

## Fighting Spiritually, Part II

In the first lesson of Fighting Spiritually, we looked at how vital our thinking is and how the Devil tries to attack how we think. Our actions follow our thoughts, so our thinking is very important when it comes to winning spiritual battles.

In this lesson, we are going to focus on the spiritual armor that God says we need to have to be able to stand in the battle.

***Ephesians 6:10-11*** Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

### QUESTION

According to the above verses, whose strength should we fight in?

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“The wiles of the devil” are similar to tactics, techniques and procedures. While our enemy may use multiple different approaches to attack us, the attack will always be disguised in deceit. The devil is a liar “and the father of it” (John 8:44) and is a master deceiver. Deceit has to be close to the truth to work.

Let me give you a modern-day example: The devil is not against you going to church! As a matter of fact, I believe there are some churches that the devil encourages people to go to. These are churches that use music, lighting and stories to get an emotional reaction. Sin is never preached against and no one is ever encouraged to follow biblical standards in these churches. The grace of God is emphasized to the point that God accepts you as you are, so there is no need to change, and the Christian life is all about God helping you to be a better version of yourself.

There is truth in the previous sentences – we are saved by grace, but that grace should lead us to holy living and thankfulness towards God, not to just keep sinning and claim “I’m under grace”. It is a good thing to go to church and we are supposed to (Hebrews 10:23-25), but we need to be in a Bible believing church, not a church that overemphasizes emotions and experiences. Just because it’s a church doesn’t mean it’s governed by the Holy Spirit. There is a reason we are instructed to “try the spirits”! (1 John 4:1) There is no doubt that these churches have some truth, but they are full of people that have never acknowledged their sin, the penalty for their sin or their need of a payment for their sin. Therefore, scripturally they cannot be saved! If you haven’t accepted Jesus Christ as your savior, by definition, you are not a Christian.

And being told by a preacher that you are a Christian because you had an emotional experience, does not make you a Christian.

Again, deception only works when it's close to the real thing!

God, knowing how our enemy works, identifies the armor we need to stand against him:

***Ephesians 6:12-18*** For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

If you didn't catch it, God wants us to be able to stand!

**QUESTION**

What is the first piece that is mentioned to protect our groin?

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While many in the world like to think that truth is relative (the circumstances determine whether something is right or wrong), God shows us there is absolute truth. According to God lying is a sin and He never tells us it is ok to lie if it will keep us out of trouble. God just says lying is a sin.

There are many things that people say, and many people follow, but that doesn't make them truth. Here's one: "follow your heart". The problem is that the Bible says that this is not a good thing to do:

***Jeremiah 17:9*** The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

Just because something is repeated, followed by many and evens sounds good, doesn't make it true.

First and foremost, if we are going to stand we better make sure we are living by God's truth!

QUESTION

The second piece of armor is the breastplate of \_\_\_\_\_?

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Righteousness is defined as acting in accordance with God's standard, encompassing moral purity, justice, and maintaining right relationships with God and others. Essentially, it is right living. It is following what God says is right and avoiding what God says is wrong. By the way, the only way you will ever do this is through God's help!

There are many that are quick to let you know they are just "a sinner saved by grace", which is true, but it also lends to the mentality that you can't help but to sin. But God wants us to live right:

**1 Peter 1:15-16** *But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.*

Tring to live righteouslessly takes discipline and there will be many temptations. Thankfully God has provided a way of escape (1 Corinthians 10:13) and we can be victorious.

The next thing listed is our *feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace*. God's intention is for each one of us to be a witness (Acts 1:8). In Romans 10:15 the Bible says:

*And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, **How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!***

While we need to witness to others and share the gospel so that they can be saved, doing this also has an impact in our heart and mind. First, it helps us to stay focused on eternity, instead of just temporal things. Second, it will makes us see how effective our enemy has been in corrupting people's minds and blinding them to the truth of salvation.

**2 Corinthians 4:4** *In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*

There are many people that think they are "ok" or "good" because they believe in God, go to church, have never really hurt anyone or a variety of other things they will attribute to them not going to Hell. The problem is that their righteousness cannot get them to Heaven; they need Jesus! The more people you talk to and listen to the more you will understand how powerful and deceptive our enemy is.

## QUESTION

What is the piece of armor that is listed “above all”?

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Faith is the key to the Christian life. By it we are saved (Ephesians 2:8) and we have to have it to please God (Hebrews 11:6). Everybody has faith in something or someone. Some have faith in a person (many times themselves), a religious dogma, internet theology, evolution or a variety of other things. In order for us to stand we are going to have to have faith in Jesus Christ and God’s word!

By the way, faith has fruit, or maybe we could say it like this; faith produces works. Someone that has faith in God, shouldn’t have to tell you, you should be able to see it and hear it in their life (i.e. they read the Bible, pray, go to church, talk right, witness to others, etc.). Faith is vital to standing, because many times we don’t see the results in the physical realm. But what a blessing that living by faith can result in eternal rewards. Imagine being in Heaven and someone coming up to you and telling you “thank you” for handing them a gospel tract; they read it and got saved. It was faith, because you handed out many tracts and never “saw” the results. When I have faith “above all” I understand that God is at work even when I can’t see it.

Those fiery darts of the devil are the things in your life that cause you to doubt and ask things like:

“is it really worth it?”

“don’t I deserve more money, power or recognition?”

“am I really making a difference?”

“am I missing out on the fun stuff?”

When those fiery darts are hurled your way; have faith, keep going!

The next piece of armor is the helmet of salvation. We discussed this in the first lesson on Fighting Spiritually, and identified salvation as the starting point to be able to have any spiritual victories.

The last piece of armor listed is the sword of the spirit, which is identified as the word of God. There is an acronym that I like to use for the B.I.B.L.E.:

## Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth

If God was powerful enough to create everything in 6 days through speaking, it would be foolish for me to think He couldn't preserve a book, so that I can know how to get to heaven and to live my life in a way that is pleasing to Him.

I have talked with many people that like to say that they don't believe the Bible, because it was written by men. I like to ask them what they believe. Regardless of what they say (scientology, evolution, aliens, etc.), I ask them how they came to their conclusion. They all have the same answer; they read about it or heard about it, from guess who...MEN! Everything we know has been passed on by men. The question is were the men that wrote what they believe inspired by God? You are going to believe something that men have passed down or you have to come up with something on your own; I'm sticking with God and His book!

We have looked at each piece of armor, but there is one more thing that is vital to being able to stand: "praying always". Notice that it is specifically "praying in the Spirit" and it is for "all saints". (biblically, a saint is anyone that is saved) We should be praying in God's will for our brothers and sisters in Christ. We will look at prayer in another lesson, but just so you know; it is impossible to pray too much.

Just like Soldiers have to learn to fight against the enemy, Christians need to learn how to fight against our enemies; the world, the flesh and the devil! These things can be learned. Don't be afraid to try. The only way to get better/ proficient with the armor is through repetition. Keep going!

### QUESTION

What are the 5 pieces of armor we need to stand?

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What is the thing we should do "always"?

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