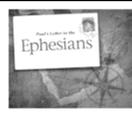




Ephesians 13 Wearing Your Armour



TEXT: EPHESIANS 6:10-18

Why do we need to 'be strong?' Because the ENEMY will ATTACK it all.

- * Causing us to doubt the INDICATIVE statements of what Christ did and who we now are as a result.
 - * By bombarding us with fears, doubts + anxieties ... guilt, regrets + insecurities ... He'll chip away incessantly: at our confidence, identity, purity.
 - * All designed to set us up to FAIL ... So the IMPERATIVES appear unattainable → So we back off, give up, undo all the positives and focus on negatives.
 - * "Sooner or later, every believer discovers that the Christian life is a BATTLEGROUND, not a PLAYGROUND.
- *How does the enemy attack you? Where are your weakspots?*
 → *Does it feel like a battleground? Right now? Why is it attractive to think of it as a playground? Why is that dangerous?*

REVELATION #1: Our battle is not against HUMAN BEINGS, but SPIRITUAL POWERS.

- * There are LEGIONS + RANKS of ANGELS + DEMONS working for Satan, opposing God.
 - * GOOD NEWS: Their POWER is LIMITED, their STRATEGIES are PREDICTABLE and their DAYS are NUMBERED.
 - * By His death and resurrection, Jesus DEFEATED the DEVIL (Eph 1:21-22).
- *Do you ever find yourself fighting against human opposition (flesh and blood)? Can you think of examples when you've seen through all that to identify the real enemy? (Think Lee and Lyn Rigby in the news this week). Why is it so important to know who your enemy is?*

REVELATION #2: You can't win a SPIRITUAL battle with EARTHLY, CARNAL, NATURAL methods (2 Cor 10:3-4).

- * You can't successfully take on the enemy AT HIS OWN GAME.
 - * First, we must acknowledge that the OLD WAY doesn't work. We need a NEW way, with far superior WEAPONS
- *What are the 'carnal weapons' of 2 Cor 10:3-4? What methods / weapons have you tended to use to defend yourself against attack? Have they worked? How are the spiritual weapons superior?*

1. BELT OF TRUTH

- * Belt HELD all the soldier's uniform TOGETHER.
 - * Satan is a LIAR (John 8:44) and the main thrust of his attack is LIES.
- *Give some typical examples of enemy lies. How do lies grow into something devastating? Why is integrity so crucial?*
 → *What does this attack look like for you? How might you change your tactics in the light of this teaching?*

2. BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

- * The enemy wants your HEART → To corrupt, wound, break and harden it. He knows the catastrophic effects of sin: pride, greed, lust and will throw temptation at you incessantly.

- * Righteousness is God's standard of CHARACTER, BEHAVIOUR + MOTIVE ... His way of DOING and BEING right.
 - * Jesus has made us POSITIONALLY righteous and this should DEFINE WHAT WE DO (Phil 1:9-11).
- *Your sin brings him glory, furthers his agenda and frustrated God's purposes in and through you. Discuss.*
 → *What does this attack look like for you? How might you change your tactics in the light of this teaching?*

3. SHOES OF GOSPEL PEACE

- * The Gospel is rooted in RECONCILIATION → At peace with God the Father, thanks to finished work of the Prince of Peace + now led by the Spirit of Peace.
 - * Enemy loves to RATTLE your peace → He's peace-thief (Jn 10:10); loves stirring anger, confrontation, relational fall out, disunity; thrives on stress, fear + anxiety (Phil 4:6-7).
 - * Having said that, Romans soldiers wore marching shoes, not slippers, designed to combine strength, protection + flexibility
 - * The purpose of WAR is to bring PEACE by CONQUEST and our call is to advance (Matt 16:18, Isa 52:7, Rom 16:20)
- *What does this attack look like for you? How does he 'rattle' your peace? How might you change your tactics in the light of this teaching?*

4. SHIELD OF FAITH

- * Everything the enemy throws at you must be INTERCEPTED by your FAITH SHIELD and TESTED against the WORD (Rom 10:17, 2 Cor 10:5).
 - * As Roman soldiers interlocked their shields to create strong defence, so we are not + should not be in battle alone. Danger is ISOLATION (1 Peter 5:8-9), but you have BROTHERS + SISTERS to stand with you and CHURCH to TEACH you.
- *What does this attack look like for you? What 'flaming arrows' does he tend to fire your way? How might you change your tactics in the light of this teaching?*
 → *The enemy can't penetrate strong, bold, confident faith. Weak faith however, he picks off. Discuss! (See 1 Peter 5:8-9)*

5. HELMET OF SALVATION

- * We know the MIND is the BATTLEFIELD → Enemy loves sowing THOUGHT-SEEDS and watching them develop a life of their own.
 - * At the FOREFRONT of our thinking, at all times, must be the most fundamental of spiritual truths : WE ARE SAVED!
- *What does this attack look like for you? What thought-seeds / suggestive thoughts does he try to plant in your mind? Why are those thought-seeds so dangerous? Where might they go? How might you change your tactics in the light of this teaching?*

6. SWORD OF THE SPIRIT, THE WORD OF GOD

- * If the Word is ALIVE in your mind, it will be POWERFUL when you speak it at time of crisis (Heb 4:12)
 - * Word should be your AUTOMATIC RESPONSE to every challenge.
- *What does this attack look like for you? How might you change your tactics in the light of this teaching?*
 → *The more you use a physical sword, the blunter it becomes; the more you use the Word sword, the sharper it becomes. Discuss!*