

**Living In Resurrection Power  
(Week 14)  
Ephesians 6:11-14  
"The Armor of God" (Part 1)  
The Belt and The Breastplate**

**Introduction**

**Trust and Obey**

**"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."**

**James 4:17(KJV)**

After reminding the church at Ephesus of the constant struggle with the forces of evil, Paul encourages them to fight these spiritual battles in the strength of The LORD. He metaphorically uses the image of "suited up" in armor to prepare for battle. What he is truly saying is that as believers we must be "wrapped up" in Christ, if we are to have a chance of taking our stand against the devil. To be wrapped up in Christ is simply another way of stating what Paul has been saying all along to the church at Ephesus. In order to survive in this fallen world, the child of God must be filled with The Holy Spirit. It is the same power that rose Jesus from the dead, and every believer has been granted access to this power! It is simply a matter of putting it to use. To be Spirit-filled is to surrender all of ourselves over to The Spirit's control. Every aspect of our lives is thereby dictated by Christ Himself. Christ is LORD of ALL, in the Spirit-filled disciple. Therefore, it is as if we are completely wrapped up in Christ Jesus, and He becomes our armor! Keeping this truth in mind, now listen to these verses once more.

**"Finally, be strengthened by The LORD and by HIS vast strength. Put on the full armor OF GOD so that you can stand against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this darkness, against evil, spiritual forces in the heavens. For this reason take up the full armor of God, so that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having prepared everything, to take your stand."**

**Ephesians 6:10-13** (emphasis added)

One of the key phrases in this passage is "having prepared everything to take your stand". This means that in order for us to be filled by The Spirit, to be wrapped up in Christ as it were, then there are some things that we are required to do. We are to make preparations for this spiritual battle to which we were enjoined upon pledging our allegiance to Christ. Paul uses the illustration of "putting on the armor" to explain for us just what we must do in order to be "wrapped up" or "clothed with Christ". It is this concept of being clothed with Christ that keeps the believer from falling into the snares of Satan.

**"Let us walk with decency, as in the daytime: not in carousing and drunkenness; not in sexual impurity and promiscuity; not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on The LORD Jesus Christ, and don't make plans to gratify the desires of the flesh."**

**Romans 13:13-14**

In short, this means that if we are wrapped up in Jesus, being filled with His Spirit, then He will protect us from the sin that is meant to bring us down. So, with this in mind, look at each piece of the armor of God as something that every believer must be continuously doing in order to keep himself clothed with Christ. The way that Paul lays these things out for us as individual pieces of armor is quite ingenious (because The Holy Spirit inspired it that way). For they are given in a progressive manner that shows us everything that we need to go through life as a Spirit-filled Christian. The first two requirements or "components" of armor, if you will, are The "Belt of Truth" and The "Breastplate of Righteousness". They represent the first two actions that every believer must take in order to walk according to The Spirit. I have entitled this first section of our study on the armor of God "Trust and Obey". Please allow me to explain.

## **The Belt (of Truth)**

**“Stand therefore, with truth like a belt around your waist...”**

**Ephesians 6:14a**

In Paul's day, the Roman soldiers wore a long sleeveless tunic or robe, if you will, that had holes cut out for the arms and head. This loose fitting garment came down almost to the knees. Around their waists, the soldiers wore a heavy leather belt that cinched up this tunic and held it in place. In times of battle the soldier would take the “skirt” of his tunic and tuck it up into his belt to keep him from becoming entangled in it as he ran or fought in hand to hand combat. To become caught up in his own robe could prove disastrous for a soldier caught in the throes of combat. This process of “tucking in ones robe” is actually referenced several times in scripture. It is called “girding up your loins for battle”. Everyone in Paul's day knew exactly what this term meant, for running, or swift motion of any kind, with a long flowing robe around your legs would prove to be difficult. Therefore, preparations for such activity were a must unless a person wanted to trip and fall over the hem of his own robe.

Spiritually speaking, Satan longs to “trip us up”, to cause us to stumble and fall as soldiers of Christ. He does this, as we have mentioned before, by using our own weaknesses against us. The “robe of flesh” in which we are clothed is in fact our worst enemy. Therefore, as Paul says in Romans (**Romans 13:13-14**), we must make no provision for the flesh. We need to keep the things that would cause us to stumble tucked into the control of the truth of Jesus Christ. And the only way that we can do this is to fully know and understand this truth. We are to wrap ourselves in God's truth, as we would a belt around our waist.

What does this mean exactly? It means that we must know The Word of God! The Word alone is God's truth. It is not just true for the believer, my friends, the Word of God is ABSOLUTE TRUTH. It is truth, whether a person believes it or not. Those who reject it will be destroyed, but those who believe will be saved. Think about this for a moment. If you are a born again believer, just how did that happen? You heard the Word of Truth and trusted in it. This is how we all were saved. First comes truth, and then faith, and ultimately salvation. The Holy Spirit of God convinces our hearts that what God has said about sin and our need for a Savior is truth, and then, we respond accordingly. We, at that moment, begin the process of putting the belt of truth around our waist as it were. But the process does not end there.

After we receive Christ by faith in the truth, we begin to develop a hunger for the rest of God's truth. A true born again Child of God will long for more and more of The Word of God. It is just that simple. Show me a “believer”, who has no hunger for God's truth, and I will show you someone who thinks they are saved, but they are not. The heart that has been regenerated by the Spirit of God, will long for The Word of God. The more of The Word that we hear and learn, the more of it that we believe and wrap ourselves in. We trust the Word, and by doing so, we are able to know what is right and what is wrong. This knowledge gives us exactly what we need to keep ourselves from stumbling. It keeps us from being “tripped up” by our own robe of flesh!

Why do we believe in teaching The Word of God so faithfully here at this church? Why do we strive to teach it to our children? So that we all can be wrapped up in the belt of truth! In order to clothe ourselves with Christ, we must know how Christ would have us to live. We can only know the will of God, by learning the Word of God. For it is by knowing The Word of God, that we will come to know The God of The Word! It is in His Word that God reveals to us His very nature. How can we possibly emulate Christ (**Ephesians 5:1**), if we do not wrap ourselves in His Word? Answer... we cannot.

So don't think for a moment that Bible Study is not important. It is vital. We must first hear the truth of the gospel in order to be saved. Then, we must continue in the Word of truth in order to “live like we are saved”. Every Sunday, we are dispensing truths from God's Holy Word, so that all who hear may wrap themselves in its truth. But this should only be a small part of the believer's quest for truth. Each of us must take it upon ourselves to feast on God's Word daily. For only then, will we be adequately prepared for what the devil might throw at us at any given moment. Only when we are wrapped up in God's Word, fully trusting in it as absolute truth, will we have the means necessary to take our stand. For without sound doctrine, the Christian is left vulnerable to all kinds of confusion. And confused soldiers, are useless on the battlefield. This is why we must teach doctrine at the church:

**“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, equipping the saints for the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ, until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of God’s Son, growing into maturity with a stature measured by Christ’s fullness. Then we will no longer be little children, tossed by the waves and blown around by every wind of teaching, by human cunning with cleverness in the techniques of deceit. But speaking the TRUTH in love, let us grow in every way into Him Who is the Head — Christ.”**  
**Ephesians 4:11-15**

So, how do we reach maturity in Christ, being fully wrapped up in His Spirit? It all starts with The Word of Truth. We hear it, understand it, and place our trust in it. We know what we should do, because we have wrapped ourselves in God’s truth. But, it is not enough just to know and believe The Word of God. We must also learn to “live what we believe”, and that bring us to next piece of the armor, “The Breastplate”.

### **The Breastplate (of Righteousness)**

**“...righteousness like armor on your chest...”**

**Ephesians 6:14b**

In order to protect his vital organs, such as the heart, the Roman soldier wore a breastplate, made of leather or metal, that would fit snugly across his chest and back. This breastplate was worn as a protective garment to keep anything from penetrating his upper body. It encased him all around, protecting him from both a frontal or a rear assault. Without his breastplate, the soldier would have been an easy mark upon the battlefield.

Paul likens the wearing of this breastplate to putting on righteousness. Righteousness simply means doing what is right and just. Paul is not just speaking about imputed righteousness here as some would argue. Imputed righteousness speaks of our “position” in Christ. When we are saved by grace through faith, God places the righteousness of Christ upon us. In other words, where our righteousness is lacking (**filthy rags, Isaiah 64:6**), we are clothed in Christ and His righteousness. Now, when God looks at us, He sees the perfection of His Son in our stead. Because we cannot live well enough to earn our own salvation, we put on the righteousness of Christ, and it is sufficient to give us “right standing” before a Holy God.

However, Paul is speaking here of not only the righteousness of Christ, but that of the believer as well. In other words, we are not only to have positional righteousness (a right standing before God), but practical righteousness as well. We are not only to be clothed in the righteousness of Christ, we are also to live righteous and holy lives empowered by His Spirit. The Child of God, who is filled with The Spirit of God, will live according to the Word of God. We will live what we believe, as it were.

There are many false teachers out there, who say that because we are saved by grace alone through faith, then it doesn’t matter how we live. “Live as you please”, they say, “for all is forgiven by grace.” This cheapens the gospel of Jesus Christ and is dangerously false teaching. The born again believer will desire to live a holy life. I’m not speaking of sinless perfection here, but striving to live in a way that brings honor and glory to God. We who have been saved by grace ought to live like we have been saved.

To willfully continue in sin, when we have been set free from sin, is unthinkable. It is like going to war without your breastplate. You have no chance of survival. God’s grace should change the way we live. Listen to the words of Paul:

**“The Law came along to multiply the trespass. But where sin multiplied, grace multiplied even more so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace will reign through righteousness, resulting in eternal life through Jesus Christ our LORD. What should we say then? Should we continue in sin so that grace may multiply? Absolutely not! How can we who died to sin still live in it?”**  
**Romans 5:20-6:2**

So here we see clearly that there is much more to our righteousness than that of our position, or standing before God clothed in the righteousness of Christ. We have been set apart to live according to His righteous nature living within us. The children of God have been reborn to allow us to emulate Christ in how we live our lives (again **Ephesians 5:1**). SO... we are to wrap ourselves in God's truth (the belt), and then, we are to live out this truth which we claim to believe (the breastplate). It is simply not enough to say we believe, and then not obey. Or as our friend James would say

**"For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead."**  
**James 2:26**

So, there it is in a nutshell. If you claim to believe in Jesus, then your life ought to prove that faith out in a practical way. To live out one's faith because you are filled with The Spirit of God is to be protected by the breastplate of righteousness and to guard your heart against sin. In Jewish thinking, the heart is the seat of emotions. So what is in a man's heart defines who he is. What pours out of us and is outwardly seen is simply a manifestation of what we are truly like on the inside. Listen to the words of Christ:

**"But what comes out of the mouth comes from the heart, and this defiles a person. For from the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, sexual immoralities, thefts, false testimony, and slander."**  
**Matthew 15:18-19**

Simply put, if your heart is bad, then that which is on the inside will come out in the way that you live. But conversely, if you have truly been born again by The Spirit, then your heart has been cleansed and made whole. You need to maintain a close relationship with Christ to keep it that way. The devil would love nothing more than to draw you back into the sins from which you have been delivered. So, you need to put on the breastplate of righteousness and live out the truth that has set you free. And this is what the belt and breastplate represent. Not simply to trust, but to "Trust and Obey"! This is the only way that a believer can fully guard his heart against the devil's schemes.

To be all that you can be as a soldier for Christ, you'll need your armor. The conflict is real and the enemy is continually waging a war against you and everyone who would claim Jesus as their commanding officer. In your own strength you have no chance, but God wants to protect you. Spend your time abiding in Christ and beware of idle pursuits that would make you vulnerable and penetrate your breastplate. The best way to avoid the pitfalls that are all around us is to keep your eye fixed upon Christ and His righteousness. Remember what happened to Simon Peter, when he walked on the water with The LORD. Everything was going great until he took his eyes off Jesus (**Matthew 14:22-23**). It only took a moment of weakness, before Peter began to sink. Good thing for him, he knew enough to cry out to Jesus for his rescue. That is exactly what all of us need to do, when we fall for some temptation from the enemy... cry out to Jesus. He can restore you. Thank God that we have a Savior Who will never abandon us to our foes. As the old hymn-writer once wrote, "Jesus is merciful, Jesus will save!"

So put on your armor and keep yourself wrapped in truth and live in righteousness. Trust and obey. And Jesus will protect you. And when you have fallen short, cry out for rescue and mercy, for God can restore you, if you will only ask Him. Don't leave yourself open to the devil's fiery darts, but rather stay close to your commanding officer. Idle time apart from Him could lead to disaster. Or as Paul would say:

**"Pay careful attention, then, to how you live — not as unwise people but as wise — making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So don't be foolish, but understand what The LORD'S will is."**  
**Ephesians 5:15-17**

Well said Paul! And it all begins with the belt and the breastplate! Wrap yourself in God's truth and live what you believe. In other words... Trust and Obey.

And let all of the soldiers of Christ say... TRUTH!!!