

Christ Reformation Church

Tillamook, Oregon

Php 3:9 ...not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith,

www.sermonaudio.com/crc

www.unholycharade.com (blog)

www.lightfordarktimes.com (blog)

Christ Reformation Church – YouTube Channel (Light for Dark Times)

Hungering and Thirsting for God's Word (Part 11) (October 4, 2026)

His Word is Shield and Sword

Sermon Text: Ephesians 6:10-20

Scripture Reading: 1 Peter 5

2Ti 3:16-17 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; (17) so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

Satan's inevitable trait and tactics of evil consists of twisting and distorting – lying about – the Word of God. His goal of course is to deceive and enslave us. He is a murderer and a liar (John 8) and *whenever* he speaks, he lies. So it is with his servants (2 Cor 11).

I wanted to add one more installment to our series on Hungering and Thirsting for God's Word, and this chapter concerns the central role Scripture plays in the Christian's armor which, as you know, is described for us by Paul here in Ephesians 6. Listen to it:

Eph 6:10-18 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. (14) Stand firm therefore, **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. (18) With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,

Paul tells us **WHY** we need this armor, and **WHAT** this armor is. You might be quite familiar with this text, but I think you will see some things here that perhaps you have missed.

I. Why We Need this Armor

A. Because we are very weak

“be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.”

We see here that we have no strength of our own to stand against this enemy. This fact calls for much humility. We tend to think too highly of ourselves and of our own strength. But Paul tells us that this is a great mistake. David understood this correctly as he faced Goliath -

1Sa 17:45-47 Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin, but **I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts**, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have taunted. (46) **"This day the LORD will deliver you up into my**

hands, and I will strike you down and remove your head from you. And I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the sky and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, (47) and that all this assembly may know that **the LORD does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is the LORD'S** and He will give you into our hands."

it is nothing else but a deceit."
[Sermons on Ephesians]

Such a deception which puts our trust in ourselves always leads to carelessness, meeting the enemy with no defensive shielding or offensive weaponry. As if a soldier can go into battle with no protective garb or rifle and yet assume he will have victory. So it is with those who trust in themselves.

I wonder if the visible church today really understands, believes, and practices this truth? The battle is and **MUST BE** the Lord's.

And we need this armor because the battle rages continually as long as we are in this world. Calvin once more:

By ourselves, we are weak. Helpless, really, in this battle. To have victory over Goliath, we must admit this in humility. Listen to John Calvin on this-

"The earth, then, is not only like a pilgrimage to the faithful, but also like a camp where we must always have enemies to trouble us night and day without ceasing.

"The devil has the upper hand over us already if we are not rescued in a wonderful way, so there is good reason why we should stoop and distrust the strength that we imagine we have to stand firm, for

Eph 6:13 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.

By the ‘evil day’ Paul means all of our earthly life, and particularly in those times when the Lord permits us to be pressed by the enemy more than usual....when there are great and at times extreme temptations and trials....Let us not then expect an earthly paradise here below, or to reap here the fruit of our victory, or to live at rest, but rather let us know that distress without ceasing and without number are prepared for us, and let us be armed in order to endure them and to overcome them.” [ibid]

1Pe 1:6-7 In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, (7) so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

B. Because our Enemy is Strong

Furthermore, we need this armor, we need strength which is from the

Lord, *because our enemy is very strong*. By ourselves, in our own supposed strength, Satan would have the victory over us in a moment. If the devil catches us napping (as Calvin puts it), then we provide him with an opening, and we should not be surprised if he gets the upper hand of us.

Therefore, let’s humbly admit this:

“Satan and his devils have such power over us that we could not tell how to withstand them, unless God were both our shield and our rampart, protecting us from all assaults, yes, and fighting for us when we can do nothing at all. I say, we must note that well, and also suppress the foolish presumption which is so rooted in our hearts that it is extremely hard for us to weed it out.

For we see how (unregenerate) people always vaunt themselves and would make themselves like idols. But how does the Scripture speak of them? It calls them the devil’s slaves. So long then as we do not have Jesus Christ as our

King, and his seat is not set up among us, the devil is bound to be our prince and to have all authority, we being subject to him.” [ibid]

This self-trust, this foolish pride still persists in the Christian’s flesh. Against it the Christian must always beware and by the Spirit in us beat it down as soon as it raises its head. If we would make an honest evaluation of ourselves and see, for instance, **our lack of prayer** as an expression of our total dependance upon the Lord, we would be astonished at how vulnerable we make ourselves to the enemy. It should then not amaze us that we so often fall to temptations, or that we awaken one day to realize that we have been deceived and blinded by the enemy’s lies for a long while.

Eph 6:18 With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,

Prayer, you remember, *is the language of faith*. It is our plea for

the Lord’s protection against the enemy, and for His strength to grant us victory over those schemes and wiles of the devil.

It should make us shudder when we realize that we have entered into another day without prayer for the Lord to give us His strength so that we might meet the enemy, strong in the Lord.

Our enemy is very strong, so strong that by ourselves we have NO chance of victory.

Eph 6:12 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.

Know your enemy and you will realize that you have no weaponry nor defense that is adequate against *spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places*. You cannot pick up an AR-15 or a sword or a grenade and fight this enemy.

NOTE: While the devil cannot do anything without God's permission (see Job 1:6), the Lord permits him, for the present time and only to further the purposes of God, to carry on this warfare against us. He is still the "god of this world" (2 Cor 4).

C. The Lord's Promise to Help

"There is a certain assurance included in Paul's instruction – *'so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.'*" (Calvin) Do you see this? It is a certain promise. When we acknowledge our weakness and inability to stand against this enemy alone, when we put on this full armor of God, *we will be able to stand. We will be able to resist in the evil day.*

"Here Paul gives us to understand that God will display such power that we shall not need to doubt of victory against all the devil can practice, so long as we are not reckless or drowsy....these two things then go together – first, our own vigilance and care to strengthen ourselves [ie, WE must

put on the armor] and on the other hand a hearty resolve to call upon the Lord for His strength and power." [ibid]

II. What This Armor is

Now, just what is this armor which we must put on and which the Lord empowers us in? We often handle this subject very superficially and tritely. We might have the children make cardboard armor in their Sunday School classes and read Ephesians 6 to them. But this only teaches a very shallow understanding of what Paul is telling us. It can even promote that pride which results in self-trust. Do you remember learning some songs in Sunday School which mock the devil? This is a great mistake.

To understand the essence of the *full armor of God*, think carefully about each piece of it-

- Loins girded with *truth*
- Breastplate of *righteousness*
- Feet shod with the preparation of the *gospel of peace*

- Shield of *faith*
- Helmet of *salvation*
- Sword of the Spirit (the *word of God*)

Do you see a common thread running through each? Truth, righteousness, gospel, faith, salvation, word of God. Let me suggest that *each one is an aspect of truth, of God's Word*. And this being the case, we see once more *the vital importance that we hunger and thirst for God's Word*.

- Truth: This belt is obviously God's Word which, as a belt, is foundational
- Righteousness – both practical (obeying God's Word) and imputed (the righteousness of Christ) all of which is revealed in Scripture
- Gospel of peace – where do we hear the gospel? The good news of peace with God which prepares us to meet the enemy's accusations? In God's Word.

- The shield of *faith* which really is paired with the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God.
- The helmet of salvation – where do we guard our minds and thinking about this great salvation – in God's Word.

Let's spend the rest of our time thinking about the shield of faith and the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God.

These two pieces of armor are inseparable. They are both *defense* and *offense* in the battle. And they necessarily function together. Let's consider an example:

Eph 6:16-17 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.

Take up faith. The faith the Lord has given you when you were born again. Use it. How? To extinguish

these flaming arrows Satan fires at us.

We have a very graphic illustration of this as we watch the war with Iran and in Europe. Flaming arrows – missiles are launched, and most of them are intercepted by the patriot missile system. America and Israel and some others have been diligent to develop these shields:

- **Strategic/Homeland Defense:** The U.S. Ground-Based Midcourse Defense (GMD) targets long-range intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) in space. [1, 2, 3]
- **Regional/Theater Defense:** Systems like the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) and Patriot (PAC-3) intercept short- to intermediate-range threats in the upper and lower atmosphere. [1, 2]
- **Sea-Based Defense:** The Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense System uses naval destroyers and cruisers equipped with Standard

Missiles (like the SM-3) for flexible regional protection. [1, 2, 3]

- **Point Defense:** Shorter-range systems like Israel's Iron Dome protect localized areas against low-end or tactical threats. [1, 2]

But think very carefully. Satan fires his missiles at us every day. These fiery darts are far more dangerous than any missile Iran or Russia could fire. Why? Because man's missiles can kill the body, the Satan's can send a person to hell. His missiles are meant to destroy our faith, to lead us away from Christ, and there have been many professing Christians who have perished eternally as a result. Why? Because they did not heed the Lord's command to put up the shield of faith and use the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God.

And many other true Christians – probably all of us at one time or another, have been hit with the devil's missiles and led into some degree of unbelief or sin.

Now, *just what are these fiery darts?* This is vital for us to understand.

Satan's missiles are lies, deceptions, distortions and denials of God's Word. Consider the lies and twisting of Scripture the devil used when he tempted Jesus.

And THIS is where the sword comes in – the Word of God. Faith shields us from Satan's lies, but that faith always has an OBJECT. The faith the Lord gives us always has its eyes set upon what? *God's Word. His truth. The Scriptures.*

So in comes this missile, a lying, deceiving message which opposed Christ's Word. *You shall surely not die.* Remember, his servants can, like the devil himself, appear as sons of righteousness, as angels of light. They deny the reality of hell. They deny the deity of Christ. They put lying thoughts in our minds about our brothers and sisters in Christ. They imply and suggest that the Bible is not the inerrant Word of God.

The history of the church is one of flaming missiles incoming. The lure of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Vanity Fair.

And make no mistake, many of Satan's fiery darts are so subtle, so camouflaged, that if we do not have our faith/Word radar finely tuned and ready, we will be hit by them.

1Jn 5:4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

Faith shields, the Word attacks. Faith intercepts, the Word launches a counterattack. Faith knows and trusts the Word and blows up that incoming missile. It then sends a missile of God's truth which is like fire and a hammer. This is why this is true:

Jas 4:7 Submit therefore to God. **Resist the devil and he will flee from you.**

Now, listen very, very carefully. HOW do you resist the devil?

First, we must be able to recognize his attacks. Then we must use the shield of faith and the sword of the Spirit and when we do, SUCCESS is guaranteed. This is the victory over the world, Satan's kingdom, our faith!

And so we return to our theme verse-

2Ti 3:16-17 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; (17) so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

Adequate. Equipped. Ready for battle. Armor on. Faith as our shield. Faith in God's Word. But if we are lazy, if we are like this:

Heb 5:13-14 For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. (14) But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

I am going to tell you something now and I hope that it shakes you and that you find it sobering and scary. In the 33 years that I have been your pastor in this church, many children have been born among us and have grown into teen and adult years. And I can count on probably just one hand, at the most two, those who have grown into sound, genuine, Christians who are walking with Christ. And yet we knew them in their early years. We heard them recite memory verses, we heard them tell us that they loved us, we saw that they were eager to come here. But where are they now? The great majority have made shipwreck of their faith. Numbers have been handed over by God to degrading passions. The enemy's missiles took them down.

Php 3:17-19 Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. (18) For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, (19) whose end is destruction, whose god is their

appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things.

Do you understand who Paul is talking about? He is talking about people who once claimed to know Christ, to be walking in Him. But look what they are now.

And he will take US down as well if we are not watchful. If we do not hunger and thirst for God's Word. Your shield will not operate if your faith does not have God's Word as its object.

Let me illustrate once more:

2Th 2:7-12 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. (8) Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; (9) that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, (10) and with all the deception of

wickedness for those who perish, **because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved.**

(11) For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, (12) in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.

Do you believe this? Do you truly believe that Christ is coming again? That before He does there is going to be a great falling away from the Lord such has never been seen before? Do you believe that the enemy's man, the antichrist, is coming and that he is going to establish his one world tyranny?

This is the truth, but if our shield of faith is not up, if we do not love God's Word, if we do not believe His truth and oppose the enemy's lies with the Word of God, then God is going to send a *deluding influence* upon such people so that they will only be able to believe Satan's lies.

But if we love God's Word, if we diligently give ourselves to hearing it, reading it, studying it, and obeying it, *we will stand because we will have the Lord's own power and strength.*

Please, please, please – do not be careless, lazy, or slothful in this battle. Be faithful in gathering together with the Lord's people every Lord's day, give yourself to hearing God's Word, and in all of this,

Eph 6:18 With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,

And you will stand!