

Arm Yourself Spiritually

Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. [12] For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. [13] Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm.

Ephesians 6:11-13 NLT

What is something in your life for which you fought the hardest? Maybe it was to get a good grade in a class, to get (or keep) the job you wanted, or to change your eating or exercise habits to become healthier. Most worthwhile things are not easy, but the outcome outweighs the difficulties we go through to achieve them.

This is also true in our relationship with God. If having faith feels like a constant struggle, that's because it is! The Bible says we all are in the midst of a spiritual battle against evil *rulers* and *authorities*, *mighty* powers, and evil spirits in the heavenly places. Think about that for a second - evil rulers, authorities, and powers. And they are out against *you*. They want to steal, kill, and destroy your faith (John 10:10).

You are going to need some help.

Fortunately, God gives us the armor and the weapons we need to not only fight back, but to defeat these spiritual enemies.

Is your faith being attacked? How? How have you been responding?

Check out Ephesians 6 to learn how to arm yourself spiritually and come through Satan's attacks standing strong.

Bible Study

Belt of Truth and Breastplate of God's Approval

But to do this, you will need the strong belt of truth and the breastplate of God's approval.
Ephesians 6:14 TLB

Belt of Truth

God tells us that before we even enter the battlefield, we need to put on truth as a belt. This isn't meant to be a fashion statement, but rather the one tool that holds all the other tools together. Without truth, none of the other tools matter because they will quickly fall off. We have to be aware of and honest about where we are at in order to not have anything holding us back from moving forward.

- Are you aware of and honest about the truth of what you are guilty about, the emotions you feel, the ways you have given up, etc.?

Breastplate of God's Approval

This Scripture also talks about the need for the "breastplate of God's approval." The Passion Translation calls this "the protective armor that covers your heart." When we are in the heat of the battle, it can be easy to neglect our hearts.

Above everything else, guard your heart. Everything you do comes from it.

Proverbs 4:23 NIV

Do you neglect or avoid what's in your heart, or do you protect and guard it above all else? Sometimes it can be scary to look into and be aware of what's in our hearts, because that is where our deepest desires and emotions lie.

If we leave our hearts unguarded, they can get overrun by anything that comes our way. We can get easily knocked down by things like doubt, worry, negative or self-deprecating thoughts. Are you diligent about protecting your heart?

- Are you aware of what's in your heart?
- What do you let influence your heart?

The Good News Shoes

On your feet wear the Good News of peace to help you stand strong.

Ephesians 6:15 NCV

Shoes help us travel distances we never could on bare feet. They help us stand strong. The tool God gives us to stand strong and keep moving forward much farther than we could on our own is the Good News, which is the hope we have that no matter what we're going through, our lives can always be used to help someone else. When we are focused on and moving toward the purpose God has for our lives, we are able to keep fighting and moving forward even when it's hard.

He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us. [5] For the more we suffer for Christ, the more God will shower us with his comfort through Christ.

2 Corinthians 1:4-5 NLT

The pain we go through, the doubt and guilt we struggle with, the failures that weigh down on us will never be for nothing as long as we understand the purpose in them. No matter what difficulty you may be going through, there is someone in your life to whom you can give hope, which makes the fight worth it.

- Who in your life needs you to keep fighting?
- Who can you give hope to today?

The Shield of Faith

In every battle, take faith as your wrap-around shield, for it is able to extinguish the blazing arrows coming at you from the Evil One!

Ephesians 6:16 TPT

Even when we think we are fully armed and prepared for battle, the arrows still come. We get in a fight with a family member, our co-worker gets the promotion we were working so hard for, an unexpected bill takes us out financially. When the burning arrows come, we need faith in order to not get knocked down but keep pushing. Faith is what helps us win our battles!

What is faith? It is the confident assurance that something we want is going to happen. It is the certainty that what we hope for is waiting for us, even though we cannot see it up ahead. [33] These people all trusted God and as a result won battles, overthrew kingdoms, ruled their people well, and received what God had promised them; they were kept from harm in a den of lions

Hebrews 11:1,33 TLB

Having faith doesn't mean we are perfect or have everything together; it's simply trusting that God has our back. The Bible is one of the best places to get faith (Romans 10:17) because it's where we see who God is and how he is moving.

- Do you believe that God wants to give you the things you hope for?
- What area of your life needs more faith? Look up Scriptures to get more faith so that you can keep fighting.

The Word and Prayer

Embrace the power of salvation's full deliverance, like a helmet to protect your thoughts from lies. And take the mighty razor-sharp Spirit-sword of the spoken Word of God. Pray passionately in the Spirit, as you constantly intercede with every form of prayer at all times. Pray the blessings of God upon all his believers.

Ephesians 6:17-18 TPT

God gives us an entire set of armor to protect us from the battles we face, and he gives us weapons like his Word and prayer so that we can be on the offense. The Scriptures are a razor-sharp sword we can use to attack our spiritual enemies. Prayer moves God and unleashes his blessings on our lives.

The LORD your God will fight alongside you and help you win the battle."

Deuteronomy 20:4 CEV

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

Romans 8:37 NIV

We are never alone in the battle because God is fighting *alongside* us! He is not simply watching from the sidelines or judging from above, but is in the thick of it with us to help us become conquerors.

- Find Scriptures about the battles you are facing to help you fight through them.
- Pray about how you see God has been fighting alongside you
- Talk to one or two friends about which parts of your spiritual armor you need to strengthen.



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