

The Armor Of A Good Soldier

(10) Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. (11) Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. (12) For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. (13) Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. (14) Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, (15) and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. (16) In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; (17) and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,

Paul uses the soldiers of his time to describe the type of armor that we should be using and at that time one of the most powerful soldier was a Roman Legionary.

There are six pieces of armor that a good soldier should be wearing.

- The Girdle of Truth
- The Breastplate of Righteousness
- The Shoes of the Preparation of the Gospel
- The Shield of Faith
- The Helmet of Salvation
- The Sword of the Spirit

The Girdle Of Truth

Webster describe the girdle as a band or belt; something drawn around the waist of a person, and tied or buckled.

The girdle was kind of a tunic, it was needed it to tie up any loose garment. If a soldier did not, his flaps and folds would hinder his movements. Paul said the girdle for us is truth, truth in daily living. It means honesty, sincerity, openness, and frankness.

Breastplate of Righteousness

The breastplate of the Roman legionary protects above all, one vital organ of the human body: the heart. The bible tells how important that the heart is in our lives as stated by Solomon in Proverbs 4:23

*(23) Watch over your heart with all diligence,
for from it flow the springs of life. (NAS)*

Paul spoke of the breastplate of righteousness as a protection of the heart. We ask ourselves what is meant by righteousness in this context, Paul brings up the theme of armor in another epistle. In 1 Thessalonians 5:8, he said:

*(8) But since we are of the day, let us be sober,
having put on the breastplate of faith and love.*

Here he described the breastplate from another point of view. He called it the breastplate of faith and love. Putting these two passages together: the breastplate of righteousness (Eph 6:14) is a breast plate of love faith and love. The kind of righteousness I think he was talking about doesn't come from righteousness of work or religious law, but righteousness that comes only by faith.

The Shoes of The Preparation of the Gospel

The shoes Roman legionaries usually wore were strong, heavy sandals with thongs that kept them in place. They lace halfway up the calf with leather thongs. This was a very important part of soldier equipment, this enable him to march long distance at speed; this gave him mobility.

The Shield Of Faith

During this time there was basically two types of shields that the Roman soldier had: a small, circular shield, shaped like a large round flat wicker basket. Paul speaks of a second one that was a long rectangular shield and is taken from the word meaning door because that is what it looked like. This was the kind of shield he (Paul) spoke of when he said the shield of faith (Ephesians 6:16)

A properly trained soldier could shield his whole body so that no part of his body is shown.

The Helmet of Salvation

When we talked about the breastplate it covered and protected our heart. The helmet protects the head and the head represents the mind. So here Paul is talking about a helmet that protects our mind.

We think because we are Christians that this comes automatic, as we look again in Paul's writings in 1 Thessalonians 5:8

(8) But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation

The Sword Of The Spirit

When we look at the sword there is one thing that distinguishes it from the other five items that we have looked at. The sword is not purely defensive. Without it, we can not drive off the devil. Looking at all the other items of equipment, we are able to prevent the devil from wounding us but we cannot drive him from our presence. The only thing that can do that is the sword which is called the word of God (Ephesians 6:17)

The Bible compares God's Word to a sword because God's word pierces and penetrates.

Hebrews 4:12 declares

(12) The word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

(NIV)

God's word penetrates to every area of the human personality. It penetrates to the marrow, to the very innermost part of the physical being. In Revelation 1:16, where John had a vision of Jesus in His glory as the Lord of the church, one of the things he saw was a sword coming out of the mouth of Jesus.

(16) In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword.

Paul tells in verse 11 and 13 why we need this armor

11 Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

13 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

Paul tells us the armor that we as a good soldier needs and why. If we stop to look at it, the armor we can put it on the defensive side, the sword of all these is the one that is used for the offensive. There are other weapons to be used on the offense such as prayer, praise, preaching and testimony.

Are there any questions at this time?