



LIVING GRACE
COMMUNITY CHURCH

“Walking in the Armor of God-Part 2”

Sermon Date: May 15th, 2022

Reflections on Sunday’s Sermon

Below is a reference to the section of the New City Catechism that we went over on Sunday:

The New City Catechism—Lord’s Day 20

Who is the Redeemer?

The only Redeemer is the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, in whom God became man and bore the penalty for sin himself.

Prayer

Before you begin the study, consider making this prayer your own (this prayer was taken from The Valley of Vision A Collection of Puritan Prayers and Devotions).

O Lord, I bless thee that the issue of the battle between thyself and Satan has never been uncertain and will end in victory. Calvary broke the dragon’s head, and I contend with a vanquished foe, who with all his subtlety and strength has already been overcome. When I feel the serpent at my heel may I remember Him whose heel was bruised, but who, when bruised, broke the devil’s head.

My soul with inward joy extols the mighty conqueror. Heal me of any wounds received in this great conflict; if I have gathered defilement, if my faith has suffered damage, if my hope is less than bright, if my love is not fervent, if some creature-comfort occupies my heart, if my soul sinks under pressure of the fight. O thou whose every promise is balm, every touch life, draw near to thy weary warrior, refresh me, that I may rise again to wage the strife, and never tire until my enemy is trodden down.

Give me such fellowship with thee that I may defy Satan, unbelief, the flesh, the world, with delight that comes not from a creature, and which a creature cannot mar. Give me a draught of the eternal fountain that lieth in thy immutable, everlasting love and decree. Then shall my hand never weaken, my feet never stumble, my sword never rest, my shield never rust, my helmet never shatter, my breastplate never fall, as my strength rests in the power of thy might.

Scripture

Ephesians 6:13-17 (ESV)

¹³ 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 firm. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; ¹⁷ and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Handling the Word

Let's break down the passage:

1. Given the schemes of the devil and the rulers, authorities, and spiritual forces, what are the saints to 'take up' and why (v. 13)?
2. What will enable the saints to confidently stand in the evil day (v. 14)?
3. What gives the saints a readiness amidst spiritual warfare (v. 15)?
4. What are the saints to 'take up' that they might destroy all the efforts of their accuser (v. 16)?
5. What else is the saint to grasp that they might have confidence in this life (v. 17)?
6. What does the Spirit, indwelling us, use to help us combat the schemes of the devil (v. 17)?

Understanding and Applying

1. Richard Coekin states, “Truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, and the word of God are not virtuous actions that we are to start doing! Paul is not urging us to be good. Rather, they are all ways of describing *the impact* of the gospel.” If the armor is the ‘impact’ of the gospel in our lives, how does this help us understand how we are to ‘take up’ the whole armor of God (Rom. 13:14; Col. 3:1-4)? Why should Coekin’s statement be a source of encouragement and confidence as you consider your responsibility in the battle ahead?
2. Regarding the belt of truth, James M. Boice suggests that “we must be truthful men and women, but we will become that only as we feast on the revealed truths of God” (Eph. 4:23-25). We are able to stand because our lives are being shaped by God’s revelation, especially concerning His Son. What tends to compete with God’s truth for your heart and desires? Do you find yourself more readily resisting temptation, obeying sincerely, and unwilling to compromise as you continue to know and trust Christ? Please share.
3. Regarding the breastplate of righteousness, we are to continually draw upon the reality that in Christ we have been made right with God (1 Cor. 1:30). Are there things in your life that Satan uses to cause you to doubt your standing with God, and why is the breastplate able to curb these accusations? Furthermore, being made right with God, we will inevitably begin to lead righteous lives (1 Jn. 2:29). Why does our union with Christ lead to godly living and why does godly living counter Satan’s schemes against the church (Eph. 4:23-27)?
4. Regarding the shoes for our feet, Ian Hamilton suggests that “every Christian is called to wear gospel shoes, to be ready to give a reason for the hope that is in them (1 Pet. 3:15).” What about the gospel message causes your heart to want to share it with others? It is through the gospel that we obtain peace with God and one another (Eph. 2:13-14). How does the gospel of peace urge you to maintain peace with fellow saints and thus, resist Satan’s attempts to divide or distract the church (Eph. 4:3-6)?

5. Regarding the shield of faith, we are able to ‘extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one’ as we place our *confidence* in God and His promises ‘in all circumstances’ (v. 16). What are some specific attributes, works, or promises of Christ that you have clung to for protection against fear, compromise, sin, or despair? Please share. How has the shield of faith raised over you by other believers helped to protect you during trials or temptations?

6. Regarding the helmet of salvation, our minds are to be armed with the truth of God’s salvation in Christ so that although we might struggle with sin, lapses of faith, or continual suffering, we can know that our salvation is secure and will be consummated (Ian Hamilton). Why can God’s people have assurance regarding their salvation, despite circumstances (Rom. 8:30-39; 1 Thess. 5:8-10)? At times, where are you tempted to look for confidence in this life or the life to come, and why is this gaze hopeless?

7. Regarding the word of God, “it is the church’s mighty, God-given weapon to defeat the schemes of the devil” (Ian Hamilton). How does the Spirit use the Word, within the elements of the Sunday service—worship, prayer, preaching, the benediction, and the sacraments—to enable the saints to defend against Satan’s efforts to deceive and divide the church? Do you think we are more susceptible to Satan’s wiles when we downplay or neglect the communication of the Word in the elements? Please explain.

8. Praise God who gives us the victory in Christ Jesus (1 Cor. 15:57); He is our truth, our righteousness, our peace, our confidence, and our salvation. Rather than figuring out how to put on each individual piece of armor, how has this text directed your gaze to Christ and His work on your behalf?

“We must also remember that the devil has been defeated. We can have confidence because Jesus has already won the victory for us (Eph. 1:19-22; 4:8). Paul does not urge us to win the battle here but to stand. The authority of the powers has been broken, and their final defeat is coming soon.”

-Tony Merida