



KNOW YOUR SPIRITUAL ARMOUR 2

The Breastplate of Righteousness



EPHESIANS 6:10-18

- * The breastplate's primary purpose was to PROTECT the HEART.
 - * It goes without saying that the enemy is AFTER your HEART ... If he can WOUND you, if he can BREAK your HEART or WEAKEN your HEART, he can keep you on the back foot, bound & defeated.
- *What are the various ways the enemy attempts to wound our hearts? How, specifically, does he try to attack your heart? What strategies has he used with success in the past? How have you overcome his attacks?*
- *Why does he attack our hearts so remorselessly? What are the consequences for our Christian lives of a wounded, weakened or even broken heart?*

A. WHAT IS RIGHTEOUSNESS?

- * Simple definition = RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.
 - * REALITY = OUTSIDE of CHRIST we are UNRIGHTEOUS.
 - * That relationship is BROKEN, DAMAGED, (sin schism) and needs to be FIXED, (restored, redeemed) (Romans 3:9-10).
 - * Because we DEEPLY LONG to be 'right with God,' we instinctively try to FIX IT OURSELVES ... But we just CAN'T.
 - * Leads to SELF-righteousness = I'll FIX it myself or WORKS-righteousness = I'll EARN it myself (Romans 3:19-20).
 - * THE GOOD NEWS: Romans 3:21-25 = Righteousness is a GIFT ... Given to us in spite of, not because of WHAT WE HAVE DONE in fact, entirely because of WHAT JESUS HAS DONE (Colossians 2:21-22).
- *If you really are now righteous in Christ, how should that affect how you see God? How you see yourself? How you talk about yourself? How you relate to other people?*
- *Do you believe that the desire to be right with God manifests itself even in people who wouldn't describe themselves as Christians, and, if so, how?*
- *Are you ever tempted, even in subtle ways, into self-righteousness or works-righteousness? What is the difference between the two?*

Justification. Sanctification. Glorification

- * POSITION (PAST tense) = We HAVE BEEN MADE righteous in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21, Isaiah 61:10).
 - * PROGRESSION (PRESENT tense) = We BECOME MORE righteous as we are made more like Christ (1 Timothy 6:11).
 - * GLORY (FUTURE tense) = One day, we WILL STAND in the FULLNESS of God's righteousness (2 Peter 3:13).
- *How does the reality that we progressively become more righteous affect our position as righteous in Christ? [P.S. Is this a trick question?]*
- *How do we become 'more righteous?' How do we 'pursue' righteousness?*

B. WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT?

- * Because our hearts will be REMORSELESSLY ATTACKED (2 Corinthians 2:11).
 - * One of the Enemy's favourite games is to tell us that we are USELESS, WORTHLESS, REJECTED, ON THE OUTSIDE, JUST A SINNER.
- *Why are those so dangerous? How does he attack in these areas? Are you just a sinner?*
- * Christians that don't UNDERSTAND righteousness are EASY PREY.
- *Why are they 'easy prey?' How does the enemy use self-righteousness and works-righteousness against you?*
- * If you KNOW that you're righteous, no word of CONDEMNATION, false ALLEGATION or NASTY DIG can break through (Romans 8:1).
 - * Satan is the ACCUSER; Jesus is the TRANSFORMER.
 - * Satan deals in GUILT; Jesus in GRACE.
 - * Satan wants to DEVOUR always; Jesus to DELIVER always.
 - * With your breastplate IN PLACE you can DEFLECT those condemnatory accusations so they cannot PENETRATE your heart.
- *What is the difference between condemnation and conviction? Which comes from where and how?*

C. HOW DO WE USE IT AS A WEAPON?

- * Righteousness is a weapon for ATTACK and DEFENCE (2 Corinthians 6:7).

DEFENSIVELY

- * DEFLECT all those arrows
 - * PROTECT your heart
 - * Keeps your SPIRIT from being WOUNDED.
- *Has your spirit ever been wounded? How would a fuller revelation / understanding of your righteousness in Christ and all that entails have protected you from those arrows?*

OFFENSIVELY

1. It REVOLUTIONISES your PRAYER LIFE

- * If you understand your righteousness, you don't BEG as a WORM; you CLAIM as a CHILD.
 - * You pray from VICTORY not DEFEAT ... with AUTHORITY not WISHFUL THINKING ... From HEAVEN DOWN rather than EARTH UP. (Hebrews 4:16, 1 John 5:14, James 5:16).
- *What does it mean to pray from VICTORY not DEFEAT? Why can you have authority, rather than wishful thinking? What does it mean to pray from heaven down rather than earth up?*
- *Look up Hebrews 4:16, 1 John 5:14 and James 5:16, and note what they teach us about prayer.*

2. Your righteousness SHINES

- *How does righteousness shine? How is that shininess received? What does your righteousness affect how the enemy sees you?*