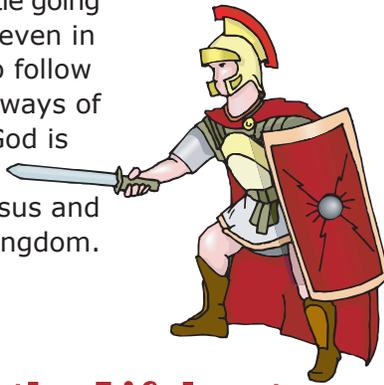




The Armor of God

Ephesians 6:10-18

There is a very real battle going on all around us, and even in us. We are tempted to follow the crowd and go the ways of the world. But when God is living in us, we have His power to follow Jesus and live our lives for His kingdom.



Day #1: In the Lifeboat

Pretend your bedroom floor is the ocean, and your bed is a boat. Try "swimming" around the ocean. Now imagine there was danger in the water. What if the water contained something much stronger than you? What if it were teaming with sharks? If that were the case, would you want to just be *near* your boat, or would you rather be *in* your boat? You would certainly want to be *in* the boat! Jump in your boat (bed)! Even though sharks are much stronger than you, the boat is stronger than they are. If sharks were circling, you would be crazy not to sit inside the protection of the boat!

The Bible describes the devil as a hungry lion (1 Peter 5:8). He is very much like a shark. He prowls around constantly, seeking to destroy those who are weaker than he is. Because God loves you and created you in His image, the devil wants to ruin every good thing in your life. He tries to lure you into sinful behavior. He wants you to believe lies about God, about others, and even about yourself.

But even though the devil is tricky, he is nothing compared to God! God's truth ALWAYS wins! God is more powerful than we can imagine. With just a word, He created our universe, everything in it, and everything beyond it. God is in control of all things, And He **freely** offers His protection to us.

+ Finally, be strong **in** the Lord and **in** His mighty power. - Ephesians 6:10 NIV

All you must do is **be in** the Lord. This is abiding in, or remaining in Him. It is sort of like climbing into your indestructible Lifeboat everyday. When you are in God, the devil cannot harm you.

***** How can you be *in* God? (Talk to Him; Listen to Him in prayer and by reading His word; Sing praise songs to Him; Thank Him for what He does.) It is so much easier to **stay in** the protection of God's power than to ever leave and try to fight the devil's schemes on your own! As a family, ask each other, "Are you in the Lifeboat today?"

Day #2: At War

Did you know that all believers are at war? It is not a battle against other people. It isn't even a battle that we can see with our eyes. It's a battle over our minds.

+ *Our fight is not against human beings. It is against the rulers, the authorities and the powers of this dark world. It is against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly world.* - Ephesians 6:12

Satan wants people to sin. He wants our thoughts to turn away from God and toward things that are evil. Satan is a clever enemy. He knows that if he can focus our minds on things other than God, then he can lure us into sin. But Satan's schemes are NO MATCH for God's incredible power.

Make no mistake, once you have trusted Jesus to forgive your sin, you are God's child forever! Satan can NEVER take away a person's salvation. But the devil knows that if a believer is trapped in sin, he will not bear spiritual fruit, and he will not live a life that shows God's glory to others.

Battling Satan's schemes is impossible for any of us to do in our own power. The great news is that God has given us everything we need to defeat the devil!

So put on all of God's armor. Evil days will come. But you will be able to stand up to anything. And after you have done everything you can, you will still be standing. - Ephesians 6:13

Look at the verse above. Whose armor do we put on? (God's armor.) This spiritual armor is stronger than any metal on earth. It is the power we need to protect our minds from the devil's temptations. It is the very power of God, and it is available for each of us. When you are **in** God's armor, you are **in** His protection.

***** Ask God to make you aware of the spiritual battle around you. Ask Him to show you when the devil is trying to distract you, tempt you, or lie to you.

Day #3: The Armor

Ephesians 6:14-18 describes the armor of God. We know that the writer of these verses, Paul, was in prison for several years. He had no company other than the Roman soldiers who were guarding him. Paul really knew what the soldiers' armor looked like. Paul compared God's protection for us to a suit of armor. A soldier wears armor to protect him from his enemy's blows and he has weapons with which to strike his enemy.

Day #3 continued:



*Stand firm then, with the **belt of truth** buckled around your waist, with the **breastplate of righteousness** in place, and with your **feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.** - Ephesians 6:14-15*

First, we must know truth. Just as a soldier's belt holds his armor in place and carries his weapons, the truth holds our spiritual armor together. The devil is called the father of lies (John 8:44). He is afraid of the truth because the truth is that God is immeasurably greater than he is. The truth is that when Jesus died on the cross, He made a way for all people to be free from the power of sin.

In a suit of armor, the breastplate guards the soldier's heart and other very important organs. Without a solid breastplate, a soldier would easily be killed with one blow from the enemy's sword or arrow. Being righteous is being right, perfect, or without sin. God is righteous. The **only** way for us to be righteous is by having faith in Jesus, who died to take away our sin (Romans 3:22). We put on the breastplate of righteousness when we put our faith in Jesus. The enemy will destroy those who have not put their faith in Jesus.

Every good soldier needs solid footing. Without it, he would slip and fall, and the enemy would strike him. The Bible tells us to be prepared or ready with the gospel of peace to give us sure footing. The gospel of peace is being **SURE** that because of Jesus' sacrifice, the believer is saved from his sin and he has nothing to fear from God or people. We can only have this sure footing when we have put our trust in Jesus.



You can only find all of these things in Jesus. He is the truth (John 14:6). When we put our faith in Him, He makes us righteous; He brings us peace with God (Romans 3:22, Luke 7:50).

Day #4: The Weapon

Paul continues to describe the armor of God:



*In addition to all this, take up the **shield of faith**, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the **helmet of salvation** and the **sword of the Spirit**, which is the word of God.* - Ephesians 6:16-17

The soldier's shield is used to defend himself against the enemy's attack. The shield is held up in front of the soldier to block arrows that are sailing toward him. Several times, the Bible says that lies are like deadly arrows (Psalm 25:18, 26:18-19). From the first book of the Bible to the last, we see that the devil is a liar - especially about God and those who follow God (Genesis 3:4-5; Revelation 12:10). Only our faith in Jesus, which is a gift from God, will stop the devil's lies from landing in our hearts and minds (Ephesians 2:8).

The helmet may be the most important part of the armor because it protects the soldier's head. Without a helmet,

Day #4 continued:

the soldier would easily be crushed. Paul compares our salvation to a helmet. Salvation is being saved from the punishment that we deserve because of our sin. Having faith in Jesus is the **ONLY** way to have salvation (Acts 20:21). Once we are saved, the devil cannot destroy us.

Then we come to the sword. This is a weapon with which the soldier can strike his enemy. Paul says our weapon is the word of God. God's word is living and active. It is sharper than any sword on earth (Hebrews 4:12). One of the wonderful things that the Holy Spirit does is that He reminds us of Bible verses that we have learned. When you are in a situation where the devil is trying to attack you with doubts or lies, the Holy Spirit will tell you the truth, and remind you of verses that you know (John 14:26, 16:13). The Bible calls that your spiritual sword!



Set aside a special time each week when you can memorize Bible verses. The more you study God's word, the more ammunition you put in your arsenal.

Day #5: "Pray On" the Armor

Take a few minutes to draw a picture of the armor of God. Can you remember all of the pieces Paul wrote about? (Belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, shoes of the gospel of peace, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, sword of the Spirit)

The last weapon that Paul talks about is prayer.



At all times, pray by the power of the Spirit. Pray all kinds of prayers. Be watchful, so that you can pray. Always keep on praying for all of God's people. - Ephesians 6:18

Prayer may not seem like a weapon, but it certainly is. Praying by the power of God's Holy Spirit is a very powerful thing! Paul uses the word **dunamis** to describe the power of God's Holy Spirit within us (Ephesians 3:16). This is the same word that we get the word **dynamite** from. Now that is some amazing power!

Every person who puts their faith in Jesus is given access to this power. By God's power, you can be protected from the devil's temptations and his lies (1 Corinthians 10:13). By God's power, the devil is defeated. When you remain in God, and in His armor, you can live a life that is fruitful and points other people to Jesus.



Look at your picture and pray about each piece of armor. Thank God for providing the breastplate of righteousness and the helmet of salvation by sending Jesus to take away your sin. Ask God to protect you from the devil's lies with the belt of truth and the shield of faith. Ask God to keep you firmly planted and ready to share the gospel of peace. And ask God to use the sword of His word to defeat the devil's schemes in your life and in the lives of those around you.