



NEW TESTAMENT • LESSON 67

THE ARMOR OF GOD

The gospel that saves us also arms us for battle.



MONDAY

THE STORY: EPHESIANS 6:1-3

In writing to the Ephesians, Paul takes time to address the children directly. He does not say, “Parents, tell your children to obey you.” Paul assumes that children will be reading this letter, so he speaks directly to them. He reminds all children of God’s commandment to obey their parents and that if they do, they will be rewarded with a long, prosperous life. The illustration of the armor of God, which ends Paul’s book, seems to be custom-tailored for children and is an easy illustration to understand.

Notice also that Paul tells the children to obey their parents in the Lord. Apart from the saving work of Christ, children, just like adults, are hopelessly bound in their sins. The phrase “in the Lord” tells children that they should obey not merely because their parents say so, but because God says so. But now that Christ has come, “in the Lord” means much more than the law. Those three words must now include grace through Christ as well!

TALK ABOUT IT:

Why is the Lord mentioned in this verse? (Children are to obey their parents not just because their parents tell them, but because the Lord tells them. And in their own strength, they cannot obey as they should. They need the Lord to help them.)

PRAY:

Parents, take time to lay your hands on each of your children one at a time and ask God to give them the grace to follow God and obey His Word.

**TUESDAY****THE STORY: EPHESIANS 6:10-14**

We need spiritual armor for a spiritual war. We are not fighting against men, we are fighting against a spiritual enemy. Our enemy is evil and powerful. But God has given us what we need to defend ourselves against the enemy's attack. We have the armor of God. A normal sword cannot save us against a spiritual enemy. We need spiritual armor! If we use the armor God gives, He promises that we will be able to withstand the attack. The first two pieces of armor are truth and righteousness. Since the enemy's attack relies often on lies, for he is the father of all lies, we must remember the truth of God. It alone can sustain us.

Our enemy also comes at us with partial truth. One of the enemy's greatest schemes is to point out weakness and suggest we are unworthy. This, of course, is true! We are weak and unworthy. But we must remember that it is not our own righteousness we wear. Christ's righteousness protects us like a breastplate. When the enemy tells us we are weak, we can say, "Yes, but my Lord is strong." When the enemy tells us we are unworthy, we reply, "Right, but Jesus is worthy." When the enemy tells us we have no righteousness, we reply that we have the perfect righteousness of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21).

TALK ABOUT IT:

Why would a soldier wear a belt? (In addition to keeping his pants on and his uniform secure, the soldier's belt held his offensive weapons as well, such as his sword or knife. All that we have depends on the truth of God's Word. The soldier who goes to battle without a belt would not be able to run for fear of his pants falling down. That makes him a fairly easy target for the enemy!)

What does the breastplate protect? (The breastplate protects our most vital organs - our heart and lungs. One blow to the heart or lungs can kill a man in a minute.)

Why is this good picture of our righteousness? (If we don't have Christ's righteousness, we cannot live and are condemned in our sin. The enemy could condemn us by simply reminding us of all the sins we committed. If, however, we have the righteousness of Christ in place, no amount of accusations, whether true or false, can affect us as we carry the unassailable righteousness of our Lord.)

PRAY:

Ask God to save each member of your family so that they would be wearing God's righteousness, which comes to us by faith in Christ.



WEDNESDAY
WHERE IS THE GOSPEL?

THE STORY: EPHESIANS 6:15

All the armor, from the belt of truth to the sword of the Spirit, is connected to the gospel. Each piece takes us back to the cross. The belt of truth is our security because we know the truth of God's plan to send His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for our sins. As a result we receive His righteousness as a breastplate along with salvation in Christ as our helmet. Faith in Christ and His sacrificial death is our shield. The Spirit that God pours into us at conversion helps us to use the Word of God against the schemes of the enemy.

So why do we have the gospel of peace in the midst of the battle? Well, we are to love our enemies, and there is no greater demonstration of love than to share the gospel of peace. In the midst of our battle against Satan and against our own sinful nature, we always need to be ready to give a reason for our hope.

TALK ABOUT IT:

Why is the gospel called the gospel of peace? (Romans 5:1 tells us that because of what Jesus did, we have peace with God. Hebrews tells us we should make every effort to live in peace with all men [Hebrews 12:14]. The gospel restores peace with God and also helps bring peace with our fellow man.)

Who has God placed near your life whom you might share the gospel of peace with? (Parents, consider whom the Lord might have your family reach out to in order to share the gospel of peace.)

PRAY:

Pray for those you would like to reach with the gospel.



THURSDAY

THE STORY: EPHESIANS 6:16-20

The shield, helmet, and sword protect us. Paul continues with the description of the defensive armor by describing our shield of faith and the helmet of salvation. The gospel is able to fully protect us from any attack. A fully equipped soldier can defend himself well. We are well defended as we stand upon the truth of God's salvation in Christ.

The sword is an offensive weapon with which we attack and defeat those who come against us. Our attack is not with human strength or skill. Our attack is mounted by using the Word of God, which is powerful beyond human strength. Paul concludes by encouraging the Ephesians to pray and by asking for their prayers for his own battle with sin. Sometimes we can think that the men who

wrote Scripture were perfect and without sin. But Paul was tempted to give in to fear and not use his sword as he should. If Paul needed to pray, then we certainly need to pray also.

TALK ABOUT IT:

How is the sword different from the other parts of the armor? (The sword is a weapon that can be used to attack. The other items of armor are mostly used to defend.)

How can the fear of man hold us back from using our sword as we declare the gospel? (We can be concerned with what people will think of us if we tell them the good news about Jesus. We sometimes live to please those around us rather than honor the Lord. We should not be afraid to invite someone to church or tell them about Jesus, but often we are.)

PRAY:

Pray that God would give each member of your family courage to share the gospel with others. Pray that God would keep you aware of opportunities to make Him known to those you meet.



**FRIDAY
ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS**

THE STORY: PSALM 69:17-29

When Jesus was crucified, He was offered wine mixed with gall to drink. Then He was offered wine vinegar to quench his thirst. These two items are mentioned in the account of suffering from Psalm 69 (Matthew 27:34 and Matthew 27:48). Jesus was also scorned, disgraced, and shamed. Jesus found no sympathy, for even His Father in heaven forsook Him on the cross. This psalm is quoted in the New Testament as a prophetic picture of the Lord's suffering.

TALK ABOUT IT:

When we read Psalm 69 should we think about the suffering of David who wrote the psalm or of Christ and His suffering? (We should consider David, but then quickly turn our attention to Christ. This psalm, like all the others, is designed to point to Jesus. Apart from Christ, all the stories of the scriptures are just stories.)

Why should the suffering of Christ increase our gratitude and thankfulness? (We can sometimes become too familiar with the cross and forget the genuine suffering that Christ endured for us. Thinking about every aspect of the suffering of Christ, even the small details like being offered vinegar when you are thirsty, can help us to appreciate what a great salvation we have.)

PRAY:

Praise the Lord for His willingness to suffer and die in our place.