



Welcome to
**New Beginnings
Community Church**

A part of Grace Communion International

Wearing the armor of God





The Armor of God

In the end of Ephesians, Paul gives us his iconic armor image by describing the full armor of God. The belt, the breastplate, the shield, the boots and of course the sword have made their way into Christian imagery for centuries, from dynamic art to cheesy plastic costumes.

:11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. :12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil 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 firm

Ephesians 6

**Reality #1
It's not
who you
think**



So instead of the fight against your neighbors, Paul is talking about who the real enemy is. Satan's campaign to destroy humanity in subtle, insidious ways is not a military battle but a centuries-long war.

The weapons he recommends—truth, righteousness, salvation, peace—are the way to true victory. Our worldly weapons of power, intrigue and violence are no match for the strength of true armor. They will fall away and burn themselves out, but the metal (and mettle) of the kingdom is indestructible.



As we fixate on the flesh and blood in front of us, we lose sight of the bigger picture—standing firm in God’s power while he builds his kingdom through us. This brings us to reality number two.

:14 Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, :15 and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. :16 In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; :17 and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Ephesians 6

**Reality #2
It's
primarily
defensive**



“Jesus taught that we are all bad and He is good, and He wants to rescue us because there is a war going on and we are hostages in that war.”

The Belt of Truth

The gospel is the bedrock truth about the universe that holds it all together; Jesus is the quantum equation that sums it all up.

This belt of truth holds everything together, and when we are assailed by temptations to sin or despair, holding on to that truth keeps us from falling apart.

Again, is this a command from Paul to go pick fights and squabbles? Is Paul telling us to beat people over the head with this truth until they acquiesce? No. Absolutely, we will stand for truth when necessary, but this is not a call to come out with an angry, judgmental voice—which is really just a vent for our own rage—and call it God’s work.

The Breastplate of Righteousness

This word encompasses more than just virtue or ethics, although those things are important. It also speaks to the historical reality of God putting the world to “rights” – reforming and reconciling and one day completing the process. God vindicated Jesus through the resurrection, set all to “rights” even though Jesus was burdened with all our sin, and he put us to rights as well within him.

The breastplate we need in place is that we are loved, accepted, and set to rights before God in Christ. We are part of the legacy and family of salvation that began with Israel and will one day end when Jesus returns.

Shoes for your feet

Again, standing firm. The “peace that passes understanding” that we have access to as God’s children gives us strength to stand ready through battle. When you’re at peace, you are prepared. Much of martial arts and other kinds of hand-to-hand combat is about stance, having your feet in the right place, and everything else follows.

The “flaming darts” of the enemy take all shapes and forms—everything from the temptation to despair, to slip into entangling sin or simply to be so distracted by life that we never grow. Standing against these things is not a matter of putting out every last arrow that comes your way—that will drive you mad, and while you might extinguish one, you are liable to get hit by twenty more.

Keeping the reality of our completed salvation close to us gives us protection. Knowing that the main battle—for our own souls—is completed and won gives us strength to face whatever other skirmish comes our way.

It's interesting how close the helmet is to the brain. We are continually charged with keeping our minds on things above, taking every thought captive, setting our focus on the realities of the gospel. This is our helmet, which we should always keep in place to protect our minds, and by proxy, our hearts and everything else.

This armor reality sounds completely strange until we consider the source material for Paul's famous arsenal.

Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins. (Isaiah 11:5 ESV)

He made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me a polished arrow; in his quiver he hid me away.

(Isaiah 49: 2 ESV)

He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on his head. (Isaiah 59:17 ESV)

Ephesians 6

**Reality #3
It's
second
hand**



Paul is most likely referring to the “word” in the sense of the gospel word in which God accomplishes his work in us. In short, the “word” here is the gospel itself. Paul refers to this in the previous chapter, verses 25-26: ...as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word. (Ephesians 5:25-26 ESV)

Ephesians 6

The Mirror Bible

11 Fully immerse yourself in the detail and significance of every individual part of the armor of God. [Acquaint yourself with all that God's victory in Christ represents.] Just like every aspect in a soldier's armor significantly completes their battle uniform to best equip them to face every method and strategy that an enemy could possibly employ against them.

12 People are not the enemy, (whether they be husbands, wives, children, or parents, slaves, or bosses. They might host hostile, law inspired thought patterns through their unbelief or ignorance but) to target one another is to engage in the wrong combat. We represent the authority of the victory of Christ in the spiritual realm. We are positioned there (in Christ); we confront the mind games and structures of darkness, religious thought patterns, governing and conditioning human behavior.



13 It is most important therefore to acquaint yourself with every aspect of God's armor. You are fully fit to powerfully defeat any onslaught or contradiction on any day of confrontation, triumphantly standing your ground. The days where the law of hardships, annoyances and labor dictated your life are over!

14 Take your position: you have the truth [of who you are in Christ] wrapped around your hips like a soldier's belt, holding the complete body armor together. [Know that your loins are protected from all manner of lust, gluttony and sexual sins.]

Righteousness covers your heart like a bulletproof breastplate.

Ephesians 6

The Mirror Bible



Ephesians 6

The Mirror Bible

15 You wear your eagerness and passion to communicate the Good News like soldier's shoes. Announce peace; the battle has already been fought and won!

16 It is most important to engage your faith as a man-size shield that covers your whole person and empowers you to extinguish the flame in every arrow of contradiction that you might face. The only visible part of you is your faith!

17 Pondering redemption realities is your headgear that protects your mind; inspired thoughts give voice to God's word—this is your spiritual sword.



Ephesians 6

The Mirror Bible

18 Prayer is an ongoing conversation; praying in the spirit includes every form of prayer, whether it be a prayer of request or a prayer of thanksgiving, or worship or interceding for all to realize their saintly innocence. Oh, and remember, you do not have to do all the talking! Always be attentive to the voice of the Spirit. (Prayer is so much more than a one-way conversation.)

19 My most urgent request is for clarity of utterance every time I open my mouth to speak. I desire that my words will be gifted with inspiration, boldly articulating the mystery of the gospel.

20 I am an ambassador in bonds, chained to this task of confidently communicating the revelation of the Gospel with the accuracy it deserves.



Summary

These are the realities of the armor of God—the counter-intuitive, three-dimensional, second-hand armor of God which is stronger and older than anything the Mandalorian might put on. Our stance is not aggressively chasing down every last “enemy” we may think arises, but holding firm and letting the darts of the true enemy extinguish themselves. Our strength is not in our ingenuity and strategy, but in the faithful, everyday holding of truth in place in our hearts and minds. Our power is not our own, because the armor is not exclusively worn by us.

