
Wednesday GEL Group

Grow Encourage Learn

In our final week of studying the book of Ephesians, we will examine what the individual pieces of the armour of God are. Last week, we concluded how the armour of God is most effective when used in community. That is the church community of brothers and sisters in Christ, standing ground with you, in unity. In order to stand our ground, believers will need every piece of God's armour. As we will examine tonight, the pieces listed in the following verses is the order in which a Roman Soldier would typically put them on.

First, let's pray and then read Ephesians 6:10-18

1. Verses 14 speaks of firstly standing firm with the belt of truth buckled around your waist. When a Roman soldier would put their belt on and fastened it, the soldier was 'on duty' where if it was slackened, they were 'off duty'. As the belt formed the foundation of a soldier's armour, how does the belt of truth form the foundation of our armour?
2. Is there a case to be made that we can be 'off duty' Christians? What could be the consequences? What does the Bible say about this?
3. Next is the breastplate of righteousness. What does a breastplate protect? How does righteousness provide a defense and how significant is it? What could be the attack of the enemy? What is the difference between "self-righteousness" and the "righteousness of God"?
4. What is the righteousness that has been promised to us through our faith in Jesus Christ?
5. A Roman Soldier wore sandals or military shoes that firstly protected their feet without slowing them down. They were made of leather with studded soles which allowed them to march further as well as giving them the ability to dig in and hold their ground in slippery surfaces. How are our feet fitted?

6. **A Roman soldier would also have a shield as part of their armoury. It was a large oblong shape made of leather and wood with an iron frame and edging. At times the soldier would soak their shield in water which would help extinguish the enemy's fiery arrows. For us, the shield of faith demonstrates our complete reliance on God. Our faith is not something that we need to 'put on show' for others but our willingness to do His will. What parts of Scripture tell us what the illustrative fiery arrows of the ruler of this world would shoot against us? How does faith help us to stand firm?**

7. **Helmets do two things. They are protective as well as provides an image of identity. One could tell who they belong to by the shape of their helmets. Let's look at Isaiah 59 and compare the language the prophet used in conjunction with Paul's writing here in Ephesians. What stands out for you in these two readings?**

8. **Finally, we come to the sword of truth which is the only potentially offensive weapon. The sword of the Spirit makes the word of God effective as we receive it and believe it. The Spirit gives the Word its penetrating power and sharp edge. The sword is also a defensive weapon. Let's read Matthew 4:1-11 to see how Jesus perfectly exemplifies this. How is your sword? Is it sharp and ready for use? Is it rusting? In our lifestyle, is there a potential to rust in peace in the peace of our own mind, riches and abilities? What does it actually mean to rest in peace?**

9. **Let's read 1 Thessalonians 3 to see an example of 'why' the armour of God is being illustrated to stand firm in the gospel as well as 'why' unity is so important in community.**

10. **What does Paul exhort us to do in verse 18?**

11. **How have you grown, how have you been encouraged and what are the key areas of learning for you as we have studied the book of Ephesians?**