

**Stand Firm in Warfare:
The Call to Battle – Gird Your Loins!
Eph 6:14-20 (Part 3)**

I. Introduction- Turn to Eph 6

**A. Paul Calls us to PUT ON THE FULL ARMOR of GOD
– So - How important is armor?**

1. Shortly before dawn on Aug. 28, 2003 an M1A1 Abrams tank on routine patrol in Baghdad “was hit by something” that crippled the 69-ton behemoth.
2. According to an unclassified Army report, the mystery projectile punched through the vehicle’s skirt and drilled a pencil-sized hole through the hull. The hole was so small that “my little finger will not go into it,” the report’s author noted. The “something” continued into the crew compartment, where it passed through the gunner’s seatback, grazed the kidney area of the gunner’s flak jacket and finally came to rest after boring a hole 1½ to 2 inches deep in the hull on the far side of the tank. As it passed through the interior, it hit enough critical components to knock the tank out of action. ...In the sort of excited language seldom included in official Army documents, he said, “The unit is very anxious to have this ‘SOMETHING’ identified. It seems clear that a penetrator of a yellow molten metal is what caused the damage, but what weapon fires such a round and precisely what sort of round is it? The bad guys are using something unknown and the guys facing it want very much to know what it is and how they can defend themselves.”
3. Article goes on to discuss HOW WORRIED the military is that SOMETHING PENETRATED the armor of the tank!
4. I didn’t do more research to see if they found a solution – but what is the issue here?

5. A: MILITARY GOES to GREAT LENGTHS to PROTECT the TANK and it's CREW WITH ARMOR

6. M1A2 Abrams tank

a) = most advanced tank in the world!

b) = one of most HEAVILY ARMORED vehicles too!

B. Armor is CRITICAL on PLANES, SHIPS, VEHICLES – EVEN on SOLDIERS!

C. Think about the war in Iraq! What have been two of the greatest controversies for our troops?!

1. Body Armor – against the bullets of the enemy

a) Military-issued body armor was deemed INFERIOR to what you could buy personally in the US

b) Many soldiers and their families were buying personal body armor and taking it over to Iraq to use instead of standard issue!

2. Vehicle Armor – Against IEDs and RPGs

a) IEDs = Improvised Explosive Devices

(a) Bomb filled cars on roadside

(b) Land mines

(c) Buried explosives next to road

(2) Remotely blown up as vehicles go by!

b) RPGs = Rocket-propelled grenades!

c) Military's Humvees (the modern Jeep) comes in two versions

(1) Heavily armored

(2) Lightly armored

d) Seems most of the Humvees at the start of the war were lightly armored!

(1) Soldiers were easily killed by IEDs and RPGS

e) Heard stories of Soldiers RE-INFORCING their Humvees with extra metal while Pentagon figured out how to UPGRADE the armor!

D. What's the POINT of all of this? EVEN the WORLD KNOWS you NEED ARMOR to FIGHT WARS!

1. NO SURPRISE that GOD tells us that we NEED HIS ARMOR to fight SPIRITUAL WARFARE

E. BUT before we go back to the Armor of God

1. DON'T LET PRIDE keep you from putting on your Armor!
2. TAKE HEED

F. I want to speak briefly of three men: Solomon, Samson, and David.

1. Solomon was the wisest of all men.
2. Samson was the strongest of all men. He killed 1000 men with the jawbone of an ass and he toppled a temple with his own hands.
3. David had a heart after God's own heart.
 - a) He loved the Lord and sought to honor and glorify God.
4. Yet, all three fell. As strong as these men were they were no match for the schemes of the Devil.
 - a) Satan, in his evil cunning led Solomon to marry many foreign women and through them he fell to the temptation to serve false gods.
 - b) Samson, as strong as he was, was unable to resist the persistence of a woman. Delilah hounded him into telling the secret of his strength, and through her betrayal of Delilah, he ultimately fell.
 - c) David fell into the temptation of lust, then adultery, then murder.

G. Are you any stronger than they?

H. Can you handle Satan and his demonic forces ON YOUR OWN? NO!

I. Review: STAND FIRM in WARFARE

1. The CALL to PREPARE (6:10-13)

Eph 6:10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. 13 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

2. Then...

II. The Call to Battle / Fight (6:14-20)

A. The Mandate

14 Stand firm therefore,

1. In the Preparation Section (v.10-13) saw
 - a) THREE TIMES in the preparation section we are told that we going to be called to “stand firm”
 - b) Guess What? Now are called to STAND FIRM in battle!! 😊
2. “Stand firm” = COMMAND -DO it ONE TIME -STAY THERE!
3. =KEY OUTCOME of the PASSAGE
 - a) All the strengthening / All the armor
 - b) SO THAT you STAND FIRM!
 - c) = DEFENSIVE POSITION NOT OFFENSIVE! – HOLD YOUR GROUND
4. IMPORTANT – grammatical Structure
 - a) stand firm= COMMAND DRIVES SECTION to v.20!
 - b) ALL of the Pieces of armor are described with participles – not commands
 - c) IOW – grammatically they DETAIL OUT HOW to STAND FIRM (= the METHOD)

5. So – STAND FIRM is our BATTLE COMMAND – we are to ACTIVELY GET SET INTO POSITION and HOLD IT!

B. The Method (How we stand firm)

HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, 15 and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; 16 in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

III. The Girdle of Truth

14...HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH,

A. METAPHOR: Belt for tunic

1. Soldier wore a tunic – piece of cloth – Square with Holes for arms
2. Had to GATHER IT AROUND THE BODY
3. Used LEATHER BELT
4. BUT Belt had shoulder strap – front-to-back
5. Shoulder strap had sword holder!
 - a) IMPORTANT – because girdle of truth and sword of the Spirit – the Word of God ARE RELATED!
6. And – depending on how long the tunic was below the belt – they'd tuck in the extra to "shorten skirt" for maneuverability

B. MEANING: preparedness

Ex 12:11 'Now you shall eat it in this manner: with your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste—it is the LORD's Passover.

C. Key – What do you gird with? A: TRUTH

D. Debated meaning! Either

1. CONTENT: Truth = Word of God
2. ATTITUDE: Truthfulness
 - a) = Attitude of Readiness, alertness
3. Ultimately – Truthfulness is grounded in TRUTH
 - a) Every piece of Armor needs the RIGHT ATTITUDES and ACTIONS to use in battle
 - (1) If the foundation is truth – let's go there!

E. In the end whichever side you pick -end up at TRUTH!

F. Who is truth? CHRIST! – the living word!

[Jn 14:6](#) Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

G. Don't we PUT on CHRIST and have Christ in us?

[Ga 3:27](#) For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

[Col 1:27](#) ...Christ in you, the hope of glory.

H. So –

1. We've clothe ourselves with Christ – the living Word
2. We've got the Spirit of Truth – our resident GUIDE of ALL TRUTH!
3. THEN STUDY WORD of GOD to LEARN PERSON of CHRIST!

[2 Ti 2:15](#) Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

[2 Pe 1:2](#) Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; [3](#) seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

a) YOU FIND TRUTH in the “KNOWLEDGE of God and of Jesus our Lord”

[Eph 4:20](#) But you did not learn Christ in this way, [21](#) if

indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus,

4. You LEARN to LEARN a person – Jesus Christ
5. Truth is all for the TRUTH ABOUT CHRIST to KNOW CHRIST and become LIKE HIM

IV. Breastplate of Righteousness

and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS,

A. “and having put on”

1. = another participle that GIVES US ANOTHER DETAIL of WHAT the COMMAND to STAND FIRM MEANS!
2. Middle voice = you participate in the action of putting it on yourself!

B. “the breastplate of righteous”

1. literally = “the breastplate which consists of righteousness”

C. “breastplate”

1. = BODY ARMOR! – DEFENSIVE armor!
2. Cloth or Leather “shirt”
 - a) COVERED with
 - (1) Slices of hoofs of animals OR
 - (2) Chain mail OR
3. Later: molded heavy Leather or metal plating
4. KEY – what did it protect?
 - a) Purpose to STOP the enemy’s weapons from getting to your body’s vital organs!
 - b) HEART
 - c) ORGANS of the STOMACH region!
 - d) Both of these have GREAT THEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE to the Jewish mind!
5. Heart = mind = thinking

Pr 23:7 For as he thinks within himself, so he is. ...

Mt 9:4 And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, "Why are you thinking evil in your hearts?

Lk 9:47 But Jesus, knowing what they were thinking in their heart, took a child and stood him by His side,

a) So = PROTECT YOUR THINKING!

6. Stomach area = Bowels = Feelings and emotions

Col 3:12 ...put on ...compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;

a) Col 3:12 = put BOWELS of COMPASSION

b) Don't you FEEL your EMOTIONS in your GUT? = GUT-FEELING

c) So = PROTECT your FEELINGS and EMOTIONS too

7. So – Breastplate protects THINKING and EMOTIONS!

D. "righteousness"

1. What is this **righteousness**?

a) It isn't is our own righteousness!

b) Our righteousness was not sufficient to save us,

c) Our righteousness will never be sufficient to keep us.

d) Isaiah = our righteousness is "filthy rags."

e) Our righteousness is NO BREASTPLATE AT ALL!

(1)= Bare chested!

(2)Reminds of a boy our children used to run with – SO PROUD of HIS body he never wore any shirt – just strutted around bare-chested!

(3)That's what a prideful, sefl-righteous Christian looks like in spiritual warfare against SATAN!

2. Our righteousness is not in view, rather it is the righteousness of Christ which is in view.

E. BUT –

1. Is it the Righteousness GIVEN to US at Salvation (IMPUTED RIGHTEOUS)
2. or our RIGHTEOUS Living / Practical RIGHTEOUSNESS? A: BOTH

F. Christ's Righteousness GIVEN to US!

1. Christ is the true righteous one
2. AND He is OUR righteousness–
3. Because of His work on Calvary's cross, we can now receive His righteousness.
4. When you become a Christian and reach out in faith to God through Christ, the righteousness of Christ is imputed to you at that moment:
 - a) God clothes you in the righteousness of Christ.
 - b) He puts a canopy of the absolute holiness of Jesus Christ over you.
 - c) From that moment throughout eternity, whenever God looks at you, He sees the righteousness of Jesus Christ.
 - d) That is called *imputed righteousness* by the theologians
 - (1) Impute = “to credit to”
 - (2) AND At salvation we are IMPUTED His Righteousness.
 - e) He died there for us, and in our place. He now gives us His righteousness in exchange for ours.

[1 Cor 1:30](#) “But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption.”

f) In 2 Corinthians 5:21 we read,

“He made him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in him.”

5. Imputed Righteousness IS the ABSOLUTE NECESSARY FOUNDATION for living righteously!
6. Putting on the BREASTPLATE of RIGHTEOUS =
 - a) FIRST – HAVING the RIGHTEOUSNESS of Christ IMPUTED to you
 - b) Plus OUR RIGHTEOUS LIVING!

G. PRACTICAL Righteousness / Righteous Living!

1. Just because you ARE a CHRISTIAN
 - a) Doesn't mean you AUTOMATICALLY LIVE like Christ!
 - b) IOW – You can be a CHRISTIAN and NOT put the BREASTPLATE ON – You are UNPROTECTED even though you have it to WEAR!
2. Turn to Romans 6 and let's see Paul EXHORT us TO LIVING RIGHTEOUSLY!
3. Actually – start at Rom 5:18
 - a) Rom 5:12 and following – Paul shows
 - (1)HOW sin entered world through sin of Adam
 - (2)HOW Christ's work on the cross made it possible for us to BE RIGHT with God again
 - b) 5:18 he summarizes and says:

Ro 5:18 So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. 19 For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous (imputed, legal righteous standing before God). 20 The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, 21 so that, as

sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

4. THEN Paul gets MORE SPECIFIC in Roman 6!

a) In the FIRST 10 verses –

- (1) He wants to answer the OBVIOUS CRITICISM that if you are given this FREE GIFT, then PEOPLE will TAKE ADVANTAGE of it and SIN!
- (2) Almost like the child who inherits a fortune and never learns the value of work – has no reason to be hard working and good!
- (3) He confronts this thinking as WRONG
- (4) Then explains our BAPTISM into the DEATH and RESURRECTION of CHRIST – our IDENTIFICATION with HIM at the cross
- (5) THEN, BASED on what CHRIST has done for us

b) LIVE RIGHTEOUSLY, NOT SINFULLY!

Ro 6:11 Even so (i.e. THEREFORE) consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. 12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, 13 and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. (LIVE RIGHTEOUSLY so that GOD can USE YOU!) 14 For sin shall not be master over you (YOU DON'T HAVE TO SIN!), for you are not under law but under grace. 15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be! (Argument – Clothed in the righteousness of Christ you are now FREE to OBEY – not free to SIN!) 16 Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience

resulting in righteousness? 17 But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, 18 and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. 19 I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in *further* lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification. 20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. (You could NOT obey God) 21 Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death. 22 But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life. 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

c) POINT: As a CHRISTIAN – you CAN and SHOULD now OBEY GOD = Live righteously

(1) Christ has made you FREE to OBEY

(2) Peter (1 Peter 1:14) Your new nature is NOW one of OBEDIENCE to God!

(3) You are ACTUALLY A SLAVE STILL! – to righteousness not to sin!

(4) OBEY your new master/Lord Jesus Christ!

(5) Benefit? ETERNAL LIFE!

5. Again – ALL of this is TO SHOW that RIGHTEOUS HOLY LIVING MUST follow Salvation to PUT on the BREASTPLATE of righteousness!

a) You have NO defense against Satan if SIN DOMINATES your LIFE!

b) BUT – Satan CANNOT HURT your VITAL organs – MIND and EMOTIONS WHEN you are OBEYING GOD!

H. Paul shows us **BOTH** in Phil 3 (Turn to)

1. Paul describes Self-righteousness

Php 3:3 [for we are the *true* circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and] put no confidence in the flesh (i.e. do not be SELF-RIGHTEOUS – let me explain what that would be!..), 4 although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: 5 circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; 6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness (God's right standard of living) which is in the Law, found blameless. (NO ONE LIVED the LAW better than me! Note: not perfectly – no one can perfectly keep the law – all sin!)

2. "BUT" this gain is loss! – Self-righteousness "isn't it"!

7 But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. 8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, 9 and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, (takes back to v.6 = how well I kept the law)

3. BUT I'm Depending on CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IMPUTED TO Me!

9b...but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith ("given righteousness" – received), 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; 11 in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

4. Now let's talk about RIGHTEOUS LIVING – I must APPLY RIGHTEOUSNESS to my Life – LIVE God's RIGHT Standards!

12 Not that I have already obtained *it* or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of *it* yet; but one thing *I do*: forgetting what *lies* behind and reaching forward to what *lies* ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you; 16 however, let us keep living by that same *standard* to which we have attained. 17 Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us.

5. Did you see the differences between the THREE types of Righteousness?
 - a) Self-righteousness earned through works bragging based on credentials in Phil 3:3-6
 - b) Imputed Righteousness “the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith” – given at salvation!
 - c) Practical / Living Righteousness – Living God’s righteousness BECAUSE I have Christ’s Righteousness!

I. KEY: the BREASTPLATE is ON ONLY when WE are LIVING a RIGHTEOUS LIFE!

1. BREASTPLATE = RIGHTEOUS, HOLY LIVING!
2. BREASTPLATE OFF
 - a) = worldly living
 - b) = thoughts and emotions NOT on THINGS ABOVE (Col 3:1) – not on the EXCELLENCIES of God and SCRIPTURE (Phil 4:8)
3. Paul is an excellent example to us – Remember Philippians 3!

V. Application – Living Righteously!**A. Good checklist I learned while serving at Grace Church that I've expanded on!:****B. Excellence**

Php 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.

Col 3:1 Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. 3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

C. Expectation

1 Co 14:37 If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord's commandment.

1. God didn't put the Commands of Scripture there just to hear Himself talk!
2. We have to do them!

D. Exaltation.

1 Co 10:31 Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

1. Will the Lord be lifted up and glorified in what I do?
2. God's glory and exaltation should be the supreme purpose behind everything we do.

E. Emulation.

1 Jn 2:6 the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.

1. If we are doing what Christ would do, our action not only is permissible but good and right.

F. Example.

[1 Ti 4:12](#) Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but *rather* in speech, conduct, love, faith *and* purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.

[1 Co 11:1](#) Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.

1. Are we setting the right example for others, especially for weaker brothers and sisters?
2. If we emulate Christ, others will be able to emulate us, to follow our example (1 Tim. 4:12).

G. Excess.

[Heb 12:1](#) Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

1. Is the activity or habit necessary, or is it merely an extra that is not really important?
2. Is it perhaps only an encumbrance that we should willingly give up?

H. Expediency.

[1 Co 6:12](#) All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything.

1. "Is what I want to do helpful and useful, or only desirable?"

I. Edification.

[1 Co 10:23](#) All things are lawful, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful, but not all things edify.

1. Will I be built up and matured in Christ; will I become spiritually stronger?

J. Evangelism.

[Col 4:5](#) Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity.

[1 Pe 2:12](#) Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe *them*, glorify God in the day of visitation.

1. Is my testimony going to be helped or hindered?
2. Will unbelievers be drawn to Christ or turned away from Him by what I am doing?
3. Will it help me conduct myself “with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity”

K. Everything!

[Col 3:17](#) Whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

1. WHATEVER principle – leaves NOTHING OUT!

VI. CONCLUSION

A. A few weeks ago we covered all of this from other side of the coin – HOLINESS

1. Holiness = SEPARATENESS from SIN

B. Today we’ve SEEN the same OBEDIENT life as RIGHTEOUSNESS

1. = Living according to God’s PERFECT RIGHT STANDARD – RIGHTEOUSNESS defined by WHO HE IS!

C. IF you want to successfully STAND FIRM in BATTLE – you MUST OBEY GOD and LIVE RIGHTEOUSLY!

D. THEN SATAN CANNOT INJURE your MIND and EMOTIONS!