God is called the Spirit of Truth. The Word of God is called the Truth. So, anyone who wants to have a close relationship with God must be truthful at all times. To be protected by God, one has to speak the truth only and keep away from lies and deception. The Devil is the father of lies. To lie is to yield to the devil. To lie is to bring

oneself under the power and authority of Satan. To lie is to leave the secure place of God and trespass into the territory of the devil. When one trespasses, Satan afflicts that person. To be safe, the believer has to speak only the truth in all circumstances and at all times. Truth is the belt that holds the armor he wears on his body together.

Liars are not safe but under the judgement of God. Speak the truth for it will set you free. It will enable God to protect you. Lies open you up for attacks and oppression, while truth secures you and makes God to be on your side.

2. Righteousness as breastplate

Eph 6:14

*14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness,
NKJV*

2 Cor 5:21-6:1

*21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.
KJV*

Righteousness is the nature of God that puts the believer in right standing with God – the believer stands before God as if he has never sinned in his life. It is the nature of God received at the new birth. This nature is to be manifested for the believer to be proven to belong to God and for him to be protected. A man cannot be walking in sin and expect to be protected by God. This is the reason why the breastplate of the believer's armor is righteousness. Breastplate covers the heart area. The heart is the centre of being. That is where the righteous nature of God dwells. It is essential that you the believer walk in righteousness daily and at all times so you can be maximally protected.

Eph 4:24

*24 and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.
NIV*

Put on the life you have received from Christ. Wear it like you wear any dress. Let the righteous nature of Christ in you dominate your thoughts, words and actions. As long as you are living in righteousness, sin will be absent and you will be safe. Sin disconnects a man from the grace of God and makes the man an enemy of God. But righteousness bonds a man to God and protects him. Practice it and the second armor is in place. Put this armor on all the time for you do not know the evil day.

3. Gospel of peace as sandal

Eph 6:15

*15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;
NKJV*

To some the gospel of peace is the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The gospel of peace according to Ephesians chapter 6 is supposed to be an armor that protects. Preaching the gospel is confronting the powers of darkness in the life of people, and this exposes us to attacks from angry demons, but the armor of God protects us when they attack us. The armor called the “gospel of peace” is living in peace with all men – practicing forgiveness and being in good terms with all.

Heb 12:14

14 Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord

NIV

Rom 14:19

19 Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.

NIV

The gospel of peace is the shoe or sandal of the Christian. It protects the feet of the believer. The feet also speak of the places we go – our walk. God wants the believer to seek and pursue peace with all men everywhere he goes. He does not want the believer to be bitter with anyone, keep malice or be unforgiving in character. If you love life and must see good days, you have no choice than to live in peace with people. Learn to forgive, and keep no record of wrongs.

1 Peter 3:10-11

10 For, "Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech. 11 He must turn from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it.

NIV

Do not wait for the offender to come and ask you for forgiveness. The Bible teaches that we should pursue it, though the person is running from us. Bear insults, overlook offences and make sure you are at peace with all. This will bring you protection in God against all the wiles of the devil.

Unforgiveness grieves the Holy Spirit. It makes Him uncomfortable in the life of the believer. A forgiving heart is a good and comfortable place for the Holy Spirit to dwell in. So for the Holy Spirit to be comfortable in your life, guide and protect you, you have to be a peace maker, and keeper.

Eph 4:30-32

30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. 32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

NIV

If you don't forgive those who hurt you, your heavenly Father will not forgive you your own sin. We qualify for forgiveness when we forgive those who sin against us. Jesus Christ who came to bear witness to the truth taught this. So, take it serious and pursue peace with all men. Make every effort to live in peace with all men.

Matt 6:12-15

12 Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.' 14 For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

NIV

If God does not forgive you because you have not forgiven your offender, how can you be safe from the attacks of the enemy against your life? If your forgiveness is pending while God waits on you to settle with an offender, what happens when an arrow is shot at you? Think about this very well and determine in your heart to put on this boot or sandal called the gospel of peace.

4. Faith as shield

Eph 6:16

16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

NKJV

Faith is absolute confidence in God. It is trust in the faithfulness and willingness of God to keep His promises. Faith is reliance on the power and love of God for you, to bless, prosper, preserve and protect you. Faith in God and His word in time of peace, trouble and attack is your shield that protects you from the arrows of the enemy. The believer's faith stands as a protection against the darts of the evil one.

John 14:1

14:1 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me.

NIV

Num 23:19

19 God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?

NIV

2 Cor 5:7

7 We live by faith, not by sight.

NIV

Faith is developed by the hearing of Gods word. Give attention to building strong faith for that is what shields you from the attacks of the enemy. You cannot live by another's faith, but yours. You have to build it. Study and meditate on the word of God. Give your

ears to listening to the word of God. What you don't understand, ask your pastor and he will explain things to you. Buy books, teaching tapes or Cds on the areas you seek insight. As you study and pray, God will enlighten you. Build your faith. Believe you are who God says you are. Believe you have what God says you have. Believe you can do what God says you can do. Never doubt, panic or fear, always believe.

5. Word of God as helmet of salvation

Eph 6:17

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; NKJV

The helmet is to protect the head, and the head houses the brain. The brain is physical, while the mind is spiritual (cannot be seen with the physical eyes). The mind of man is the self-conscious part of man. The brain is so tender and delicate that God provided a hard casing to protect it called the skull. In the same way a spiritual covering is needed for the mind of man lest the devils takes over the thoughts of the believer and control him.

The brain is the control room of man's body. The entire body parts are controlled by the brain. No part functions without signal being sent to it from the brain. In the same way, the mind of man determines what we say, how we feel, the decisions we make, how we respond or react to situations and our habits, character and general lifestyle. This calls for protection for it is vulnerable to attacks from the devil.

The devil cannot have access into the life of a believer because he is one with Christ in spirit, except he gains control of the thoughts of the believer. If he is able to sell an idea to the believer, and he starts to meditate on it, decides, and go on to work on it, the devil gradually gains control, and after repeated practice of the sin suggested, he enters into him to solidify his grip on the backslidden believer. This is the reason why the helmet of salvation is needed. The helmet of salvation is the helmet that protects our minds from being taken over by the enemy. It bounces back the attacks on our minds. The Holy Spirit in the moment of attack suddenly brings to our memory what God has said in his word that we have stored in our minds. The remembrance of the word of God helps us to resist the thoughts and suggestions of the devil and escape his plan.

The word of God is the helmet of salvation. It has to be stored in the mind and heart for the believer in faith for it to be remembered. Give attention to the reading and storing of the word of God in you, for at temptation, the Holy Spirit will remind you what is written and through it save you from be taken over by the enemy. Read Luke 4:1-14.

6. Word of God as sword of the Spirit

Eph 6:17

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; NKJV

The word of God is the sword of the Spirit. It becomes a sword when quoted or spoken in faith against the enemy or an unpleasant situation. When stored in the mind, it serves as a

helmet that protects the mind of man. When spoken it becomes a sword that strikes the enemy and sends him away. Arm yourself with the word of God. Wrap your faith around it and speak it with confidence and you shall have what you say.

7. Prayers to communicate and move the hand of God.

Eph 6:18

18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints--

NKJV

Prayer is a means of communicating with God through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, and at the same time a weapon of war. It is in prayer that we settle issues with God, confronting Him with His promises and arguing our case to victory, confront the powers that challenge us and speak to the situation to comply with the word of God and our hearts delight. Faith is essential in prayer. You come to God when you are sure you have the faith to believe through to the end.

It is extremely difficult for the devil to get down a prayerful believer. Prayerfulness makes one alert and sensitive in the spirit, such that when the enemy is coming or working, he will know. Pray in the spirit often. Pray in faith and not in unbelief. Pray from your heart and not just to fulfill all righteousness. Pray as you are inspired by the Holy Spirit. Pray always. Pray everywhere. Always be in the spirit. Plead your case when it is required. Rebuke, destroy, plant, build, prophesy, bind and loose as the case may require in faith and you will be an impossible case for the devil.

Conclusion

The whole of armor of God must be won all the time at the same time. You don't invoke it upon you. It doesn't work that way. You live it. It is a lifestyle. Study, meditate and store in you the word of God. Wrap your faith around it and speak it in faith as need arises. Speak nothing but the truth no matter the circumstance you find yourself. Never lie. Put on Christ nature received at the new birth. Practice righteousness. Live a holy life. Be upright in all your ways. Live in peace with all men. Have no enemies and keep no record of wrongs. Let there be no malice in your heart. Build strong faith and never doubt God no matter the situation you find yourself in. Determine to believe and obey the word of God, so that when you are tempted and the Spirit reminds you what is written, you will stay faithful with God. Be prayerful and you will stand against all the wiles of the devil against your life and all that concerns you. When you live like this, you are putting on the whole armor of God.