

# Arming Yourself with Spiritual Weapons

## Overcoming Darkness, Week 4

*"We are human, but we don't wage war as humans do. We use God's mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments. We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God. We capture their rebellious thoughts and teach them to obey Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:3-5 NLT).*

Paul uses metaphorical language to convey that believers do not use physical weapons to overcome darkness, but by spiritual ones. He contrasts the weapons of the world, associated with physical force and power, with ones God provides.

The "mighty weapons" Paul refers to are spiritual resources and attitudes that believers use to overcome challenges, temptations, and opposition along their Christian journey. Weapons, as indicated in Ephesians 6, metaphorically describe the armor of God as essential tools for Christians to engage and overcome the challenges of life in spiritual warfare. This passage encourages believers to embrace virtues that fortify their faith in order to protect their spiritual well-being.

Ephesians 6 beautifully depicts the armor of God as a set of attributes believers must "put on" in order to stand strong against any spiritual opposition. The metaphorical armor consists of six components: the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

*"So stand strong, with the belt of truth tied around your waist. And on your chest wear the protection of right living. And on your feet wear the Good News of peace to help you stand strong. And also use the shield of faith. With that you*

*can stop all the burning arrows of the Evil One. Accept God's salvation to be your helmet. And take the sword of the Spirit—that sword is the teaching of God" (Ephesians 6:14-17 ICB).*

- **The Belt of Truth** represents the powerful truth of God wielded as a weapon against falsehood and deception. Believers grow in wisdom to discern right from wrong, keeping them firmly grounded in faith. The belt represents honesty, integrity, and a commitment to living aligned with God's instruction. Just as a belt holds a warrior's armor together, truth serves as the foundation upon which a christian life is built.
- **The Breastplate of Righteousness** symbolizes living a life within the protection of God's moral principles. It protects against sin and ungodliness, representing moral integrity and right conduct. Just as a physical breastplate protects the physical heart, it protects our soul, our na'au, the center of our emotions. Living righteously safeguards a believer's heart. Christians are then able to shield themselves from spiritual attacks that aim to weaken their faith by killing the spiritual heart.
- **The Shoes of Peace** encourage believers to actively spread harmony, reconciliation, and goodwill. Just as sturdy footwear enables a warrior to stand firm on the battlefield, these metaphorical shoes empower Christians to walk confidently, carrying the message of peace and love, even in the face of adversity.
- **The Shield of Faith** encourages believers to trust in God's promises and to rely on His faithfulness. It represents unwavering trust and reliance on God's promises. Like a shield that guards against enemy attacks, faith protects believers from doubt, fear, and skepticism. One can remain confident against any onslaught the enemy may strategize against believers through a strong and steadfast faith. Christians have the ability to extinguish the fiery

darts of doubt that seek to undermine, discourage and sabotage their spiritual journey.

- **The Helmet of Salvation** represents the saving grace we have in Christ and the victory won. It serves to strengthen believers in times of struggle. It symbolizes a sound and sober mind. Just as a helmet safeguards a warrior's head, this virtue guards a believer's thoughts, ensuring they remain focused on the hope, blessed assuredness and promise of salvation through Christ.

- **The Sword of the Word of God** is the believer's weapon to counter lies, temptations, and false teachings. Jesus used the Word when tempted by Satan in the wilderness. The Sword of the Spirit, is both a defensive and offensive weapon. It represents the importance of scriptural knowledge and wisdom in facing life's challenges. By internalizing, meditating and understanding God's Word, Christians equip themselves to confront spiritual battles, dispel falsehoods, and share the transformative message of the Gospel.

- **Prayer:** Communicating with God through prayer connects believers with divine wisdom, guidance, and strength. We are encouraged to communicate with Him as we abide with Him intimately.

- **The Holy Spirit** is the believer's helper, a guide to navigate our spiritual battle space. The Spirit empowers believers, convicts them of truth, and helps them grow in Christlikeness. He leads believers to other believers, allow them to engage in fellowship, encouragement and the commanded blessing in unity.

- **Love:** Unconditional love can break down barriers and overcome animosity, showing the world the transformative power of Christ's love.

- **Humility is our posture of submission.** Humble dependence on God acknowledges our need for His strength, wisdom and power of coming under the Lord's leadership.

The passage in 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 teaches that these "weapons" are used not to harm others, but to confront spiritual strongholds and overcoming arguments that oppose the truth of God. "Strongholds" refer to entrenched patterns of thinking or belief systems that stand in opposition to God. These weapons are employed to bring every thought and belief into obedience to Christ, emphasizing the renewal of the mind and the transformation of the believer's inner life. In essence, these "weapons" are used through a combination of applying God's Word, relying on His strength, engaging in prayer, and living out the principles of the Christian faith. They are means by which believers can grow in their relationship with God, overcome challenges, and impact the world around them positively.

Conclusion: These passages provide a metaphorical framework for understanding the virtues and attributes that Christians should embody as they navigate the complexities of life and spiritual warfare. Just as a warrior prepares for battle by adorning himself with armor, believers are encouraged to "put on the full armor of God" to stand firm in their faith, defend against spiritual attacks, and fulfill their divine purpose. By internalizing the lessons of these passages, Christians can embrace a life characterized by truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, and a deep connection to the Word of God.

## Discussion Questions

1. How does the sword of the Spirit, representing the Word of God, function as an offensive weapon?
2. What insights can we gather from Ephesians 6 about the concept of spiritual warfare and the tools provided for believers?
3. Describe a time you relied on spiritual armor for protection? For strength? For overcoming? How do the elements of the armor correspond to challenges and temptations that believers might encounter today?
4. How does each piece of the armor mentioned contribute to the spiritual protection of a believer?
5. How can believers equip themselves with the spiritual weapons mentioned in the passage to overcome challenges and obstacles?