

**What On Earth Am I Here For?**  
**Ephesians 6:10-20**  
 "The Armor of God "

**Introduction**

Today we will conclude our series of messages on our purpose for being here and putting on the full armor of God. We have discovered over the past several weeks that we were created; For God's Purpose, For God's Pleasure, To Belong To God's Church, To Become More Like God's Son, and finally, To Fight Against God's Adversary with Spiritual Warfare. In order to engage in the spiritual battle to which we have been called, it is necessary to equip ourselves with the full armor of God: The Belt of Truth, The Breastplate of Righteousness, The Boots of The Gospel of Peace (week one), The Shield of Faith, and The Salvation Helmet (week two), and finally today, The Sword of The Spirit, and The Supplication (prayer) In The Spirit. When we have been properly equipped, then God is able to send us to the battlefield with full confidence, knowing our victory is certain, for the victory is The LORD's and not ours. We must fight in His Name, under His banner, and when we do so, then we have nothing to fear. The devil will do anything within his power to render us ineffective, but as long as we know how to properly use our armor, he cannot harm us, he cannot sway us, and he cannot stop us.

In his letter to the Ephesians, The Apostle Paul admonishes them to put on the full armor of God (**6:11**), so they will be able to take a stand against the schemes of the devil. So far in our study, we have only examined the parts of the armor that are used for defense. This morning I would like to take a closer look at our two powerful offensive weapons that we use in Spiritual Warfare. Our weapons of offense are Supplication (prayer) in The Spirit, and The Sword of The Spirit (The Word of God). The proper handling of these two powerful weapons will combine for a one-two punch that will deliver a knockout blow to the devil when he attacks. No force of darkness can overcome a believer who knows how to humbly draw near to God, combining Prayer and The Word to resist the devil (**James 4:7**). Paul concludes his "armor analogy" by insisting that the Ephesians take up The Sword of The Spirit and Pray in The Spirit on ALL occasions. It takes The Holy Spirit to fight in a SPIRITUAL Battle. In order to be victorious, we must fight with Powerful "Spirit-Guided" Prayers, and a Powerful "Spiritual Sword". Please allow me to explain.

**The Spirit-Guided Prayer**

A lot of Bible teachers have attempted in vain to explain exactly what Paul means here when he tells the Ephesians to "Pray in the Spirit" on all occasions (**vs. 18**). Often times I believe that theologians try to overcomplicate spiritual truths to make themselves sound more "spiritual". Have you ever thought about the people who responded to Jesus' message when He walked upon the earth (and the sea for that matter)? It was simple, everyday, "average Joes" like Peter, James, and John that followed after Christ and not the brilliant scholarly types who fell in behind Him pulling a wagonload of their credentials along as they came. No, the message of the gospel was a simple one. Have a childlike faith and BELIEVE in Jesus. With this in mind, wouldn't you also agree that the things we need to do to follow Jesus would be, in fact, just as simple? Take "Praying in The Spirit" for instance. That sounds so very complicated and even kind of "mystical", but would you be surprised to learn this morning that it is actually a very simple truth as well? To pray "IN THE SPIRIT" actually means to allow The Holy Spirit to guide your prayer life. In other words, it is to pray for what GOD wants, above what YOU might desire for yourself. Isn't that EXACTLY what Jesus did when He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, "**Not My will, but Your will be done**" (**Luke 22:42**)? Paul actually closes his letter to the Ephesians with a perfect example of a "Prayer in The Spirit", when he asks the Ephesians to pray for him that he would "**be given the the words to fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly as I should.**" (**vs. 19-20**). You see, Paul did not request them to pray that he be released from jail. Paul assumed that he was in prison because it was God's will for him to be there. He was willing to give up any desires that he might have had to be released, in favor of fulfilling

whatever God's plan was for him while he was there. In other words, Paul was praying for God's will ABOVE that of his own. This is a perfect example of what it means to pray in The Spirit. Simply put, it is to be so consumed with doing God's will and fulfilling God's purpose that your prayer is to be led by The Spirit above your own fleshly desires. It is in essence, yielding over total control of your prayer life to God.

Too many "so-called" believers these days think that God exists simply to make them happy, but a true believer knows that real joy is found in exactly the opposite. We exist to bring pleasure to God! Therefore, we must give up our own agendas and trust the leading of The Holy Spirit. We pray for what God desires, and NOT what we desire. An amazing thing happens when we do that: ALL of our prayers are answered in the affirmative (**John 15:7-8**). Ever wonder why your prayers aren't being answered? Put them to the test. Are you praying self-ISH-ly or self-LESS-ly (**James 4:1-3**)? Contrary to what they preach on TV, God does not live in a lamp. You don't get to rub it and have Him pop out to call you "master". HE is Almighty God, and we exist to serve HIM! Just because He has adopted us as His children doesn't mean that He intends to raise us as spoiled brats. A loving father simply will not do that. A good and loving father knows what is truly best for his children and gives accordingly. Praying in The Spirit is therefore by definition, yielding up all our personal desires for ourselves in exchange for God's desires FOR us, because He is a good, good Father. Have you ever really considered that what God wants for you is far better than anything you could possibly imagine for yourself? He made you, He knows what is best for you. Let Him have control over you. A child of God, who surrenders their prayer life over to The Spirit of God, is a terrifying thing to the devil, for he knows that a soldier like that can cause great harm to his evil schemes. This is the kind of "Prayer Warrior" who can actually take ground from the enemy! So yield up control to God and pray in The Spirit.

### **The Sword of The Spirit**

I find it incredibly fitting that Paul uses a belt to describe truth. The Belt of Truth, as we discussed earlier, represents the Truth of God in which the believer must wrap himself in order to discern right from wrong. Jesus is the source of all truth, and His Word (The Bible) is our ever ready source of His wisdom. There is a distinct difference however, between knowing the truth and living the truth (Breastplate of Righteousness), and there is also a big difference between knowing the truth and being able to use the truth as an offensive weapon. Paul calls this weapon, "The Sword of The Spirit". Where does a soldier carry his sword? On his belt. So bear with me with the imagery here. If a Christian is wrapped in the truth found in God's Word, then that Christian also should be able, at a moments notice to "draw out" a piece of this truth to use it against the devil's schemes. In short, it is to use The Word as a "sword" of truth.

The actual Greek that Paul uses for "Word" of God in verse seventeen is *Rhema* (pronounced hray-mah). The word actually means "sayings". Now think about this for a moment. You are a soldier in God's army. You have made it your purpose to know The Word of God just as a soldier would memorize an army field manual. You have so devoted yourself to this "Word" of God that it's now a part of your very nature. It's truth is wrapped around you like a belt, as it were. The devil, or more likely one of his minions, comes along and tries to pin you down with some form of enticement or another. In this crucial moment, you do not need the WHOLE BIBLE, but what you need is the appropriate verse that applies to this particular situation. You need to be able to "draw" that verse (*Rhema*) from the belt of truth and use it to fight against the devils attack. By doing so you are actually employing a verse of scripture like a sword drawn from the belt of truth. In this moment, you are using The Sword of The Spirit as an offensive weapon against Satan. THIS IS WHY WE MUST TEACH OUR CHILDREN TO MEMORIZE SCRIPTURE!!! Every Believer should know exactly how to retrieve The Sword of The Spirit from their belt of truth when it is needed. We, as Christians, MUST hide God's Word in our hearts so that we may not sin against Him (**Psalms 119:11**). How did I know what verse I could use just now you might ask? Because I had it memorized, and I knew that it would precisely fit this particular situation! I knew just

where to retrieve that particular “sword” to make my argument just now. There is a word for a soldier who has to fumble around and find his sword in the heat of battle: Deceased. The best advice that I can give you this morning is to make it your mission to commit God’s word to memory. You don’t want to be fumbling around for the right sword when you need it, saying things like, “I don’t think I should be doing this, but I’m not sure. What was that verse again the preacher used last Sunday?” If you have to stumble around THAT long to find your sword, you’re probably gonna lose this battle!

The word that Paul uses for “Sword” is actually *Machaira* in the Greek. It is not the huge battle sword that most people think of when they think about Roman soldiers, or Gladiators, but rather it is a short two-edged dagger made for “piercing” the vital organs of an opponent. Now that I think about it, I believe I remember another verse of scripture that compares the *Machaira* to God’s Holy Word. **“For The Word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword (machaira). It penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.” (Hebrews 4:12).** What does that mean? If you want to win a spiritual battle, QUOTE SOME SCRIPTURE OVER IT! God’s Word will make the devil leave quicker than anything. To be perfectly honest, I never take seriously any advice that I am given if it doesn’t come with the undergirding of a verse of scripture. Why? Because, **“There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death” (Proverbs 14:12).** If God’s Word doesn’t back you up in your decisions, then quite frankly you are making terrible decisions. Memorize The Word so you will be able to use it as a Sword against the enemy.

If you remember our study from last week, I told you that the devil often uses three types of temptation to entice the people of God to sin. The Lust of The Flesh, The Lust of The Eyes, and The Pride of Life. So how can we effectively use The Sword of The Spirit against such attacks? Allow me to show you exactly how Jesus did it in **Matthew Chapter Four.**

### **Matthew 4:1-11**

#### **Jesus Is Tested in the Wilderness**

- 1 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.
- 2 After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.
- 3 The tempter came to him and said,  
“If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.”
- 4 Jesus answered, **“It is written:** ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”
- 5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple.
- 6 “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down.  
For it is written: “‘He will command his angels concerning you,  
and they will lift you up in their hands,  
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’”
- 7 Jesus answered him, **“It is also written:** ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”
- 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.
- 9 “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.”
- 10 Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan!  
**For it is written:** ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.’”
- 11 Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

Did you catch that? Jesus in His humanity, I’m quite certain would have much rather been somewhere else, but The Spirit led him into the wilderness for fasting, prayer and to be tested. He yielded himself to the leading of The Holy Spirit. He was in fact PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT. Then after 40 days without anything to eat, the devil finally shows up, with his particular bag of tricks. He tempts Jesus three distinct times. And just what did he use to tempt Him? The Lust of the Flesh, The Pride of Life, and The Lust of The Eyes. And how did Jesus respond? With The Sword of The Spirit. Allow me to explain.

First, the devil makes a sarcastic remark about Jesus' deity. ***"If you are The Son of God, tell these stones to become bread" (vs. 3).*** Just what was Satan implying? He was questioning the goodness of God. What he was really trying to do was to get Jesus to conclude that His Father wasn't treating Him very well. I mean here he was, "The Son of God" starving to death in the wilderness. Satan wanted Jesus to make a break from His Father's will and to fend for Himself. He was saying, "Your Father has let you down Jesus, you need to fend for Yourself." Upon Jesus' Baptism The Father proclaimed from Heaven that He was indeed the Son of God, and straightaway The Holy Spirit led Him into the wilderness to fulfill God's purpose (***Matthew 3:16 - 4:1***). Jesus had no doubts about who He was, or what God wanted of Him. He was fasting and praying in the wilderness because He was obedient to The Father. He also had the power and authority to tell the devil to take a hike, and the devil would have had no choice but to go, but The Spirit had led Him there to be tested. Instead of commanding Satan to leave, He chose to obey and face the test. I'm actually grateful that Jesus was fully obedient to His Father, for if He had just shut the devil down, then we wouldn't be able to learn from His experience just how to face the devil when he attacks us. Think about that for a moment. If the scriptures said that Satan appeared and Jesus simply stared at him until he burst into flames and ran into the sea, how exactly would that help us? We can't do that, we don't have that kind of authority. So what does Jesus do exactly? He does the very same thing that Paul tells us to do. He used The Sword of The Spirit to fight the devil. He showed us how it is done.

The first temptation was The Lust of The Flesh. Jesus had been forty days without food. The devil knew it. The devil also knew that he was hungry and needed to eat something. His FLESH needed food. This, in and of itself, was not sinful. It was a legitimate need. Satan wanted to exploit that need to get Jesus to sin. The devil attempts to get Jesus to stop waiting on his Father to provide for His fleshly needs and to fend for Himself. To do so would have separated Him from the will of God. There was no way that He would ever do that. So how did He respond? With a VERSE OF SCRIPTURE. He quoted ***Deuteronomy 8:3*** to remind the devil that just as God had provided manna in the desert for His children, He would also feed His beloved Son. All The Son needed to do was trust and Obey. Jesus One. Satan Nothing (zero).

The second temptation was The Pride of Life. The devil takes Jesus to the top of the temple and asks Him to prove who He is by jumping off its pinnacle, some four hundred feet to the ground. The devil even quoted a little scripture of his own from ***Psalms 91:11-12***. He tried (foolishly I might add) to beat the Jesus at His own game by misquoting a scripture concerning The Messiah and how He would be protected by God Himself. He tries to bait Jesus into showing the world, or at least the inhabitants of Jerusalem, just how special he is. It was as if the devil was saying, "You want them to believe in you don't you? Then show them who you really are! You're not just some nobody from Nazareth. You're God! Have some pride man, show these people just who they are dealing with." Then he quoted a verse to back it up. He omitted a very key element of the passage however. Oh sure, he mentioned the part about how God would send His angels to keep watch over His Messiah, and they would not allow Him to be harmed, but he left out the part where it said, ***"to guard you in all your ways"***. Why did he fail to mention that? Because in order to be protected by the angelic host, The LORD Jesus would need to be obedient to the course that God had laid out for Him. He was sent here to Earth to fulfill His mission, according to HIS FATHER'S WILL, and not His own. To do what the devil was asking of Him would be an attempt to get the people to believe in Him by another means other than what His Father had intended. So how did Jesus respond? ***"You shall not tempt The LORD your God."*** This is Yet ANOTHER verse from Deuteronomy! I'll bet you never thought of Deuteronomy having so many powerful swords in it, huh? How many times have you quoted Deuteronomy when your life was in dire peril?! I'll wager, NEVER. But here is Jesus, hammering the devil with verses from Deuteronomy. God's Word works every time. No matter what particular book of The Bible you quote it from! Jesus knew just which sword to use for just the right temptation. Jesus Two. Satan Nothing (zero).

The third temptation was the biggest one of them all, The Lust of The Eyes. The devil took Jesus to a mountain top and SHOWED Him all the kingdoms of the world. Satan knew that the Father's plan for his Son is that He one day be King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Jesus is destined to be the ruler over all the earth (**Revelation 2:26-27**). God's plan was for Jesus to die upon the cross to forgive the world of sin, and then rule over those who would trust in Him by faith. He would become not only their savior, but also their King. This was to only become a reality by the way of the cross. The devil showed The Christ a way to have all those kingdoms WITHOUT going to the cross. The devil told Jesus that if He would reject The Father's plan and simply worship him instead, then He would give the kingdoms of earth to Him. The devil is called **"the prince of this world"** so he was in fact offering Jesus up something that he could deliver. The problem is, that if Jesus had accepted the offer, mankind would have been lost forever. For there was no other way that men could be saved except through the sacrifice of God's perfect lamb. Jesus was and is our only hope (**Acts 4:11-12**). The devil was tempting Christ just to take the kingdoms, but skip the suffering of the cross. This was not the only time that he attempted to do so. He even tried it through one of Jesus' own disciples (**Matthew 16:21-23**). How did Jesus respond to this third and powerful temptation? You guessed it. Once again with a verse from Deuteronomy (**Debt. 6:13**)!

Every single time the devil tried to trap Jesus, The Savior responded with **"It is Written..."**. Jesus knew exactly how to reach into His Belt of Truth and pull out The Sword of The Spirit. I would rather see a sermon than to hear one any day. Jesus demonstrated perfectly for us just what it means to fight the enemy with The Sword of The Spirit. Now let me ask you this morning, "How important is it for us to study and memorize The Word of God?" Answer: IT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN VICTORY AND DEFEAT, BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH.

This brings us to the conclusion of our study of The Full Armor of God. Make sure that you have your armor on this morning. Wrap yourself firmly in the Belt of Truth. Live what you believe by wearing The Breastplate of Righteousness. Know that you are standing upon the firm foundation of The Gospel of Peace. Block the devil's attacks with The Shield of Faith. Protect your transformed mind with The Helmet of Salvation. Yield your desires up to God's will, and Pray In The Spirit.

And finally, learn to use your memory verses like a Sword of The Spirit against the enemy. Do this my friends, and you will be able to stand firmly against everything the devil can ever hope to throw your way. You have been guaranteed a victory, if you will just prepare yourself for the battle. There is no need to fear. Jesus will show us the way. In fact, He IS our way (**John 14:6**).

And ALL of God's people said... TRUTH!!!