

"Put On the Full Armor of God, Part 2"  
(Ephesians 6:14-17)

Introduction: As we have seen on the previous Lord's Days we are engaged in a battle, a battle against the kingdom of darkness, and the leader of that kingdom, the devil, that serpent of old, that deceiver who beguiled our first parents and caused them to fall from their state of innocency. We have seen that every man, woman, and child upon this earth is involved in this battle, as well as the eternal destiny of each. The lines are clearly drawn. Those who are in each camp are clearly distinguished by God, but not as easily by man. The kingdom of God was planted upon enemy territory. It is an intrusion of the consummate kingdom into the present time. The Lord has recruited you to fight in His army and to take ground from the enemy using the weapons of His warfare. And so we have been seeking to understand what the Lord's provisions are, and how we might best use them to the Lord's glory. And this morning, the Spirit of God is saying to you,

*Christian, you must put on the breastplate of Christ's righteousness, and the shoes of readiness to proclaim the Gospel, if you are to stand firm in the Lord's battle.*

- I. *Put On the Breastplate of Righteousness (6:14b).*
  - A. *For the Soldier, the Breastplate Provided Protection for the Vital Organs of the Torso.*
    1. *It is the piece of armor which covers from the neck to the thighs.*
    2. *It consisted of two pieces, one covering the front and the other the back.*
    3. *Without it, the soldier was vulnerable to any number of mortal wounds from the front, back, or sides.*
      - a. *The torso encloses all of your vital organs.*
      - b. *A wound in other areas may cripple or maim the soldier, but would not likely cause death.*
      - c. *But a sword, javelin, arrow or other projectile lodged into the trunk of the body would be apt to do major damage.*
      - d. *Because of this, the soldier would protect himself with the sturdiest material he could find as a breastplate.*
      - e. *The Christian needs a breastplate as well, but one which will work for his kind of warfare.*
  - B. *The Christian Needs to Be Protected by the Righteousness of Christ.*
    1. *Your own righteousness will not do.*
      - a. *Your personal righteousness is as filthy rags.*
        - (i) *Since the Fall, no man possesses any righteousness of his own.*
        - (ii) *His entire being is polluted with sin.*
        - (iii) *Everything that he does, whether outwardly good or bad, is sinful in the sight of God.*
        - (iv) *Even the Christian, who has experienced the*

new birth, who has a new nature, has no righteousness of his own that makes him acceptable to God.

- (v) Even the best of our works are still tainted by sin, in that our goals, motives and standard always falls short of what they ought to be.

**b. *Therefore, your personal righteousness will not ward off the attacks of Satan.***

- (i) When Satan came to Christ, he found nothing in Him by which he might accuse Him.
- (ii) Christ is the spotless Lamb of God.
- (iii) But when the tempter comes to you, it is not the same.
- (iv) All of us guilty of many crimes against God's justice.
- (v) We are all worthy of punishment and condemnation.
- (vi) Satan is right, we do stand condemned by our own sins.
- (vii) And he will exploit them to the uttermost in trying to destroy you.
- (viii) Therefore, you need a bulwark, a defense, a breastplate of righteousness which will repel those attacks of the enemy.

**2. *There is no one or nothing outside of Christ which can provide you with that needed protection.***

**a. *No one else died for you, nor could they.***

- (i) No mere man could provide you with perfect righteousness, for all are guilty of sin. There are none who are perfect save Christ.
- (ii) No angel could provide that righteousness, for there are none worthy and they do not share our nature.
- (iii) The blood of bulls and rams could not take away our sin and provide us with that righteousness. They could only cover it until the perfect sacrifice could be made.

**b. *Indeed, the righteousness of any mere creature would be inadequate.***

- (i) You need a perfect righteousness if you are to be right with God.
- (ii) The sacrifice for your infinite sins must be an infinite sacrifice.
- (iii) The personal worth of the One who would provide you with a garment of righteousness must also be without limits.
- (iv) And there is no mere creature who could in any way approximate this perfection.

**3. *You will only be found safe in the righteousness which comes through faith in the only-begotten Son of God.***

**a. *Your own righteousness affords no peace; it is unacceptable to God.***

- b. *Any other defense is useless.*
- c. **THE ONLY SECURE REFUGE FROM THE ACCUSATIONS OF THE ENEMY IS TO BE FOUND IN THE PERFECT RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST.**
- (i) Christ's righteousness is absolutely impeccable.
  - (ii) Christ "COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH" (1 Peter 2:22).
  - (iii) "YOU WERE NOT REDEEMED WITH PERISHABLE THINGS LIKE SILVER OR GOLD FROM YOUR FUTILE WAY OF LIFE INHERITED FROM YOUR FOREFATHERS, BUT WITH PRECIOUS BLOOD, AS OF A LAMB UNBLEMISHED AND SPOTLESS, THE BLOOD OF CHRIST" (1 Peter 1:18-19).
  - (iv) And the apostle Paul, recognizing the shortcomings of his own good works, said, "BUT WHATEVER THINGS WERE GAIN TO ME, THOSE THINGS I HAVE COUNTED AS LOSS FOR THE SAKE OF CHRIST. MORE THAN THAT, I COUNT ALL THINGS TO BE LOSS IN VIEW OF THE SURPASSING VALUE OF KNOWING CHRIST JESUS MY LORD, FOR WHOM I HAVE SUFFERED THE LOSS OF ALL THINGS, AND COUNT THEM BUT RUBBISH IN ORDER THAT I MAY GAIN CHRIST, AND MAY BE FOUND IN HIM, **NOT HAVING A RIGHTEOUSNESS OF MY OWN DERIVED FROM THE LAW, BUT THAT WHICH IS THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST, THE RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH COMES FROM GOD ON THE BASIS OF FAITH**" (Phil. 3:7-9).
  - (v) Paul did not want to found in his own righteousness for he knew that it would not enable him to stand before God and that the accuser knew that very well.
  - (vi) Satan could legitimately buffet Paul with all of his sins and utterly destroy him.
  - (vii) And if he could do so to Paul, how much more to you and me who are far less circumspect in our observance of the Lord's will?
  - (viii) In this warfare, you cannot stand in the breastplate of your own sanctification, but you need the impenetrable armor of Christ.
  - (ix) Yes, the devil can impugn your own obedience as faulty and inadequate.
  - (x) But when you stand clothed in the righteousness of Christ, in His perfect righteousness, the enemy has no ground to accuse you FOR YOU STAND AS ONE WHO HAS DONE ALL THINGS PERFECTLY AND CARRY NO STAIN OF ANY SIN!
  - (xi) When the devil seeks to discredit you and destroy your assurance and peace, and to paralyze your obedience to the Lord, **STANDING IN CHRIST YOU MAY CONFIDENTLY ASSERT THAT SATAN HAS NOTHING IN YOU, FOR YOU STAND BY CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS, ALONE!**
  - (xii) As the songwriter said, "MY HOPE IS BUILT ON NOTHING LESS THAN JESUS BLOOD AND RIGHTEOUSNESS. I DARE NOT TRUST THE SWEETEST

FRAME BUT WHOLLY LEAN ON JESUS NAME. ON CHRIST THE SOLID ROCK I STAND, ALL OTHER GROUND IS SINKING SAND, ALL OTHER GROUND IS SINKING SAND."

- (xiii) And so you must put on the breastplate of Christ's righteousness if you are to stand firm.

II. Next He Says You Must Shod Your Feet with the Readiness of the Gospel of Peace (6:15).

A. The Shoes of the Soldier Were Also Important for His Maneuverability.

1. Most of his fighting was hand-to-hand combat on the open fields.
2. It was important that he be able to move swiftly and surely and to stand steadfastly when exchanging blows with the enemy.
3. It was also necessary to protect his feet in the many miles of marching up and down rough terrain.
  - a. If his feet were not protected, he would develop cuts, blisters, and bruises.
  - b. This could make the difference between standing in battle, or falling.
  - c. His shoes, therefore, were very important to his success (MacArthur 354).
  - d. And the shoes of God's armor are no less important to the Christian.

B. As Christians, You Are to Put Upon Your Feet as It Were, the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace.

1. You are to stand firm in the strength of the Gospel.
  - a. Remember, you became a partaker in the grace of God through the Gospel.
    - (i) The Gospel is the good news given to man of a Redeemer who reconciles God to man.
    - (ii) It is the good news of a God who, though angry with fallen man and at war with Him, offers him forgiveness of sins and perfect righteousness, IF HE WILL RESPOND TO THE GOSPEL CALL OF FAITH AND REPENTANCE.
    - (iii) When you responded to the outward call of the gospel, through the grace of God given to you by the effectual call of the Holy Spirit, you were declared not guilty of all your filthy sins, and given an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of light.
    - (iv) And now you are in Jesus, from whom you will never be separated.
  - b. And so now He calls you to stand firm in that grace.
    - (i) Even as the breastplate of righteousness protects us from the blows of the enemy, the Gospel enables us to stand strong.
    - (ii) The recognition that the Son of God became man and died for you and for your salvation, should make you realize that IF HE WAS WILLING TO GIVE

YOU HIS SON WHILE YOU WERE A SINNER, HOW MUCH MORE SHALL HE KEEP YOU AND STRENGTHEN YOU NOW THAT YOU HAVE BEEN RECONCILED!

- (iiil) And so, you are to be assured of the love of God and His intention to keep you in the grace of Christ.
- (iv) He loves you as the apple of His eye for Christ's sake, and will preserve you to the end.

**2. But not only are you to stand strong in the Gospel of His Son, you are also to prepare yourself to be a witness of it at all times.**

**a. The Gospel did not come to you so that you might be the only one affected by it.**

- (i) God did not make you a partaker of His kingdom only for you to keep it a well-guarded secret.
- (ii) He did not give you the command to keep the knowledge of His truth well-hidden so that no one may ever discover from your lips the grace of God.

**b. But you have become a partaker that you might be a witness to its power and truth.**

- (i) You are the ones whom Christ called THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.
- (ii) You are the ones whom have been entrusted with the talents of the kingdom and told to do business with them until He returns.
- (iiil) It is to you that the Great Commission was addressed when He said, "GO THEREFORE AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL THE NATIONS" [Matt. 28:18-19].
- (iv) And Christians for centuries have been obedient to the call to Gospel witness.
- (v) If they had not been, then each of us here would be on our way to hell as the prisoners of the devil for lack of knowledge.
- (vi) God uses means to accomplish His ends and He has chosen human agents to carry His Gospel to the four corners of the world.

**3. And when God's people bear witness to the Gospel, it becomes a terrible weapon against the forces of darkness.**

**a. Darkness is dispelled when the light appears, so the darkness retreats when the Gospel is preached.**

- (i) It is the God-ordained means of advancing His kingdom on earth.
- (ii) It is the only message which is able to bring men and women out of darkness into the light.
- (iiil) In the 18th century in England, the state of religion was poor and immorality was high.
- (iv) But God brought about a change in that land.
- (v) He did not do it through men's plans of social reform or by making England a police state.
- (vi) Rather, He raised up men who would preach the

Gospel, men such as George Whitefield, John Wesley, and Henry Venn, men of whom the world was not worthy, to raise high the Gospel banner.

- (vii) The result was that the darkness retreated and the kingdom of light advanced.
  - (viii) The clergy returned to the Biblical Gospel and the churches were again full of worshipping men and women.
  - (ix) But when that simple message of repentance and faith was again silenced, that nation fell back into darkness, until such a time as the people of God will again speak forth the Gospel.
- b. *Yes, the darkness will fight back and do all in its power to overcome the light, but the Gospel will ultimately triumph.***
- (i) The easiest way for Satan to defeat the soldiers of God is to silence them before they ever begin to speak.
  - (ii) He has Christians so weighted down with fear and apprehension, that most will never speak out for Christ or for His kingdom.
  - (iii) Nevertheless, God has those in every age who will remain faithful to the call to witness.
  - (iv) And because of that, the kingdom will continue to advance.
  - (v) And God's purpose will ultimately be realized.
  - (vi) BUT AGAIN, SOLDIER OF CHRIST, YOU ARE CALLED TO THE BATTLE.
  - (vii) AND IF YOU ARE CHRIST'S, YOU WILL OBEY YOUR LORD.
- c. *And so you must shod your feet with the preparation of the Gospel of peace.***
- (i) You must ready yourself at all times to present the Gospel.
  - (ii) If you don't know it well enough to communicate it skillfully, then there is no better goal to set for yourself than to learn how.
  - (iii) With the wealth of Christian learning in books, tapes, and videos that are available to you, the only excuse you have is that you're just too lazy or it just isn't that important to you.
  - (iv) How can you waste so much time in front of the television or a myriad of other diversions when you know that you do not know the Scriptures as you ought. DOES THIS DEMONSTRATE THAT YOU ARE REALLY TAKING SERIOUSLY THE GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST?
  - (v) But the message is important to God; He gave His Son that you and I might have life through the Gospel.
  - (vi) And He has given us the command to speak the Gospel to every living creature.

- (vii) In this way, the kingdom of God will advance in the world.
- (viii) And when the last of God's elect shall have been gathered, then the Captain of the armies of the Lord Himself shall appear and bring in the everlasting righteousness of the eternal kingdom.
- (ix) People of God, do not be reluctant and disobedient soldiers; do not bring shame to your captain.
- (x) But listen to His voice; obey His commands, and seek with all your might to serve the One who saved you from everlasting destruction!
- (xi) Shod your feet with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, and see the enemy flee before you. Amen!