

February 10-16, 2019

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The Whole Armor of God, Our Strength and Protection

Sunday, February 10, 2019

Text: Ephesians 6:10-13

**Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.**

Full body armor is not something that we see every day, and yet we all understand what it is for: protection! This well-known concluding passage in the Letter of Paul to the Ephesians instructs people, both then and now, to turn to God for strength and power by putting on the “whole armor of God.”

A wise woman once told me of a practice that she does when she is getting ready for the day in the morning. She goes from head to toe and thinks about the armor of God as she recites the last chapter of this letter as a way of preparing for her day as a Christian. Throughout this week, we will look at the whole armor of God.

We pray: *God of power and strength, protect us, your people, against the presence of evil and empower us to stand firm. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen*



Monday, February 11, 2019

Text: Ephesians 6:14a

**Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist.**

Belts are important, they are an integral part of our wardrobe, they are a wonderful accessory for our fashion statement, but more importantly, they keep our pants up, especially when we stand up!

Paul speaks to the early church about the importance of truth. Truth matters. Speaking the truth in love is critical for building trusting relationship. Ephesians 4:15-16 says: “speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body’s growth in building itself up in love.

We pray: *God of truth and love, guide us in our relationships so that your mission will be the focus of the church. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen*



**Tuesday, February 12, 2019**

Text: Ephesians 6:14b

**And put on the breastplate of righteousness.**

The second piece of armor that Paul mentions in Ephesians 6 is the breastplate of righteousness. The breastplate is an essential part of body armor because it protects the torso, which contains vital organs like the heart and lungs. that which provide life. So, why is righteousness associated with the breastplate? Proverbs 11:4 answers that nicely: “righteousness delivers from death.”

To be righteous means to obey God’s commandments and live in a way that is honorable to God. Psalm 106.3 says: “How blessed are those who keep justice, who practice righteousness at all times.”

When we put on the breastplate of righteousness, we receive God’s life sustaining protection.

We pray: *All powerful God, we give you thanks for the protection of righteousness that you provide for us. Remind us to trust in your life-giving strength and guidance. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen*



**Wednesday, February 13, 2019**

Text: Ephesians 6:15

**As shoes for your feet, put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace.**

There are shoes on the market for every fashion, sport and activity. I remember when my son was a little boy, he wanted shoes that promised that he could run faster and jump higher. My daughter, the designer, can walk in six-inch high heels like a runway model. For me, comfort is the key to my shoe choice.

Paul's advice to the Ephesians gives the listeners a choice. "Put on your feet whatever will make you ready" to share the good news of peace. With choice comes responsibility. You have to know what works best for you and sometimes that is a challenge. We are called as Christians to walk the walk and to do that, we need good shoes! This, my fellow sojourners, is permission to go shopping for the perfect pair of shoes.

We pray: *Provider God, give us discernment in our faith journey so that we can successfully proclaim your promise of peace. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen*



**Thursday, February 14, 2019**

Text: Ephesians 6:16

**With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one.**

Happy Valentine's Day! On this, the day of love, it is somewhat of a coincidence that the text talks about flaming arrows, but not arrows of love; rather arrows of the "evil one." For these arrows of destruction, a sturdy shield of strong faith is a necessary component of God's armor that we would be wise to lift up and use.

The Roman shield was a very large, slightly curved rectangular shield with a large metal knob in its center. It was an impressive line of defense; therefore, soldiers were afforded a great deal of protection from enemies. A shield guards. While a physical shield protects us physically, faith can protect our spiritual lives even amidst physical trials.

What is faith? Hebrews 11:1 says: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Therefore, faith involves a huge element of trust. By reviewing the past, we see that God has proved himself to be unchanging and consistent. We can firmly believe that God will fulfill God's promises in the future. Past, present, future – God is our shield of faith that protects us from the ever-present existence of evil.

We pray: *Ever present God, we give you thanks that you have provided us with a shield of protection against evil. Help us to continually recognize your presence in our lives. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen*



**Friday, February 15, 2019**

Text: Ephesians 6:17a  
**Take the helmet of salvation**

Helmets are a key component of safety, and salvation is an eternal promise of God's grace. Helmets protect our heads from debilitating damage from injuries, even those we sometimes inflict on ourselves through reckless behavior.

Salvation is the free gift that we receive through belief in Jesus Christ. Knowing with our mind, heart and soul that we have, by grace, been saved through faith, is the gift of God that is our helmet of salvation.

We pray: *Gracious and protective God, we give you thanks for the free gift of salvation that we are given through the death and resurrection of your Son. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen*



**Saturday, February 16, 2019**

Text: Ephesians 6:17b  
**and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.**

Most of the armor of God that is referenced by Paul in Ephesians are things that we put on our body for protection. We put on a belt, a breastplate, good shoes, and a helmet as protection against the "evil one." In one hand, we have taken a shield and now Paul tells us to use a "sword of the Spirit." This sword, Paul says, is the "word of God." Paul is talking about scripture.

In addition to putting on the armor of God to defend ourselves, we are also instructed to use, as a weapon, the "word of God" as our "sword of the Spirit."

We, who are covered from head to foot with the armor of God, with the shield of faith in one hand and the sword of the Spirit in the other, are well equipped to fight against the powers of darkness. Thanks be to God!

We pray: *Generous God, we are so grateful that you provide for our every need. We give you thanks for the protection you provide. We strive to be the best that we can be, with the gifts that you have provided. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen*

