

Building Biblical
COMMUNITY in CHRIST

The Christian's Armor
Ephesians 6:14-18

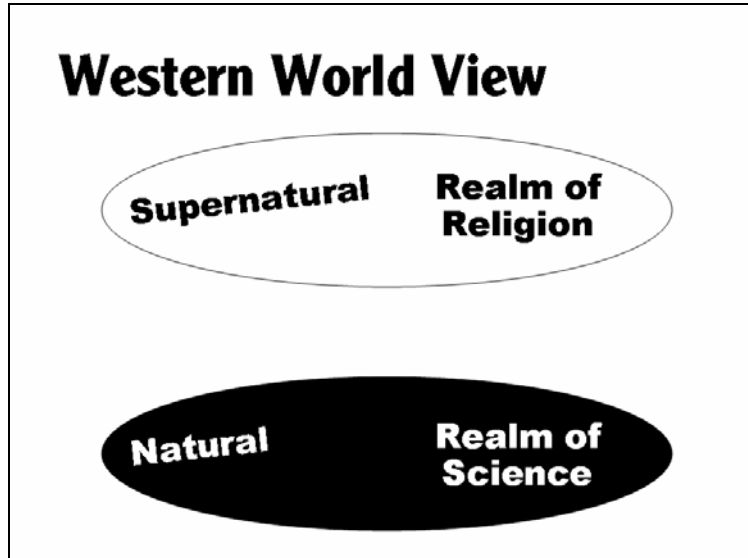
10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. 14 Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, 15 and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. 16 In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. Eph 6:10-18

It was probably February of AD 60 when the apostle Paul arrived in Rome and was placed under house arrest during the reign of Nero. Luke tells us in Acts 28:16 that the Apostle, during this first imprisonment in Rome, was allowed to stay by himself in rented quarters, along with the soldier who was guarding him. There were regular visitors, like the fugitive slave Onesimus, whom Paul had led to Lord. But during all of this time while waiting for his hearing, Paul was under the watchful eye of what is called the Praetorian Guard—the emperor's personal bodyguard. These were imperial soldiers, the “cream of the crop” so to speak. These soldiers had charge of Paul and would relieve one another in succession. One after another they heard the life transforming testimony of the Apostle. More than this, Paul had the opportunity to observe up close their royal military attire. In fact, he may have been chained to one of these guards (Acts 28:20). No doubt, out of this experience comes the inspired illustration of our spiritual armor that we find in Ephesians 6:10-18.ⁱ

However, before we look at each part of our spiritual armor, let me mention two truths from this passage that we have already seen and which will put into perspective our passage for today.

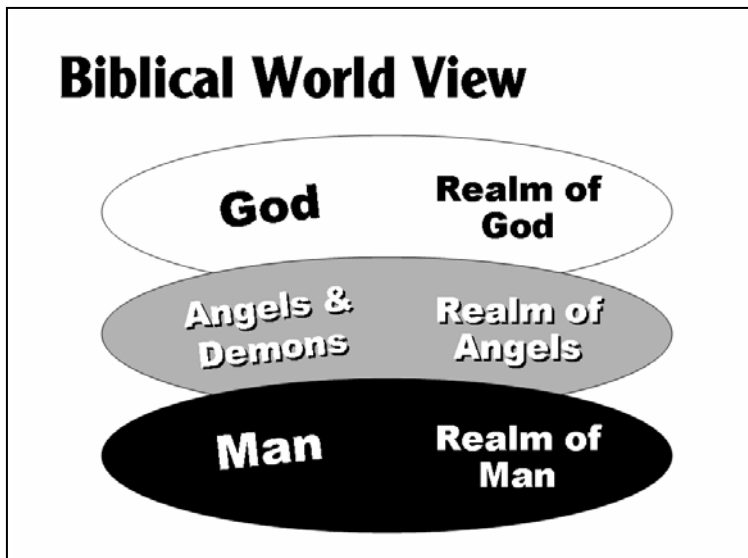
REALITY OF EVIL SUPERNATURALISM

The Bible makes no apology for its clear teaching on the reality of Satan and his demons. But for many in the Western world (including many Christians), we have adopted a world-view that is “split.”



In one compartment is the supernatural, the realm of religion. In the other is the natural, the realm of science.

But the biblical world view looks rather like this.



There is the realm of God and the realm of man. But in between there is also the realm of angels, both good and fallen.ⁱⁱ The Bible calls them God's messengers (2 Corinthians 12:7; Hebrews 1:7). The "rulers," "authorities," "powers," and "demons," of which Paul is speaking in Ephesians 6 are fallen angels who actively and aggressively tempt us to evil.

I don't know what your views are on military action on a human level. But when it comes to the Christian life, none of us are called to be pacifists. We *must* "stand firm." The idea

is repeated times in these verses. It carries the idea of drawing up in military formation for combat.

FIGHT ON THREE FRONTS

But as we do that, we must recognize that our spiritual warfare is fought on three fronts. It is not *just* the flesh (the evil inclinations within), or *just* the world (the sinful environment around us), or *just* the devil (the “devil made me do it” approach), but all three and often *all three at the same time*. Satan may not *instigate* every temptation in your life, but he is certainly *interested* in every temptation in your life.

By the way, it is probably never right to say, “The devil made me do it.” Satan and his demons can manipulate our thoughts, influence our emotions, or afflict our bodies. But when it comes to our will, we are the ones who make the willful choice to go down a certain path.

PUT ON THE FULL ARMOR OF GOD

With these two points in mind, let’s look at what Paul tells us about our spiritual armor. First, notice that he gives us a command repeated twice in verses 11 and 13: “Put on the *full armor of God*.”

Imagine yourself in the Roman army during the time of the twelve Caesars. Every morning there would be a thorough inspection of the armor of each legionnaire. As the inspecting Centurion comes and stands in front of you, you strike with your right fist the armor breastplate that covers your heart. There the armor had to be the strongest in order to protect the heart from the sword thrusts and arrow strikes. As you strike the armor, you shout *integritas*, meaning in Latin wholeness, completeness and entirety. The inspecting Centurion listens closely for this affirmation and also for the ring resonating from the well kept armor. Satisfied that the armor is sound and that you--the legionnaire--are well protected, he moves on to the next man.ⁱⁱⁱ

Here, Paul is like that inspecting Centurion, telling us to put on the *full armor of God*. He’s emphasizing not only *completeness* of the armor (there must not be one piece missing), but also the *quality*, the integrity of the armor (these pieces are fully capable of protecting you against the enemy).^{iv}

BELT OF TRUTH (Isaiah 11:5; Psalm 90:4; John 8:32, 44)

The first piece of armor that the believer is to put on is the “belt of truth.” Paul says in verse 14 “Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled about your waste.”

There were three different belts worn by Roman soldiers.^v Paul seems to be speaking here of a special belt or sash worn by military nobility: an officer or high official. This belt was often highly ornamented, complete with pockets for carrying writing instruments, money, even a pipe!

This belt, then, speaks of *nobility*. We form an army, and in this battle each one of us bears the insignia of military nobility! As you can tell from the cross references on your notes, many of these pieces of armor are taken directly from the Old Testament book of Isaiah. There they are applied directly to the Messiah. But when we come to the truth of the New Testament, since we are “in Christ,” we *all* share all that he is! There is no distinction between officers and privates, between captains and enlisted men, between the weak and the strong, between the clerks in the rear and the heroic fighters on the frontlines.^{vi} We are all officers in God’s army and we are each invested with all the authority that this rank implies.

Not only does this belt speak of nobility, but also of *liberty*. It was this particular belt worn by the Roman soldier that kept the various pieces of the armor in place, giving the legionnaire liberty in his movement. It makes sense, then, that Paul calls this the “belt of TRUTH.” Truth is like that in our lives – it brings freedom. Jesus said, “You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”^{vii} (John 8:32)

It certainly makes sense that Paul would tell you and me to take up the belt of *truth*. For one of the primary strategies of the enemy is the lie. Jesus said concerning the devil: “He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, *he speaks his native language*, for he is a liar and the father of lies.” (John 8:44) Satan began his deceitful strategy of promoting lies in the Garden of Eden and has been perfecting this approach ever since. He lies to us about what really satisfies in life. He lies to us about forgiveness, using our past sins to accuse us incessantly. He lies to us, telling us that we are helpless victims, keeping us in bondage to certain habits and sins in our lives.

You and are no match for the enemy apart from who we are in Christ. We have a ruthless adversary who tries to hit below the belt. Only the truth of who we are in Christ and the authority that that implies will enable us to combat him. In other words, our authority over the enemy flows out of the truth of our identity in Christ.^{viii}

Dick Hillis, the founder of Overseas Crusades (the mission we worked with for many years in France), had an experience early on in his ministry to China that illustrates this truth. One day, a young Chinese soldier came to his door and asked, “Is your Christ all-powerful?” With no hesitation, Hillis responded “Of course he is.” “Good,” said the soldier. “My wife is in the courtyard, and she is demon-possessed. Twice the demon has ordered her to kill herself and both times she obeyed, but I was able to rescue her. I do not know what to do now. I heard that Christ was able to heal those who are demon possessed, so I brought her to you.” Dick Hillis’ wife was standing next to him. Seeing his hesitation, she tried to encourage him with a specific word of Scripture: “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.” (Hebrews 13:8) Dick’s theological education hadn’t equipped him to deal with demons, but he knew he had to do something. So Dick and his wife, Margaret, along with another church worker took the women to the house and began praying for her. The demonized woman would take words from their prayers and make ridiculous poems out of them. For three days they struggled in prayer with no results. Then they asked if there were any idols in the home of this women. There were, and they asked her husband to destroy them. Then Dick Hillis describes what happened:

In our reading of the Scriptures, we were going through Ephesians 1 and 2, and God suddenly revealed that we were not only identified with Christ in death and resurrection, but that we were “seated with Christ in heavenly places far above principalities and powers;” that we had ascended with Him. Taking this new position, . . . my wife and I sang in the presence of the woman, “There’s power in the blood,” and then after singing, we commanded the demon to come out of her in the name of Jesus. *She was instantly delivered.*^{ix}

If I were to go out on Glisan Street, stand in the middle of the road, hold up my hand and maybe even blow a whistle, people might think I’m a little crazy, but the traffic probably wouldn’t stop. Or if it did, it wouldn’t stop for long. On the other hand, take a police officer dressed in uniform. He steps into the middle of the road, holds up his hand, blows his whistle and suddenly even large semi-trailer rigs will come to a screeching stop. How is that? He may have no more physical strength than I do. But what he does have is authority – delegated authority.

On way in which we take up the belt of truth is by using the authority that you and I have in Christ to fight off the lies of the enemy. But some of us are walking around with our uniforms on, and never or rarely using the delegated authority over demonic influence that God has entrusted to us. It is in these verses that Paul is telling us how to use that authority.

BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (ISAIAH 11:4-5; ZECHARIAH 3:1-5)

Not only are we to put on the belt of truth, but also the breastplate of righteousness. The breastplate of the Roman soldier was originally a sleeveless jacket made of leather or linen, called a *cuirass*. It later developed into a type of metal breastplate that protected the soldier’s chest and (contrary to what many have thought) even his back. A later development was the mail of armor, formed of plates of brass, laid one upon another, like the scales of a fish. But all of these were designed to protect the soldier at his most vulnerable point – his heart.

Paul calls this the breastplate of *righteousness*. If you take that word, take of the “ness” you have righteous. And then take of the “eous” and you have “right.” The righteousness that Paul is speaking about is first of all our right standing with God. In Isaiah 59:17 the Messiah is described as one who puts “on righteousness like a breastplate.” And if you are a believer, you are *in Christ* and you have that same righteousness. “He who knew no sin became sin for us *that we might become the righteousness of God in him.*” (2 Corinthians 5:21)

But it is precisely here that enemy of our soul will wage all-out warfare. Satan accuses us, urging us to focus on sins of the past. And this is nothing new. He happened to Joshua the High Priest in the days of Zechariah the prophet. Look with me in Zechariah 3:1-5:

Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right side to *accuse* him. The LORD said to Satan, “The

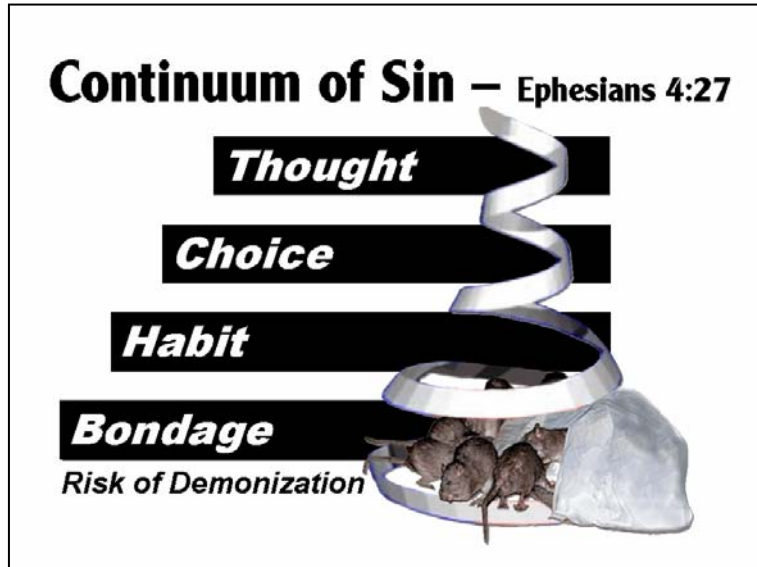
LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Is not this man a burning stick snatched from the fire?" Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood before the angel. The angel said to those who were standing before him, "Take off his filthy clothes." Then he said to Joshua, "See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put rich garments on you." Then I said, "Put a clean turban on his head." So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him, while the angel of the LORD stood by.

Satan, meaning the adversary, is the accuser of believers (Job 1:6-12; Revelation 12:10). And he will find every means possible to accuse you of your sin. One of his most developed strategies is to project evil thoughts in your mind (bizarre thoughts, immoral thoughts, blasphemous thoughts, or fearful thoughts). Have you experienced that? You speaking with someone and suddenly a thought comes into your mind that is just as evil as it is bizarre. But notice...Satan then comes along and accuses you for having these thoughts!

What should be our response? Notice verse 2 of Zechariah 3 – "The LORD [here referring to the Angel of the Lord] said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you..." Our filthy clothes of sin have already been exchanged for Christ's clean garments of righteousness. And we should say (out loud when possible!), "The Lord rebuke you Satan; away from me!"

But as for the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness not only speaks (I believe) of our *position* of righteousness in Christ, but also of our *practice* of righteousness as believers. We must stand against Satan's accusations where sin has been confessed and forgiven. But we must also stand against our excuses to continue in unrighteous living. We take up the breastplate of righteousness by living righteously. This is extremely important as we stand firm against Satan's attempts to infiltrate our lives.

Let me remind you of what we saw last week. While Satan may initially *influence* us to sin, there is another side to the "coin" of Satan's strategy. Habitual sin in our lives also *invites* demonic infiltration and bondage. This is what we might call the "continuum of sin."^x (chart)



Let me explain. It all begins with an unrighteous *thought* inspired by the world, the flesh or the devil. This then leads to an unrighteous *choice*, leading to an unrighteous *habit*, which eventually leads to *bondage* and addiction. At this point, sin becomes like the garbage that attracts the rats. Our bondage to sin in a particular area invites direct demonic influence (Ephesians 4:27; 2 Corinthians 2:10). So in dealing with demonic influence at this point, we can't simply say, "Satan be gone!" or expel a demon or two, and expect all to be well. We need to repent of the sin and deal with the garbage in our life.

Think of an area of struggle with sin in your life. Where are you on this continuum? Where are you running the risk of demonic invasion because you refuse to repent of the garbage in your life? Too many believers take sin lightly. We make excuses, saying, "Oh, it just my flesh, I'll get over it." And we don't realize how subtly the devil is carving out a foothold in our lives.

SHOES OF PEACE (EPHESIANS 6:15; 2:14-17; ISAIAH 52:7)

Paul continues, speaking of the soldiers shoes: "and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace."

In the Roman Empire, ordinary people would often walk about barefoot. But roman soldiers were equipped with a type of half-boot, made of leather and tied to the ankles with ornamental leather straps. These boot shoes were studded with nails giving the soldier a firm, solid stance which kept him from sliding.

It's rather paradoxical that Paul speaks of peace in a context of warfare! But then again, it all makes sense. For this is the very peace that Satan wants to destroy in our lives. Though the Bible speaks of the peace *with God* (Romans 5:1) and of the peace *of God* (Philippians 4:6,7), I believe Paul is here speaking more specifically of the peace that we have with one another because of Christ.

Why do I say this? Look at what Paul has already said about peace in this letter. In Ephesians 2:14-17 he says this:

For he himself is our *peace*, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility ... His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making *peace*, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. He came and preached *peace* to you who were far away and *peace* to those who were near. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

This peace is *positional* (what has been given us in Christ). But it is also *practical*...it is to be maintained at all costs. This is what Paul says in chapter 4:3 – “Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of *peace*.”

Why is this so important? Paul tells us in Ephesians 3:10. This is an amazing verse that has often been misunderstood. Here’s what Paul says: “His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms.” Who are these “rulers” and “authorities”? They certainly include those we are fighting against mentioned in Ephesians 6:12. And what do they want to do? They want to divide the church. But how is the wisdom of God made known to these heavenly powers? Not by us speaking to them or “binding” them as some have proposed. But as we, the church, live out our calling of unity, the wisdom of God in uniting us in Christ is made known to these very powers to try to work havoc in the church.

The legacy left us by Jesus and the Apostles is a pair of shoes that speak of peace. “If it is possible, as far as it depends on you,” Paul tells us, “live at *peace* with everyone.” (Romans 12:18) And as he closes that same epistle he reminds us, “The God of *peace* will soon crush Satan under your feet.”

SHIELD OF FAITH (LUKE 22:31-32; 1 PETER 5:9)

The next piece of armor that Paul tells us to put on is the shield of faith: “In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.” (verse 16)^{xi}

For the Roman soldier this was a large, vaulted shield, about 2 ½ feet wide and 4 ½ high. It was made of wood, covered with leather, and often dipped in water before the battle. Two-thirds of this shield covered the legionnaire’s body and one-third covered his comrade to his left. This encouraged tight ranks and a sense of interdependence among the troops. This formed the famed Roman wedge which was primarily for protection while the soldiers were on the offensive. This was the “centerpiece of the Roman army’s devastating military efficiency.”^{xii}

This shield is the shield of *faith*. The enemy’s strategy is to promote doubt, skepticism and fear. God’s strategy is a strategy of faith. Right after the disciples have their little

discussion about who would be greatest in the kingdom of heaven, Jesus said this to Peter: “Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your *faith* may not fail.” And then Jesus adds, “And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.” (Luke 22:31-32) And Jesus’ prayer was answered. Yes, Peter denied the Lord three times. But then he turned back and strengthens you and me by writing, “But resist him [Satan], firm in your faith,” Peter tells us (1 Peter 5:9).

“Feed your faith and your doubts will starve to death,”^{xiii} it’s been said. But not only will our doubts starve, Satan’s arrows will be extinguished. In Paul’s day, the Roman military would use small pieces of cane filled with combustible materials. In fact, one historian describes how these arrows could cause extreme panic by setting shields on fire and tempting soldiers to throw down their shields and expose themselves to attack.^{xiv}

In our lives Satan’s “flaming arrows” can take the form of sudden, severe temptation, blasphemous thoughts, accusing thoughts, or obsessive thoughts. When those come, we lift up the shield of faith, remind ourselves that these thoughts are not our true identity, and give them no further attention.

Often Christians wonder: How do I distinguish between God’s conviction and Satan’s accusation? Or between God’s discipline and Satan’s darts? Accusation is a dart from Satan. Deep conviction of wrong is divine discipline from God. How do I tell the difference? Here’s some help.

God always uses love and His Word to convict us of wrong. Satan always uses hatred, feelings and memories to accuse us. God’s convicting work in our lives has the purpose of producing discipline and devotion to God. Satan’s accusing work in our lives is to discourage and defeat us. God’s convicting work in our hearts encourages us to look ahead with hope. Satan’s accusing work makes us prisoners of our past, leading us to despair.

HELMET OF SALVATION (ISAIAH 59:17; 2 CORINTHIANS 10:3-5; 1 THESSALONIANS 5:8)

Beyond this, we are to “take the helmet of salvation.” (verse 17)

The helmet protects the head. Satan will attack our *mind* in order to reach our *emotions* and our *will* (Phil 4:8; Rom 12:2). If the brain is injured or fails, it is not long before the other organs begin to fail also. Notice Paul’s emphasis on this in his second letter to the Corinthians:

3 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. 4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

And in the very next chapter (11:3) Paul expresses his concern that Satan might lead our “minds” astray from a pure devotion to Christ.

After reminding us that we cannot rely upon human means (and the more mail I get from various ...) to fight a spiritual battle, Paul emphasizes that we have divine power to “demolish strongholds.”^{xv} What are these “strongholds?” He explains in verse 5. They are “arguments,” “pretensions,” and “imagination” that set themselves up against the knowledge of God. In this context they have to do with false thoughts about Christ and false thoughts about others (in this case, the apostles). More generally it could be applied to any sinful thought patterns that you and I struggle with.

But the mind is *never* a vacuum. We must not simply evict negative thoughts without seeing them replaced by truthful, positive thoughts (Philippians 4:6-8). And that’s where our *salvation* comes in. In this spiritual battle, our minds must remain focused on our salvation – past, present and future. In the past, we have been delivered from the *penalty* and guilt of sin. In the present, we have all that is necessary in Christ to walk in freedom from the *power* of sin and Satan. And some day we will be ultimately delivered from even the *presence* of sin and Satan.

SWORD OF THE SPIRIT (ISAIAH 49:2; MATTHEW 4:1-10; HEBREWS 4:12-13)

Finally, Paul tells you and me to take “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” In the Roman military, this probably referred to a short sword (*maxaira*) as opposed to a long sword (*pouphaia*). This short sword was more handy and aggressive than the long sword.^{xvi}

As part of our spiritual equipment, this sword is given to us by the Spirit of God and it consists of the word of God. But Paul is not here referring to the Word of God in general. He uses rather a word (*rema*) which means individual Scripture spoken for a particular occasion. It can even refer to an authoritative, binding pronouncement.

There is no better example of the “sword of the Spirit” than the way in which Jesus himself confronted the attacks of Satan in Matthew chapter 4. Jesus was actually led into the wilderness *by the Holy Spirit* to be tested by Satan. Having fasted for forty days and nights, he was very hungry. The Devil comes to him at his point of weakness and says, “If you are the Son of God, change these stones into bread.” And how does Jesus respond? He uses the *rema*, a specific word of God for the occasion, citing Deuteronomy 8. He says, “No! The Scriptures say, ‘Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’”

Then the Devil takes him to Jerusalem, to the highest point of the Temple, and says, “If you are the Son of God, jump off! Then Satan actually quotes Scripture himself, citing Psalm 91:11-12. ‘He orders his angels to protect you. And they will hold you with their hands to keep you from striking your foot on a stone.’” But Jesus once again responds with a specific word of Scripture, citing Deuteronomy 6: “The Scriptures also say, ‘Do not test the Lord your God.’”

Finally, the Devil takes him to the peak of a very high mountain and shows him the nations of the world and all their glory. “I will give it all to you,” he says, “if you will

only kneel down and worship me.” And again, Jesus depends upon the *rema* of God’s Word, citing two passages from Deuteronomy 6 and 10. “Get out of here, Satan,” Jesus tells him. “For the Scriptures say, ‘You must worship the Lord your God; serve only him.’”

And Matthew adds, “Then the Devil went away, and angels came and cared for Jesus.”

Believer, as you depend, not on your authority, but on the authority of the word of God, which is “living and active, and sharper than any double-edged sword” (Hebrews 4:12-13), the Devil will also go away. “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you,” James tells us. And there is no better way to do this than by depending upon and citing the truth of God’s word.

One of the best ways to resist Satan’s attacks as well as “put on” each piece of the armor is by prayer. Here is a suggested prayer that summarizes the key points of what we have seen today:

PRAYER TO WEAR THE ARMOR OF GOD

Heavenly Father, today I put on the full and trustworthy armor of God with thankfulness and praise. You have provided all I need to stand firm against Satan and his vicious attacks.

I confidently take the *belt of truth*, knowing that the truth can set me free. As I face temptation, I will depend upon the truth of who I am in Christ. I will refuse the lies of Satan and seek to live truthfully with others.

Thank you, Lord, for the *breastplate of righteousness*. I trust today in your righteousness which covers my life, knowing that Satan must retreat before the righteousness of God. Shine your light on any area of sin in me that would give the devil a foothold in my life. Enable me to live righteously in accordance with my true identity.

You Lord have fully equipped my feet with the *gospel of peace*. I thank you today for peace with God, the peace of God, and the peace established among your people through the cross. Today I will make every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace among my fellow believers.

I confidently lift up the *shield of faith* against all the blazing arrows that Satan fires at me. I know that you are my strong shield, enabling me to live faithfully in the face of opposition. I affirm today that my faith is best nurtured in community among fellow believers.

I recognize that my mind is a particular target of Satan’s deceitful ways. I cover my mind with the *helmet of salvation*, proclaiming my deliverance from the penalty and power of sin. I expectantly look forward with hope to my future deliverance from even the presence of sin.

With joy I place my confidence in the powerful Word of God, the *effective sword given me by the Spirit*. I choose to live in its truth and wield its authority. I depend upon the power of the spoken Word of God to push back Satan’s attacks on my life.

Help me, Lord, to keep this armor well oiled with prayer. I ask you this in the mighty name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

ⁱ Admittedly, I have felt a certain frustration in attempting to address the truths of this passage in just four Sundays. I believe that there is so much help here for all of us in our daily, spiritual battles. After all, in 1861 the puritan pastor William Gurnall published a treatise on these verses entitled *The Christian in Complete Armor*. His work was composed of 3 volumes totaling 261 chapters and 1,472 pages! More recently, Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones wrote two works, *The Christian Warfare* and *The Christian Soldier* totaling 736 pages.

ⁱⁱ In Ephesians this realm is called “the heavenlies” (1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12).

ⁱⁱⁱ Adapted from John Di Frances, *Reclaiming the Ethical High Ground* (Reliance Books, 2002), pp.103-106 and taken from PreachingToday.com.

^{iv} Cf. Markus Barth, *Ephesians 4-6*, who argues that the term may best be translated “splendid armor.” There is then not only a technical, military sense to the idea, but also a moral, psychological sense: we are marvelously protected against the enemy. There are many pieces of a soldier’s attire which are not mentioned: bow and arrow, cavalry and chariots, battle-ax, sling, spears, daggers, trumpets, bugles and flags. Josephus (*bell. Iv. 95*) states “an infantryman is almost as heavily laden as a pack-mule.”

^v The two other belts were a leather apron designed to protect the lower abdomen and a type of sword-belt. Cf. Barth, *Ephesians 4-6*.

^{vi} *Ibid.*, 767.

^{vii} In the New Testament, Jesus is the person of truth John 14:6, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth (John 16:13), the church is the “pillar and foundation of truth” (1 Tim. 3:14-15) and the Bible is the Word of truth (2 Tim 2:15).

^{viii} What does Paul mean then when emphasizing the belt of TRUTH? Paul has already spoken of truth four times in this letter (1:13; 4:15, 21; 5:9). As you look at these passages, you realize that truth speaks of both our *position* (who we are in Christ) and our *practice* (how we live as Christians). For example, in 4:21 he says, “you were taught *in him* in accordance with the *truth* that is *in Jesus*.” In this verse, Paul is speaking specifically of the truth of our new identity *in Christ*.

^{ix} As recounted by Timothy M. Warner, *Spiritual Warfare* (Eastbourne, England: Crossway, 1991), 69-70.

^x A “continuum” is “an uninterrupted ordered sequence” (Webster). The expression and adapted chart are from Ed Murphy’s notes on spiritual warfare: *Spiritual Warfare* published by Overseas Crusades, 1990. See also Ed Murphy, *The Handbook for Spiritual Warfare* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1992).

^{xi} Cf. “My shield is with God...” (Ps 7:10) and “God is a shield to those who take refuge in Him.” (Pr. 30:5).

^{xii} Walter Wink, *Naming the Powers*, 86-87.

^{xiii} “Sparks from the Anvil,” *Christian Reader*, Vol. 33, no. 2.

^{xiv} Livy in *Hist* 21.8 (ca. 8 AD).

^{xv} Cf. Proverbs 21:22; 10:29 in the LXX.

^{xvi} A terms also used for a dagger or a curved savor (Barth, *Ephesians 4-6*, 776)