

Spiritual Warfare “Breastplate of Righteousness”

Eph. 6: 14- ‘...and having on the breastplate of righteousness,’

Amplified: ‘...and having put on the breastplate of integrity and of moral rectitude and right standing with God,’

Righteousness is termed as a weapon; it is our breastplate.

We know righteousness is a weapon since Paul calls it such in several places in the scriptures: **Righteousness is called a breastplate-**

- **2Cor. 6:7-** ‘...by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left.’
- **Isa. 59: 17-** ‘for He put on righteousness as a breastplate...’

Facts about the breastplate:

1. Most beautiful, shiniest, glamorous piece of weaponry the soldier possessed. You really noticed this first on the soldier.
2. It began at the top of his neck-went all the way down to the knees.
3. Composed of two separate pieces of metal-(usually brass, maybe bronze), one down the front – one down the back; held together by solid brass rings on top of the shoulders, and connected on the sides.
4. The larger front & back sheets were comprised of smaller, scale-like pieces of metal, similar to scales of a fish. Thus, called a coat of mail.
5. Heaviest piece of armor he wore- usually approx. 40 lbs, could be 70 lbs. Depended on the size of the man. Goliath’s weighed 125 lbs.
6. Being brass or bronze, as the soldier wore his breastplate; the rubbing together of the metal added a luster & caused the breastplate to shine even more.
7. Brass, out in the sun was brilliant, reflecting the sun rays. Produced a dazzling effect.
8. The using & walking around in it enhanced the beauty of the breastplate.

A whole mountainside of roman soldiers with this armor would be aglow.

The breastplate was both ‘a defensive & offensive weapon.’

You need a breastplate- *someone wants to hurt you.*

The person who wears this type of weaponry is one who is engaged in battle, trying to protect him/herself from an adversary.

The devil wants to assault you, tell you that you are not righteous; of no value to God or man.

Remember- '*diablos*' means he hits again & again, trying to penetrate the mind with slanderous accusations.

Accuses us of not being good Christians, failures, hypocrites, weak, disgraceful to God. If you don't have your breastplate of righteousness firmly fixed in place and being held by the loin belt of truth- those accusations will penetrate you. (mind & emotions).

Christians who don't know they are righteous in God habitually walk in condemnation/guilt. Trying to establish their own sense of righteousness.

Why?

The devil comes to condemn them; they have no defense due to not wearing the breastplate of righteousness.

V. 14 of the text tells us 'to stand, having girded your waist with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness.'

God has freely imparted His righteousness to you, because we could never be righteous on our own.

Scriptures on righteousness:

1. 2Cor. 5:21- 'For He made Him (Jesus) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him, (Jesus).'

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. Nas

21God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God. Niv.

2 Cor 5:21

The Greek runs like this: "The One who did not know sin for us sin was made, that we might become God's righteousness in Him. The sinless One became (by imputation) sin for the sinner, that the sinner might become (by imputation) sinless in the sinless One. Here is the very heart of the gospel, a verse that stands with John 3:16 in importance.

Isa. 53:6- “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone, to his own way; & the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”

God treated Jesus as a sinner to order to punish our sins, so we could have a substitute.

We are righteous because Jesus paid the price for us to become righteous with God- ‘in right standing with God.’= reconciled.

You should not say ‘you want to be righteous’, you are righteous because of what Jesus & the Father already did for you. Righteousness is your current standing with God.

2. Romans 3:21, 22- “But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets.

Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ to all & upon all them that believe.’

Rom 3:22-24

If righteousness is bestowed, upon whom is it bestowed? This righteousness is realized through the efficient cause-faith, which has for its object, Christ. It is a righteousness to all those in the process of trusting. The present participle makes it clear that this is a life-long committal to Christ seen in the day-by-day response of trust (see on Rom 1:16). It is trust and only trust that is required.

(From the Wycliffe bible commentary, electronic database. Copyright (c) 1962 by moody press)

What stronger statement could be made to prove that all believers are dressed in righteousness???

3. Romans 5:17- “For if by one man’s offense (Adam) death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by One, Jesus Christ.’

When the believer finally grabs hold of the truth that he/she is righteous because of the gift of righteousness given by God through Christ, it changes him/her.

Assurance comes, peace comes, a sense of relationship with God comes, based on what God has done for us; not what we can do to earn/gain anything from him or repay him.

It will move you from the realm of struggling with yourself to reigning like a king in Christ.

Ques: If all believers have been made righteous & are supposed to reign like this, then why do so many believers live defeated lives?????

A: Their minds are not ‘renewed by the Word of God to the correct thinking.
Because they think they are unworthy, they behave as though they are unworthy.
Because they think they have no value, they behave as if they don’t.
Because they think they are unrighteous, they behave as though they are unrighteous.

When you find out you are righteous, you **‘stand therefore, having on the breastplate of righteousness.’**

Phil. 3:9- “And being found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith...”

A new source of confidence:

Knowing your righteousness (right standing with God) is based on your faith (trust in) what Jesus has done for you – **‘you will have a new & incredible confidence level in your spiritual life.’**

1John 5:13-14- “These things have I written to you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may believe on the name of the Son of God. And this is the confidence...”

Confidence-parresia = ‘boldness, openness.’

A person **exceptionally** openly bold about things; they almost appear arrogant/cocky.

An attitude of confidence will affect your prayer life-

1John 5:14-15 “And this is the confidence, [great boldness], that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything **according to His will**, He hears us.

And if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.’

You cannot pray with confidence/power/authority unless you know you are in right standing with God.

You must have on the breastplate of righteousness & know you have it on.

Example:

Acts 3:3-4

- Peter & John fastening their eyes on the man said- 'look on us.'
- Stared straight into the man's eyes. Got his attention.
- "Look at me"- why? Peter knew [had confidence] that he had this life changing power to offer this crippled man.
- This righteousness makes you bold, to tell everyone to look to Jesus whom they need.
- "Such as I have..." "Such = really is 'who I have' Jesus,
- Peter wasn't giving him a crutch, he was offering the crippled a 'who' = Jesus Christ.
- They moved in such confidence because they knew of their righteousness in Christ; it gives you assurance you need to step out and do the work of God.

Righteousness- a defensive weapon:

Isa. 51:7-8 "Listen to me, you who know righteousness, you people in whose heart is my law;

Do not fear the reproach of men, nor be afraid of their insults.

For the moth will eat them up like a garment, and the worm will eat them like wool; But my righteousness will be forever and my salvation from generation to generation.'

When you are dressed in righteousness, you do not have to fear what the devil or man can do to you.

Your righteousness will sustain you- while your enemies are eaten like a moth eats a garment and like a worm eats wool.

When you walk in righteousness, it is a defensive weapon against the slanderous accusations and insidious strategies of the enemy.

The righteous are never permanently affected by afflictions-

Psa. 37:17- "For the arms of the wicked shall be broken, but the Lord upholds the righteous."

The righteous will always outlast any attack that comes against them.

Prov. 10:30- "The righteous shall never be removed..."

If you don't have your breastplate of righteousness firmly in place when you go into confrontation with the adversary, he will do everything within his power to remove you.

Righteousness – an offensive weapon:

The breastplate was beautiful to look at, & it protected the soldier defensively from attacks, but it also did something else very important:

- Made of highly polished brass/bronze, when the soldier threw his shoulders back, the afternoon sunshine hit the metal, & it cast a blinding glare into the eyes of the enemy.
- The brilliance blinded the eyes so thoroughly that the opponent could not see to fight. This is how it was an offensive weapon.
- When we really begin to walk in righteousness, & walk into a dark situation, the darkness will begin to flee from you.
- Evil forces always flee from righteousness, because they cannot endure the brilliance that righteousness reflects into their eyes.
- You will have God's glory radiating from you, people will see a difference.

For the breastplate to be useful to the soldier, he had to put it on, wear it, let it rub together and get even more brilliant with use.

You & I have to keep walking, keep marching, keep moving forward, do not let the enemy talk us out of enjoying the benefits of our right standing with God.

The correct attitude for warfare-

The Roman commander told the armies of Rome:

“Don't come back to our encampment until the enemy has been annihilated.

If you're not going to kill the adversary, then don't come back and show your face here ever again.”

“It would be better for you to die on the battlefield than to come back here and tell us that the enemy won. Make sure that you come home a winner, or don't come home at all.”

These kind of statements affected the attitude of those soldiers.

They begin to mentally gear themselves up for the fight!!

They went into weeks & months of preparation.

They did everything they could do to prepare their minds & attitudes – because the mind & attitude have everything to do with how well you endure in the midst of a fight.

If you are not equipped emotionally & mentally, you are defeated before the fight ever begins.

Why? A negative attitude has already determined your approach.

By developing an attitude of 'righteousness' in your life & learning to view yourself through the work of the cross, your attitude will receive a divine impartation of confidence and boldness.

As you walk in righteous, every step you take, you become more and more gorgeous to the eye of God, and more & more dangerously blinding to the eye of the enemy.