



LEADERS' NOTES

THE ARMOUR OF GOD



HELMET OF SALVATION



BELT OF TRUTH



SHIELD OF FAITH



SWORD OF THE SPIRIT



BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS



BOOTS OF PEACE

PUT ON THE
FULL ARMOUR OF GOD,
SO THAT YOU CAN TAKE
YOUR STAND AGAINST
THE DEVIL'S SCHEMES.

EPHESIANS 6:11



INTRODUCTION TO **EPHESIANS**

The aim of this introduction is to give a very brief overview of Ephesians, so that what we cover in 6:10-20 is within the context of the whole book.

Each chapter is overflowing with rich theology, so our aim is to bring together all that richness through three words. This will obviously mean missing out certain things in each chapter, but our aim is clarity and simplicity.

EPHESIANS 1

CHOSEN (1:4-5, 11)

The Father's pre-creation plan is to form a people of his very own, who reflect the character of his Son.

The doctrine of election is taught throughout the whole Bible and when properly understood will lead our young people to praise not pride. The natural reaction of most young people is to think of it as a hard and harsh doctrine.

The doctrine of election highlights two fundamental truths about human beings.

1. Mankind is utterly helpless and hopeless
2. God is our only hope

When election is properly understood it has two positive outcomes for the Christian.

1. You are humbled by God's grace and sovereign choice
2. You know you are utterly secure, because it's down to God's initiative and power

APPLICATION

Our salvation is based upon God's choice not ours. This humbles our pride and gives us great security.

LOVED (1:5-9)

The Nature of The Father's Love

We now move from the act of God choosing to investigate his motive.

1:5 – The Father Pleasure and Will

The Father adopts us, not because he has to, or merely because of our great need. He chooses to adopt us because it causes Him immense pleasure.

1:6 – The Fathers Glorious Free Grace

God gives His grace freely, through the one He loves

1:7-8 – The Father's Lavished Grace

God's grace is inexhaustible, as He lavishes it upon us, with all of His wisdom and perfection.

1:9 – The Father's Good Pleasure

We began with the pleasure of God in choosing to love us, and that's where we finish.

APPLICATION

Our salvation is based upon the strength and depth of God's love not ours. He reaches down to hold our hand, and therefore the grip is eternally secure.

ADOPTED (1:5,7)

Many Christian fail to understand the radical truth of what redemption and adoption actually mean. To be adopted and redeemed by God means a complete change of status.

Adopted into Sonship

Brought in and therefore part of God's family forever.

The fact that we are adopted, must signify that we once belonged to someone else. Next session we will learn what our position was before our adoption.

It's a change of status not nature

We have moved from being outside of God's family to being part of it. The change of status is wholly down to God choosing to adopt us, which makes our status eternally secure.

Our redemption is through the death of the Lord Jesus. Our change of status is therefore wholly dependent upon God's redemption and not our effort, wisdom, intelligence, humility, race, social standing or any other factor that we could possibly dream of.

APPLICATION

Our salvation is a change of status, secured by God choice to adopt and redeem us.

EPHESIANS 2

DEATH (2:1-3)

Our first parents chose to step away from the source of all life, into the realm of the spiritual dead. From now on mankind will be marked by spiritual death *Genesis 3:8, Eph 2:1-3*.

Our nature is now marked by spiritual death. It's not something we do, but something we are. This is our spiritual state, nature, being.

Our lives and behaviour flow from who we are. Our nature is marked by spiritual death; therefore, our behaviour will be marked by disobedience. This disobedience may manifest itself in hedonism or religious behaviour, but both are ways of gratifying our sinful nature.

APPLICATION

- Accept God's diagnosis of who you are.
- Accept that your behaviour is an outworking of who you are.

ALIVE (2:1-10)

2:4-5 – Rich mercy makes us alive

Not only are we content with our spiritual death, but have no desire for change. New life is only possible because God's nature is full of mercy to those who deserve wrath and judgment. His mercy is revealed when He sees our spiritual plight and chooses to give us life.

2:6 – Rich mercy raises us up

The same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead, raises us also. We are 'in Christ' therefore everything that's true of Him is now true of us.

2:7-9 – Rich grace saves

This is the surest sign we have new life, is that we desire to accept God's undeserved love and grace.

2:10 – Rich grace that recreates

The Spirit recreates us by giving us good deeds, which mould our characters and personalities to reflect the Lord Jesus.

APPLICATION

- Call out to God for spiritual life.
- Realize who you are in Christ and rejoice.
- Accept today God's gift of grace and be thankful.
- The purpose of these good works is to make you more like the Lord Jesus.

NEW (2:19-22)

The cross creates a new humanity, for we are now no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens and members of God's household.

APPLICATION

Our new identity as a child of God supersedes every other identity we have, whether race, class, gender, tribe or nationality.

EPHESIANS 3

MYSTERY (3:1-9)

When Paul uses the world mystery it means a secret that's publicly known, which is different from how we the word, as something hidden and unknown.

The mission God gave Paul, was to take the gospel to those on the outside, 'gentiles' (3:2). Today we have the unbelievable privilege of living in the age of where the gospel secret has been made public. What the Old Testament believer could only dream of, we have as a reality (3:4-6,9).

Those who were on the outside are now...

3:6 = Heirs together with Israel.

3:6 = Members together of one body.

3:6 = Sharing together in the same promises of Christ.

APPLICATION

Realise and rejoice that you live in the gospel age. We are living in the time where God's salvation secret is known and open to all.

CHURCH (3:10-12)

The manifold wisdom of God is seen through God's people the church. As the heavenly beings watch God's gospel breaking down every man-made division they are utterly stunned. His manifold wisdom, is bringing together a people who are united under the Lordship, no matter what class or colour, tribe or tongue (**1:22-23, 3:10-12**).

APPLICATION

When God's people stand united in God's grace, the rulers and heavenly authorities stand amazed.

PRAYER

When we face a situation that tempts us to give up, we must make use our imagination. We must seek to imagine all that God could do through us, whatever the situation is that we face. Paul's prayer finishes in the same place as it began, with the richness of Gods character (**3:17, 20**).

What could God do?

3:20 = He can do immeasurably more that we can ask or even imagine.

3:20 = This is possibly because it's based on his power and not ours.

3:21 = All the power to change our lives comes from God, therefore all the glory for the change belongs to God.

APPLICATION

There is no limit to what God can do, so pray BIG.

EPHESIANS 4

WORTHY (4:1-2)

Even though Paul sits in a Roman jail with chains around his hands and feet, he still sees himself as a prisoner of the Lord not Caesar. He begs his followers of Christ to live a life 'worthy' of the calling they have received.

Humble = To champion others people's needs before your own.

Gentle = Any power you may have, you use for others.

Patient = Loving the unlovely long term.

These are just some of the character traits that the Holy Spirit wants to develop within God's new humanity (**2:10, 15, 3:16-17**).

APPLICATION

- New identity leads to a new lifestyle.
- The Spirit forms this kind of character over many years.

EPHESIANS 5

ONE (4:4-6)

The plan of God is for the whole universe to marvel at his united people (3:9-12).

Why is the unity of God's people so important to God?

Paul's answer is clear and straightforward. The God we serve is a trinity, a united Godhead of Father, Son and Spirit. As God's people we are called to reflect their unity and love.

The theme of 'one' dominates the whole passage:

4:4 – One body, the church.

4:4 – One Spirit, the Holy Spirit.

4:4 – One hope, our salvation accomplished by Christ.

4:5 – One Lord, Jesus.

4:5 – One faith.

4:6 – The Father creates the one family One God and Father of us all.

APPLICATION

A 'worthy' life is when God's people together reflect the unity of the Trinity.

TEACHER (4:20-21)

Paul uses the brilliant phrase '**truth that is in Jesus**' (4:20-21). What marks God's people out from everyone else is that we have one teacher. Whether it be what's true about God, or how we should live, our teacher is the Lord Jesus.

APPLICATION

As God's people we are devoted to our truth teacher, our saviour Jesus.

LOVED (5:1-2)

God's people face the biggest challenge given to mankind to '**follow God's example**' (5:1). The reason we can fulfil this challenge is because we have the Spirit's life and power (3:16), and the greatest example and motivation (5:1-2).

APPLICATION

Let all your actions be dominated by the fact that you are dearly loved by God.

LIGHT (5:8-9, 13)

Paul calls us to recognise what has happened to us, and to live as if that is true. You have been saved from darkness to light, so live a life that reflects that amazing status.

APPLICATION

Be who you are.

REVERENCE (5:21)

Every relationship we have has God's people but been seen in light of our relationship to Jesus. Whether we are the person with the power or the person under power, we must always respond and relate in a way that pleases our saviour and Lord.

APPLICATION

Every relationship is lived in the light of who Jesus is and what he's done.

STUDY KEY



THE TRUTH

THE SEAT BELT TEST

Imagine one of the young people getting into their parent's car, and as they put their seat belt on their parent asks, "what was it all about today?". The young person's answer should reflect the main point of the morning. This will be reflected in the leading, songs, small group, and especially the message.



THE LINK

CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

This helps you to see how this passage fits into the immediate verses and the whole book.



THE MESSAGE

THE MEAT OF THE PASSAGE

This takes you through the central truth of the passage. It will highlight the main points of application and give both the person who is giving the talk, and the small group leaders, what they need to teach the passage.



SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

THE TIME TO APPLY

A time to find out how much of the talk the young people have understood.
A time to correct any misunderstandings.
A time to apply the main points in creative ways.
An opportunity to build your relationship with the young people.

EPHESIANS 6:10-20

The Armor of God

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 Lord's people. ¹⁹ Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

Scripture quotations taken from The Holy Bible, New International Version® NIV®
Copyright © 1973 1978 1984 2011 by Biblica, Inc. TM
Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

STUDY 1

INTRODUCTION: THE ARMOUR OF GOD

DIFFICULT WORDS EXPLAINED

MIGHTY POWER

The power of the one who chose us (1:4), and raised us (2:5).

FULL ARMOUR OF GOD

The tools God gives us to live a worthy life (4:1).

DEVIL'S SCHEMES

The means by which Satan uses to gain a foothold in our lives (4:27).

RULERS, AUTHORITIES AND POWERS OF THIS DARK WORLD

THE SPIRITUAL FORCES OF EVIL IN THE HEAVENLY REALMS

"A whole range of evil spiritual forces of varying rank, authority and capabilities."
C.E. Arnold

DAY OF EVIL

A time of testing.



THE TRUTH

THE SEAT BELT TEST

Three reasons why we should study the armour of God:

1. **THE DEVIL** – God's enemy.
2. **THE DAY** – Of evil (testing).
3. **THE DEFENCE** – The armour God provides so we can move forward into battle.



THE LINK

CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

God's people seek to live lives that reflect light not darkness (5:8).

Chapters 4 & 5 show how Satan seeks to get a foothold (4:27) into our lives.

The World – He seeks to get a foothold through the outside arena that resists the Lord Jesus.

The Flesh – He seeks to get a foothold through the inside arena that resists the Lord Jesus.



THE MESSAGE

THE MEAT OF THE PASSAGE

WHY STUDY THE ARMOUR OF GOD?

1. THE DEVIL (6:11, 16)

The first reason Paul gives for us to study the armour of God, is that we face God's enemy. Paul uses two titles to describe God's enemy: the Devil (6:11) and the evil one (6:16). The apostle Peter describes God's enemy as a 'roaring lion' who looks for someone to devour (1 Peter 3:8). The secular world in which our young people are growing up, has very little place for a spiritual world, so is different from the Bible's way of reading the world.

- **The Devil's Desire**
The Devil's one desire is to vandalise, dismantle and destroy anything that reflects God.
- **God's People**
The people of God are the very top of the Devils hit list, for they reflect the image of his Son. He longs to rebuild the wall that the cross destroyed, so that God's people are divided (2:14-18). He longs to vandalise, dismantle and destroy God people as they live in community (4:3), families (5:25, 6:1,4) and in the work place (6:7-8). The very last think he wants is a people who reflect the unity that the Godhead displays (4:3-6,13).
- **Mankind**
Every human being is made in God's image, therefore reflects in some way God's glory. The Devils aim is to use his evil schemes (6:10) and his spiritual forces (6:12) to keep people in spiritual death and darkness (2:1-3, 5:8).

2. THE DAY (5:16, 6:13)

The second reason Paul gives for us to study the armour of God is that we face an evil day. Twice in Ephesians Paul links the words day and evil. The first time he's describing the world in general terms 'because the days are evil' (5:16). The second time Paul is far more specific when he talks of 'the day of evil' (6:13). The 'day of evil' is a time when the Devil finds it easier to use his evil schemes and apply his evil forces to lay traps of temptation for people. A time when he can vandalise, dismantle and destroy to greater effect.

3. THE DEFENCE (6:10-17)

The third reason Paul gives for us to study the armour of God comes in the form of three commands. These commands, if obeyed, promise victory in the spiritual fight that we face.

- **Be Strong (6:10)**
In light of the enemy we face and all the weapons at his disposal (6:12), it's no wonder we are commanded to be strong. The key to our strength is never to look inward, but instead away from ourselves. We are not to look towards the roaring lions (1 Peter 3:8), but instead our all-powerful Lord (6:10).
- **Put On (4:20-24, 6:11, 13)**
The second command is to put on the full armour of God. Earlier in Ephesians we were called to put on a new lifestyle that reflected our new identity (4:23). Now we are being called to put on the armour of God that reflects the spiritual war that we are now in (6:11,13).
- **Stand Firm (6:11,13,14)**
Twice we are commanded to put on the full armour of God (6:11,13) and three times to make our stand (6:11,13,14). The only guarantee that we will be able to take our stand against Satan is if we put on the armour God provides.



SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1. What images, ideas and thoughts come into your mind when you think of the Devil or terms like spiritual warfare?
2. Think about your friends at school. Do they believe in a spiritual world? If so, what is it like?
3. Is it hard being a Christian? Why/why not?
4. How does it affect you to know that you are in a spiritual battle with a powerful enemy?

5. Read Eph 1:16-21. What does Paul pray for the Christians in Ephesus?

- v18 *That their eyes would be opened to know the hope they've been called to.*
 v19 *That their eyes would be opened to the power they have in Christ.*
 v20 *That they would know that Christ is at the right hand of the Father.*
 v21 *That they would know Christ's power is above every other.*
 v21 *That they would know Christ's name is above every other.*
 v21 *That they would know Christ's power is for now and eternity.*
 v22-23 *That they would know all things will one day be under his feet.*

6. Read Luke 8:28-32. How does this story reveal and illustrate the reality of Paul's prayer?

THE DEVIL

- 8:28 *They fall at his feet.*
 8:28 *They declare him to be the Son of the Most High God.*
 8:28 *They beg Jesus not to torture them.*
 8:31 *They beg Jesus not to send them into the abyss.*
 8:32 *They beg Jesus to send them into the pigs.*

JESUS

- 8:29 *Jesus commands.*
 8:32 *Jesus has full control of where the demons end up.*

7. What will you face in your spiritual battle ahead?

- 6:10 *The Devils' schemes.*
 6:12 *The powers of this dark world and the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*
 6:13 *The Day of evil.*
 6:16 *Flaming arrows of the evil one.*

8. How does Paul's prayer, the story in Luke, and the armour of God give you confidence to face God's enemy?

WHAT GOD COMMANDS

- 6:10 *Be strong in the LORD*
 6:11 *Put on the full armour*
 6:13 *Put on the full armour*
 6:14 *Stand firm*
 6:18 *Pray in the Spirit*
 6:18 *Be alert*
 6:18 *Always keep on praying*



THE RESULT OF OBEDIENCE

- 6:11 *So you can take your stand*
 6:13 *So you can stand*
 6:16 *So you can extinguish*
 6:19 *So I will fearlessly proclaim*
 6:19 *So I will fearlessly proclaim*
 6:19 *So I will fearlessly proclaim*

STUDY 2

THE FIGHT: YOUR ENEMY & YOUR ARMOUR

PART 1

DIFFICULT WORDS EXPLAINED

BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

The breast plate represents the complete obedience of the Lord Jesus.

The breastplate of righteousness (justice) is when God's people speak his truth into a fallen and broken world. When we speak God's truth, sin and injustice are exposed. The hope is that conviction of sin will lead to faith in Jesus.

BELT OF TRUTH

Speaking God's truth to each other and the world.



THE TRUTH

THE SEAT BELT TEST

1. **YOUR ENEMY** – God’s enemy is the father of lies.
2. **YOUR BELT** – The truth that saves us is the truth that changes us.
3. **THE BREASTPLATE** – The righteousness that saves us is the righteousness we live by.



THE LINK

CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

The armour of God protects us from the roaring lion and prepares us to face the Devil’s evil schemes and power.



THE MESSAGE

THE MEAT OF THE PASSAGE

1. YOUR ENEMY (4:17-19)

The Lord Jesus describes the Devil’s character clearly in *John 8:44*:

“You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires. 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.”

The Lord Jesus describes himself as the truth (*John 14:6*), and his enemy as the father of lies. The enemy of God wants to do all he possibly can to exchange the truth of the gospel (*1:13*) for a lie. His aim is to side track God’s people so they no longer listen to the truth that is in Jesus (*4:20-21*).

2. YOUR BELT (6:14)

THE TRUTH THAT SAVES – IS THE TRUTH WE LIVE BY.

- We are *saved* by a message of truth (*1:13*).
- We are to *speak* God’s truth to one another (*4:15*).
- We are to be a community that’s *marked* by truth (*4:29*).

Our enemy is marked by lies; our God is marked by truth. It should be no surprise that the first part of our armour is the belt of truth.

As God’s people we must reflect both the God we serve and the message He’s given us (*4:29*). Our life within the gospel community and amongst unbelievers must be characterized by truth (*4:25, 5:9*). This will affect how we speak to family, friends, and

those who have authority over us. The people of God, both as individuals and as a community, must reflect the message that saved them (1:13), and the one who teaches them (4:20-21).

3. YOUR BREASTPLATE (6:14)

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS THAT SAVES – IS THE RIGHTEOUSNESS WE LIVE BY.

Christ's Righteousness

One of the titles given to the Devil is 'the accuser of God's people' (Rev 12:10). The accuser knows he can't steal salvation from God's people, for they adopted by the all-powerful loving Father (1:4-5). He can't steal their salvation, but he can seek to stop them enjoying it. His primary aim, therefore, is to prevent God's people developing an intimate relationship with the one who saved them.

When the Devil accuses the young Christian, his aim is to get them to base their salvation on their performance, rather than God's sovereign grace. Once that lie is believed, God's grace is undermined in the life of the young person, and the enjoyment of God's love is eroded.

The breastplate of righteousness points us back to Ephesians 1 and the phrase 'in Christ'. The fact that we are 'in Christ' means everything that's true of Jesus is now true of us. [See Table 1]

Therefore, when the accuser haunts us with the memory of our sin, we remind him that we wear the breastplate of Christ's righteousness (his complete and obedient life). We are in Christ, therefore sinless in God's sight.

Boasting In Christ

When the 'accuser of Christians' attacks a young person's faith, we must teach them to boast in Christ.

- They must **boast** about our Father's love for us in sending Jesus (1:7-8).
- They must **boast** about the complete forgiveness Jesus has won for us (1:7).
- They must **boast** about the perfect obedience and righteousness of Jesus (1:5).
- They must **boast** that one day Jesus will be seen to reign supreme (1:20-22).

Watching Satan Flee

"Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." James 4:7

If we change the idea that James uses of submitting, to Paul's picture of 'being strong in the Lord (6:10), 'putting on the armour of God (6:11,13), and standing firm (6:13,14), we are clearly talking about the same thing. So when our young people look away from themselves to the Lord and put on the armour of God, you can be sure that the Devil will flee.

Standing For Truth = Seeking Justice

The illustration or picture Paul uses to describe the armour of God is taken from *Isaiah 59:15-20*. The picture that we get from Isaiah 59 introduces to us the second point of application concerning the 'breastplate of righteousness'. In the Bible the word righteousness and justice are used interchangeably. [See Table 2]

When Christian young people speak the message of God's truth (1:13), into a dark world (5:5-18), sin and injustice will be exposed, as in Isaiah's day. When they face opposition, they must rest in the confidence that they represent a Saviour who came to bring justice to His world (Luke 4:18). When gospel truth is shared and lived, the cross becomes pre-eminent, and the poor flourish.

TABLE 1

TRUE OF JESUS...	...SO TRUE OF US
1:3 In Christ is every spiritual blessing.	→ We therefore have every spiritual blessing.
1:7,13 He is the complete Redeemer and Saviour.	→ We have complete redemption & salvation.

TABLE 2

ISAIAH'S WORD <i>(ISAIAH 59)</i>	PAUL'S WORD <i>(EPHESIANS)</i>
12-13 Israel's life is marked by rebellion, treachery and turning away from God.	2:1-3, 5:2, 11 Our lives were once marked by death and darkness but not now.
14-15 The victims of Israel rebellion are justice & truth.	4:25, 5:9, 6:13 We no longer allow lies to mark us, but instead the belt of truth.
16 The only saviour is God himself.	5:5-7 We are no longer idolaters.
17-18 He brings judgement as well as salvation.	6:14 We wear the breastplate of 'righteousness / justice'.
19 The result is people fear him.	5:8-20 We go out into God's world living righteous lives, that bring justice and flourishing to a fallen world.
19 God's desire to bring justice and truth is like a 'pent up flood, ready to be released'.	6:14 We go out into God's world confident that we stand in the righteousness of Christ.
20 The result is, his people are saved.	



SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

THE BELT OF TRUTH

1. What is the character of the Devil, and how does he use that character to implement his schemes and train his evil spiritual forces?

Read Ephesians 6:10-12, John 8:44

2. Read 1:13, 4:15, 4:29. What are the three ways the 'belt of truth' is seen and experienced by God's people?

- *We are saved by a message of truth (1:13).*
- *We are to speak God's truth to one another (4:15).*
- *We are to be a community that's marked by truth (4:29).*

3. What's the connection between God's character...

a) and his message (Eph 1:13)?

b) and his people (Eph 4:14-16, 29-32)?

4. What would you say were some of the Devil's favourite lies that undermine God's truth today?

What are some of the Devil's lies that you find hardest to reject?
How can the belt of truth help you?

THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

5. When you muck up and sin, how do you usually respond?

6. What is often the Devil's first move? Read Revelation 12:10.

7. What is the breastplate of righteousness?

The breastplate represents the complete obedience of the Lord Jesus.

What does that actually mean?

TRUE OF JESUS...

1:3 *In Christ is every spiritual blessing.*

1:7, 13 *He is the complete Redeemer and Saviour.*

...SO TRUE OF US

We therefore have every spiritual blessing.

We have complete redemption and salvation.

8. Next time the Devil accuses you of sin, what kind of things can you boast to him about?

1:7-8 *The Father's love.*

1:5 *The perfect obedience of Jesus that you now wear.*

1:7 *The complete forgiveness won by Jesus.*

1:20-22 *The truth that one day Jesus will reign supreme.*

9. When we boast of Christ, what does the Devil have to do? Read James 4:7.

STUDY 3

THE FIGHT: YOUR ENEMY & YOUR ARMOUR

PART 2

DIFFICULT WORDS EXPLAINED

BOOTS OF PEACE

Living peaceful lives, while taking the message of peace to the world.

SHIELD OF FAITH

The truth of God that protects us from Satan's lies.



THE TRUTH

THE SEAT BELT TEST

1. **YOUR ENEMY** – To show how our enemy wants to steal, kill and destroy.
2. **YOUR BOOTS** – The peace that saves is the peace we live by.
3. **THE SHIELD** – The truth of God that protects us from Satan's lies.



THE LINK

CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

The Devil uses his lies to cause death, division and destruction.



THE MESSAGE

THE MEAT OF THE PASSAGE

1. YOUR ENEMY

Here the Lord Jesus once again lays the foundation for understanding the Devil's character in *John 10:10*:

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

- **He comes to steal**
Our enemy wants to steal from us they joy of knowing, experiencing and depending upon God's love (*3:14-19*). He wants to steal from us the hunger to know more of Christ so that we grow into mature Christians (*4:12-14*). He wants to steal from the world the amazing effect God's new humanity can have upon a broken and fallen world (*2:10, 15*).
- **He comes to kill**
Our enemy hungers to keep people in spiritual darkness and away from God's love and forgiveness (*2:1-5*). Our enemy wants to distract God's people from following the example of Christ in preaching a message of peace (*2:17-18*) to a world under God's wrath (*2:3*).
- **He comes destroy**
Our enemy wants to destroy the unity of God's people, by bringing division and disharmony into Christian communities (*4:3*), families (*5:25, 6:1.4*) and work places (*6:7-8*).

With an enemy like this, it's essential we obey God's command to be strong (*6:10*), put on the full armour of God (*6:11, 13*), and stand firm (*6:11, 13, 14*).

2. YOUR BOOTS

THE PEACE THAT SAVES IS THE PEACE WE LIVE BY

Gospel boots are the third piece of armour, and to understand them we need to look at how the theme of peace weaves its way through the book of Ephesians.

- **2:1-5, 17** – It's the message of peace that gives us spiritual life.
- **2:14-17** – Jesus is described as our peace. His message of peace breaks down barriers, thus creating a new humanity.
- **4:2-4** – The peace that saves is the same peace that keeps us united as God's people

The message of peace leads to God's people being built into His new humanity. Therefore, when we take the message of God's truth to the world, we march *together* as one. A brief look at the word *'together'* in the book of Ephesians reveals just how unified God's people must be.

- **2:21-23** – God's people are built *together*, so that God's Spirit dwells within us.
- **3:6** – Both Jews and Gentiles *together* enjoy the promises that are in Jesus.
- **3:17-19** – God's people *together* seek to explore the greatness of God's love.
- **4:15-17** – We grow *together* in likeness to Christ, not merely as individuals.

If we take the message of peace to the world, then we must march together. The people of God are called by their captain to march as one, together in gospel unity. In a culture that worships individuality, we need to think long and hard about how that undermines our unity.

2. YOUR SHIELD (6:16)

THE TRUTH OF GOD THAT PROTECTS US FROM SATAN'S LIES.

Throughout scripture God, is described as a shield that protects his people from their enemies (*Dt 33:29*). So when we come to this part of the armour, we must have that picture in mind.

More of the Devil's lies

In the last session, we saw that the Devil uses lies to attack us when we sin. His creativity when using lies does not stop there, for he uses them to form how we think in times of crisis and suffering. Every lie he speaks is a repackaged version of the two lies he skilfully spoke in the garden of Eden.

- **LIE 1 (Gen 3:1) – God's word cannot be trusted**
When a tragedy hits us, the Devil responds with lightening quick speed to get us to doubt God's word. Just as he did with Jesus in the wilderness, the Devil quotes scripture to us (*Ps 5:2*). Surely, Lord, you bless the righteous; you surround them with your favour as with a shield. "If God is all powerful surely, he could have stopped that happening"? The Devil seeks to haunt us with the question, so we end up doubting God's word.
- **LIE 2 (Gen 3:4-5) – God doesn't want your best**
The second lie the devil uses when suffering strikes is to pressure us to think that God no longer cares or loves us. Again, he may use the truth of scripture to taunt us (*Ps 18:30*), As for God, his way is perfect: The Lord's word is flawless; he shields all who take refuge in him. "If God is your shield, and loves you, then why on earth would he allow this to happen"? So, how do we hold up the shield of faith, so as to extinguish these lies?

Holding up the shield of faith

In our culture today, the word faith is only applied to the religious arena. If we exchange the word faith for trust, we not only get much nearer to what the Bible means, but we will also find it easier to apply to our everyday life.

Looking back

Holding the shield of faith involves looking back to the cross and making sure we judge all crisis and suffering from that standpoint. It's at the cross that we understand the fullness of God's love (*2:4-5*), therefore the place to start when understanding the suffering we will face. The 'shield of faith' is about looking to the cross and putting our faith in our suffering Saviour (*3:16-19*), which protects us from the fiery lies of the Devil (*6:16*).

Looking forward

The shield of faith involves looking forward to the day when Christ will reign (*1:21-22*). Whatever injustice God's people may face, our response must never be revenge, but instead to hold up the 'shield of faith' trusting that God will deliver (*Rom 12:19, 1 Pet 2:23*).



SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

READ EPH 6:10-20

THE GOSPEL BOOTS

1. Read Ep 2:14-22. What's the aim and the purpose of the gospel?

2:14 *To destroy the barriers human beings create that divide us.*

2:15 *To create a new humanity.*

2:16 *This is achieved only through the cross.*

2:17 *To bring his new humanity together, so we all have access to the Father through the Spirit.*

2:21-22 *To build a people together that resemble a temple, so God can dwell within them through His Spirit.*

2. How are Christians described?

2:19 *No longer foreigners or strangers, but instead fellow citizens.*

3. What is the foundation of God's people?

2:20 *Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Jesus as the chief cornerstone.*

Everything flows to and from Christ.

4. What are the major divisions within our society?

5. How can All Souls Youth reflect the gospel?

If All Souls Youth reflects 2:14-22, what kind of culture would be created?

What would this really look like? Be as practical as possible.

THE SHIELD OF FAITH

REMIND YOURSELF OF THE DEVIL'S TWO MOST POPULAR LIES:

Gen 3:1 – God's Word can't be trusted.

Gen 34-5 – God doesn't want your best.

HOLDING UP THE SHIELD OF FAITH MEANS LOOKING BACK IN HISTORY.

1. What do we look back to? Read Eph 2:4-5.
2. How does looking back help Christians face suffering?
3. How does looking back expose the Devil's lies?

HOLDING UP THE SHIELD OF FAITH MEANS LOOKING FORWARD TO THE FUTURE.

4. What do we look forward to? Read Eph 1:22-23 & 1 Pet 2:23.
5. How does looking forward help Christians face suffering?
6. How does looking forward expose the Devil's lies?

STUDY 4

THE FIGHT: YOUR ENEMY & YOUR ARMOUR

PART 3

DIFFICULT WORDS EXPLAINED

HELMET OF SALVATION

God's salvation gives us the courage to go to evil places to save people from evil beliefs.

SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

The word of God that gives us all we need stand firm.



THE TRUTH

THE SEAT BELT TEST

- 1. YOUR HELMET** – Reminds you that your Saviour is sovereign and your salvation is secure.
- 2. YOUR SWORD** – All parts of the armour depend on the Word of God.



THE LINK

CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

PAUL'S PRAYERS

Throughout the book of Ephesians, we get a window into the prayer life of the Apostle Paul (*1:15-18, 3:14-17*). Yet the book finishes, not with Paul praying for the Ephesians, but Paul asking them to pray for him (*6:19-20*).

Two questions

1. Why does Paul fear?
2. How will the two pieces of armour help him today?

Fear

The fear Paul feels, is the reason he wants the Ephesian Christian's to pray for him. When we read about Paul's experiences in Ephesus, it's clear why he wanted them to pray for him.



THE MESSAGE

THE MEAT OF THE PASSAGE

1. YOUR HELMET (*6:17 & Acts 19:23-28*)

PAUL'S MESSAGE

One God (*1:20-22*)

The message Paul brings to Ephesus forces a huge world view clash, for he declares that there is only one true God.

- **1:20** – Jesus is at the place of all authority – God's right hand.
- **1:21** – His power, authority and dominion are total.
- **1:22** – One day all people will see this.

One Disease

Paul makes clear the devastating disease that affects mankind.

- **2:1-3** – We are spiritually dead and disobedient.
- **2:3** – We face God's judgement.

One Cure

Paul makes clear the answer to our spiritual death and disobedience.

- **2:4** – We are utterly dependent upon God's love and rich mercy.
- **2:5** – We are utterly dependent upon God for spiritual life.
- **2:5** – We are utterly dependent upon God's grace for forgiveness.

One Lifestyle

- **5:8** – We live in God's light instead of spiritual darkness.
- **5:9-12** – We hunger to find out what pleases the Lord.
- **5:9-12** – We reject all that God hates.

Different Gods

This is the message Paul takes to Ephesus, knowing it will cause a huge world view clash. Dominating the skyline of Ephesus was the temple of Artemis, the largest building in the Greek world. This breath-taking building was made of solid marble and boasted 127 columns, soon to become one of the Seven Wonders of the World. At the centre of the temple was the goddess Diana, the many-breasted cult figure.

*“She was thought of as both a chaste virgin and yet at the same time the mother of all. In both cases she was thought to be the goddess of protection.”
D Gooding*

It's only when Paul begins to preach this message that we quickly see why he needs the *'helmet of salvation'*.

Difficult Days (Acts 19:23-28)

When Paul preaches God's message, we instantly see how it challenges both their lifestyle and their view of God.

“It was inevitable that sooner or later the kingly authority of Jesus would challenge Diana's evil sway.” John Stott

The success of the gospel (**Acts 19:26**), leads to an economic crisis, as the new Christians stop buying idols of Diana (**Acts 19:26-27**).

“Persecution is simply the clash between two irreconcilable value systems.” John Stott

Reading this story in the book of Acts is the clearest way to understand why Paul fears (**6:19**). As fear begins to strike him, he puts on the helmet of salvation, which reminds him of his sovereign Saviour (**1:20-22**), and the salvation that's secure (**1:4**). When our young people take God's message to the world, they must expect both progress and

persecution. When they face opposition, they must remember that their Saviour is sovereign and their salvation's secure. These truths will give our young people courage and dynamism, as they put on the 'helmet of salvation' and face a hostile world.

2. YOUR SWORD (6:17 & Acts 19:23-28)

The best way to understand what Paul means by the sword of the Spirit is to watch him in action. The picture in Acts 20 is full of intense emotion, as Paul leaves the Ephesian leaders for the last time. In his account, Luke is showing us how the sword of the Spirit controlled all he did.

Paul's Work

- **Acts 20:26** – He leaves knowing his conscience is clear of their eternal future.
- **Acts 20:27** – The reason his conscience is clear is because he's taught them the whole of God's word. He's never skipped over the less savoury parts, or the bits no one likes to hear. He's left no spiritual stone unturned.

Paul's Warning

- **Acts 20:28** – He warns the leaders to be shepherds of God's flock. A flock that he bought with His Sons blood.
- **Acts 20:29** – He warns that wolves will come in and savage the flock.
- **Acts 20:29-30** – The mark of a wolf is that they distort God's word
- **Acts 20:31-32** – He warns them to remember what he has taught them. The only way our young people will stand firm in their faith is through the word of God. All the other parts of the armour are totally dependent upon the word of God.

The belt of truth (6:14)

The truth of God's gospel is found only in the word of God (1:13).

The breastplate of righteousness (6:14)

The only place to gain the knowledge of Christ's righteousness and how it applies to your life is through reading God's word (1:4).

The boots of peace (6:15)

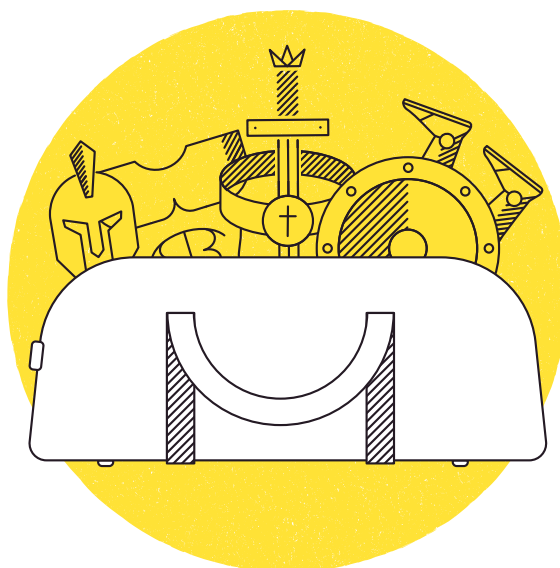
We find peace through hearing God's word (2:17), and unity through obeying it (4:3).

The helmet of salvation (6:17)

The clearer our young people understand God's word, the bolder they will be in sharing God's salvation. As youth leaders, our job is to make sure we teach 'the whole will of God' (Acts 20:27).

To have a pick and mix approach to the word of God is to leave our flock open to savage wolves (Acts 20:29-30). The clearer our young people understand God's word, the clearer they will know what the armour is and how to apply it to their lives (6:20).

THE LAST PIECE OF ARMOUR REALLY IS THE MOST IMPORTANT!



THE TOOL BAG OF TRUTH

Every one of our young people will face attacks upon their faith, morals, intellect and face the pressure of living in a fallen and broken world. One good way to picture our young people is that they carry a 'truth tool bag'. Our role as youth workers is to put as many truth tools into that bag as possible. Then when they face challenges and temptations, they will be ready and prepared for them.



SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

THE HELMET OF SALVATION

1. Read Acts 19:23-28. What impact did God's message have in Ephesus?
2. Why should that not be a surprise? Read Eph 2:1-3.
3. Do you think you need the helmet of salvation?
4. What's the link between people's response and Paul's fear? Read Eph 6:19-20.
5. Can you relate to Paul's fear?
6. How should the helmet of salvation give you courage next time?

1:20-22 Your Saviour is sovereign.

1:4-5 Your Salvation is secure.

THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

7. Read Acts 20:25-32. What does Paul know will happen?
8. How might you face the same situation?
9. What has Paul done to prepare them for it?

STUDY 5

THE FIGHT: THE AMBASSADOR'S PRAYER

DIFFICULT WORDS EXPLAINED

PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT

Allowing the Spirit to remind us of our new identity (1:13-14). Allowing the Spirit to remind us of God's love (3:16-19).

MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL

The open secret of God's gospel.

AMBASSADOR

Representing the God who chose you (1:4) and gave you life (2:5).

UNDYING LOVE

The eternal life God gives means you can love him forever.



THE TRUTH

THE SEAT BELT TEST

1. **PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT** – To understand what praying in the Spirit means. The evidence that you pray in the Spirit is your relationship with God grows more intimate.
2. **THE SPIRIT STRENGTHENS US BY REMINDING US** – of God's love, our identity and future.



THE LINK

CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

The Helmet – God's salvation gives us the courage to go to evil places to save people from evil beliefs.

The Sword – The word of God gives us all we need to stand firm.



THE MESSAGE

THE MEAT OF THE PASSAGE

1. PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT

The secret to all spiritual strength is dependence on God 6:10, and there's no greater way to express dependence than prayer. The best way to understand what praying in the Spirit means is to look back at what we have already learnt in Ephesians.

2. THE SPIRIT STRENGTHENS US BY REMINDING US

He reminds us we're God's possession and our future is secure (1:13-14, 17-18).

He reminds us of the power we have as God's children (1:19-20).

He reminds us that Christ is presently in the place of all authority and one day everyone will acknowledge that (1:20-23).

He dwells within God's people (2:22), so as to remind them of God's love (3:16-19).

Praying all the time (6:18)

The sign of a healthy and intimate relationship is natural and regular communication. The Holy Spirit wants to train us to speak to our heavenly Father continually. As we seek our Father's face, we are strengthened by His love.

Pray all kinds of prayers (6:18)

As humans we communicate with each other in so many ways, by text, emails, Zoom, long or short conversations, as individuals or corporately etc. When we communicate with God, the same principle applies depending on the context. Our prayers at times will

resemble a quick text, a short personal conversation as we walk to school, or a long conversation together with God's people.

Pray for all people (6:18)

The more our hearts are changed by God's love, the more we become other people centered. No longer is life all about our needs, for our horizon has become much bigger than ourselves. As God's people we reflect the kind of love He displayed when he saved us.

Living and praying like an Ambassador (6:19-20)

Paul outlines what every Ambassador of Christ should pray for their Christian brothers and sisters.

- Wisdom in what we say about Jesus.
- Courage to speak about Jesus.
- Success when we speak of Jesus.



SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

READ 6:10-20

1. The mark of a superhero is that they are:

POWERFUL – INDEPENDENT – WINNERS

Which aspects of the culture you live in reflect these three points?

Think about how you approach school, sport, music, celebs you follow.

2. Read again 6:18-20. Paul's approach to life is very different as he admits to being fearful, dependent and worried?

3. What two things in 6:18-20 cause him to feel this way?

His role – He's God's ambassador. His mission – To tell others of Jesus

4. How does the Spirit help us to be God's ambassador?

The definition of an Ambassador. A diplomatic official of the highest rank, sent by one sovereign or state to another as its resident representative.

1:13-14 *He constantly reminds us of who we are*

1:17 *He constantly reminds us of who we represent*

5. What is your experience of this?

6. What is Paul praying the Spirit will do in your life? Look at 3:14-19.

7. What does prayer show about your relationship with God?

8. How is prayer an acknowledgement of our dependence?

9. Think of different ways that we communicate to each.

10. What would it look like for you, to be "praying all kinds of prayers" for your friends? Look at 6:19-20.

DIFFICULT WORDS EXPLAINED

MIGHTY POWER

The power of the one who chose us (1:4), and raised us (2:5).

FULL ARMOUR OF GOD

The tools God gives us to live a worthy life (4:1).

DEVIL'S SCHEMES

The means by which Satan uses to gain a foothold in our lives (4:27).

RULERS, AUTHORITIES AND POWERS OF THIS DARK WORLD

THE SPIRITUAL FORCES OF EVIL IN THE HEAVENLY REALMS

"A whole range of evil spiritual forces of varying rank, authority and capabilities."
C.E.Arnold

DAY OF EVIL

A time of testing.

BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

The breast plate represents the complete obedience of the Lord Jesus.

The breastplate of righteousness (justice) is when God's people speak his truth into a fallen and broken world. When we speak God's truth, sin and injustice are exposed. The hope is that conviction of sin will lead to faith in Jesus.

BELT OF TRUTH

Speaking God's truth to each other and the world.

BOOTS OF PEACE

Living peaceful lives, while taking the message of peace to the world.

SHIELD OF FAITH

The truth of God that protects us from Satan's lies.

HELMET OF SALVATION

God's salvation gives us the courage to go to evil places to save people from evil beliefs.

SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

The word of God that gives us all we need stand firm.

PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT

Allowing the Spirit to remind us of our new identity (1:13-14). Allowing the Spirit to remind us of God's love (3:16-19).

MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL

The open secret of God's gospel.

AMBASSADOR

Representing the God who chose you (1:4) and gave you life (2:5).

UNDYING LOVE

The eternal life God gives means you can love him forever.



THE ARMOUR OF GOD

WRITTEN BY:

TREVOR PEARCE

DESIGNED BY:

DANCOLLINSCREATIVE.COM

© 2021