

Ephesians

Transformed by Grace, Empowered by Peace

Study 20

Spiritual Warfare II

Ephesians 6:10-20

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“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. 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.

Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. 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, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints— and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”

A. Breastplate of Righteousness

1. **Objective question.** The breastplate is a piece of armour that protects the heart, the centre of a person’s body. Metaphorically speaking, what does the centre of one’s being represent?

A. Our personality

B. Our emotions

C. Our character

2. **Discussion question.** Satan (the Adversary) will always accuse us as Christians. He:
a. Questions our right to call ourselves Christians

- b. Questions our prayer life when we sin
- c. Compares us with others

Why does Satan desire to accuse us?

3. Comprehension question. With relation to God, what is the concept of righteousness?

- Righteous - to be found pleasing to the one I want to please - to be presentable
- It is a relational term
- Pleasing to the one you want to please

4. Discussion question. Why does sin make us feel that we are not presentable or unacceptable? (Refer to Romans 1:18 below)

Romans 1:18

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who **suppress** the truth in unrighteousness,”

5. a) Discussion question. Based on the video lecture, what are the ways we make our own breastplate?

- Secular ways
- Power
- Comfort
- Control
- Each one different type of honour
- I only have significance if people loves me, does not matter if I have no power
- The one who has power does not mind if not loved

b) Reflection question. Each of us hide behind our own made breastplate. Which one of the above do you resonate with most?

6. When we sin in our lives, there are 2 parties that will be involved. The Spirit convicts us of sin, while Satan accuses and condemns us.

a) Comprehension question. What is the purpose of the Spirit convicting us?

b) Comprehension question. What is the purpose of Satan accusing and condemning us?

c) Discussion question. Shame of our own sin will keep us away from God. However, it is important to remember that Christ has died for the sin that we are ashamed about. How does this enable us to keep having our relationship and fellowship with God?

7. Discussion question. We can deal with our sins / inadequacies / shortcomings without putting on the breastplate of righteousness - consider the following ways:

a) Legalism - unworthy and God will not forgive sin. What does this thinking imply about Christ?

- What He has done is insufficient - it is not enough

b) Psychology - need to see God loves us as we are. What does this thinking imply about Christ?

- What He has done is irrelevant - it does not matter

c) Relationship - other people's eyes are more important to you than God's. What does this thinking imply about Christ?

- What others think about me is more important than what He has done for me

8. Comprehension question. What is the Gospel way of dealing with our sins / inadequacies / shortcomings?

- Yes I am a sinner, I have sinned in more ways than you know but Christ has paid for my sin and wants me with Him all the time
- In His eyes I am acceptable and that is the only standard I need

B. Feet Ready with the Gospel

9. Comprehension question. In what aspect of our lives can we show the Gospel to others?

- Orientation in life
- Our speech
- How we spend our time
- How we live

C. Shield of Faith

10. Discussion question. How does the faithfulness of God shield us from doubt, fear, despair, persecution, false teaching, and overconfidence?

D. Helmet of Salvation

11. Discussion question. How does the assurance of our salvation help with braving the storms of life?

E. Sword of the Spirit

12. Discussion question. Should we only preach the Gospel to unbelievers only? Or do we need to preach the Gospel to ourselves even as believers? Why or why not?

- The Gospel not only saves
- The Gospel transforms lives

F. Prayer

13. Discussion question. Prayer helps to strengthen us. How does prayer strengthen us?

- The very action of prayer is a declaration of our dependence on God
- It is God's strength that we depend on, not our own

14. a) Discussion question. Are we victorious by living ethical holy lives?

- We are victorious because the victory has been won by Christ

b) Discussion question. What is the reason why we should live ethical holy lives?

- It is an outward expression of our inward spiritual reality
- Christ's righteousness in us should produce the expression of righteousness in our lives

Takeaway

- A. The Breastplate of Righteousness is provided to us by God - Christ's own righteousness imputed onto us
 - a. We do not need to establish our own righteousness to hide our shame due to our sin / inadequacies / shortcomings
- B. Our feet should be Ready with the Gospel of peace through our orientation in life, our speech, how we spend our time, and how we live
- C. The Shield of Faith is really us trusting God's promises in our lives
- D. The Sword of the Spirit is the preaching of the Gospel - both for its power to save and power to transform our lives
- E. Prayer is a declaration of our dependence on God
- F. Christ's righteousness in us should produce the expression of righteousness in our lives

Case Study

Case 1 – Sewing Our Own Fig Leaves

Ah Dam is a pastor's son who grew up with very godly parents. They brought him up going to Sunday School every week, after listening to the Sunday sermon.

Ah Dam is very zealous as a youth leader, always making sure to serve at every opportunity that comes his way, never declining any work that is given to him. He makes sure to attend church every week, including every Gamma study and Life Group meetings.

He will also faithfully visit the homeless and orphans with other church members. His parents are worried for him because he also gives everything he has to the poor, leaving him with almost no savings.

However, one day he fell very ill and was bedridden for a long time. He was completely devastated because he was unable to serve in any meaningful capacity. When visited by his Life Group members, they asked him why he felt the way he did.

He responds by saying that he needs to live an ethical and holy life, because that is how God will approve of him so that one day he can be with Him in heaven. He was devastated and felt anxious because he now is unsure if he will be in heaven if he were to suddenly die.

1. Discussion question. What was Ah Dam actually trying to do?

- Ah Dam was actually trying to establish his own righteousness
- Essentially, Ah Dam was sewing his own fig leaves to cover for his sins - relying on his own works

2. Discussion question. In your opinion, was Ah Dam truly saved?

3. Discussion question. What does Ah Dam actually need?

- Ah Dam needs to trust Christ that His work on the cross was sufficient to atone for all of his sins
- By trusting Christ, he will be putting on the breastplate of righteousness - Christ's righteousness that is imputed onto him, and not his own righteousness by his own works