



**2. Putting on righteousness.**                      6:14                      *out on the breastplate of righteousness*

This command essentially expects you to put on the protection of your right standing with God regularly and keep putting it on. Righteousness is applied holiness. God is perfect and unique by nature; therefore everything he does is right. Unright happens when anything or anyone is not aligned with the holiness of God expressed in his laws and commands.

Three basic commitments regarding righteousness because of your union with Christ:

- Renew your awareness of who you are in Christ.                      E. 4:23-24                      Gen. 18:25
  - Rejoice in the gift of righteousness from God.                      Rom. 3:21; 4:22-25
  - Behave right in response to God's grace.                      E. 5:8-9; Rom. 6:13
- Cmp.    Psalm 19:8-9                      Jer. 9:23-24                      Matthew 5:13-16

**Deliberately prepare for your enemy by . . .**                      Stand therefore . . .

**3. Putting on the gospel.**                      6:15                      *put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace*

Fastening shoes or sandals on your feet is the idea here. Stand prepared with sandals or boots on your feet. The sandals that you are to put on are referred to as the preparation or readiness of the gospel that promotes peace. Stand fitted or having fastened on your feet the readiness to announce the peace that comes from receiving the good news of Christ.

This is a bit awkwardly worded but absolutely beautiful principle of warfare. You are responsible to put this preparation on your feet. This preparation involves being familiar enough with the gospel that promotes peace that you can and will announce it while under the fiercest of enemy fire. All of this is produced by the gospel itself as it is embraced by the church. This is a state of perpetual readiness to proclaim and announce the message of peace through the good news of Christ.

Three basic commitments regarding the gospel because of your union with Christ:

- Remember that you heard and believed the proclaimed gospel.                      E. 1:13
- Remember that Christ purchased and proclaimed the gospel of peace.                      E. 2:14-18
- You prepare yourself to announce the gospel that promotes peace.                      E. 3:6-10; 6:19

Cmp.    Isa. 52:7-10; Rom. 10:15                      beautiful feet/'Your God reigns' Isa. 40:9-11                      Col.4:6

Prayer list; gospel presentation; personal story                      Are you ready to announce peace?

#### 4. Putting on faith.

6:16

*take up the shield of faith*

Another action that is connected to standing against the opposition of evil is described in terms of the soldiers shield and the enemy's arrows. The shield is large enough to protect much of the body. It was roughly 4.5 feet tall and 2 feet wide. When Soldiers would stand side by side with their shields up it provided a solid wall of defense from the enemy. The shield would typically be covered with leather soaked in water so the fiery arrows from the enemy would be extinguished without harm to the soldier.

We are taught that our faith is that which protects us from the attacks of the enemy. The devil attacks believers in a multitude of ways. These temptations or solicitations to ungodly behaviors can do great damage if not stopped. Doubt, despair, persecution, false teaching . . . anything that appeals to the desires in an ungodly manner. Flaming arrows come fast, without much notice and are deadly. This is a picture of extreme danger. You must have and use your shield.

E 4:26-27 is an example of one type of arrow aimed at your soul. Unsolved problems and unresolved anger can develop into a hardness and cynicism that eats away the foundation and joy of your faith. These attacks can only be resisted and defeated by faith.

Faith is essentially relying on God. It is appropriating the promises of God to your circumstances; laying hold of God's resources in the midst of attacks.

Faith is referred to in 3 important ways for your defense in Ephesians:

1. Saving faith.            1:13, 15; 2:8; 3:12      Actively trust God's word about you, Jesus and God.
2. Living faith.            3:17; 1:19            Obediently rely on God's promises in daily life.
3. Revealed faith.        4:5, 13                The body of revealed truth that is the basis of our faith.

Model faith of Abraham . . . the just shall live by their faith . . . Romans 4:18-21

Against hope	fully convinced	obeyed/relied	grew strong in faith
Cmp. Psalm 25:15 -		1Peter 5:8-9	

As we gather around the Table of the Lord let's evaluate how we are prepared for action in the battle for the glory of God. As you participate you are declaring and celebrating three truths that are at the very heart of the spiritual battle for people's souls.

1. You celebrate that Jesus bore your sin, guilt and judgment in his death on the cross.
2. You proclaim that Jesus defeated sin and death by his resurrection and offers life to all who turn to him.
3. You promise your obedience and love to Christ who is seated as Lord of all and coming soon.

## Study Questions

1. Read together Ephesians 6:10-20. What observations, unusual or repeated terms or questions does the reading bring to your attention?
2. Have group members share their experiences in growing personal awareness of resisting the opposition of evil in their lives, marriages, families. What are the practical efforts being used to strengthen yourself in the Lord?
3. Review Psalm 19:8-9; Matthew 5:13-16 and Jer. 9:23-24. How do they inform your commitment to strengthening yourself in the Lord this week?
4. Have the group listen as you tell your story in less than 3 minutes of hearing and responding to the gospel. What are the 3-5 absolutely essential points that must be made without which you do not have the gospel?
5. What would a prepared, ready church or individual look/sound like as they proclaimed the gospel of peace in the midst of the battle? What does the enemy typically do to keep you from proclaiming peace?
6. Review Isa. 52:7-10; 40:9-11 and Romans 10:15.
7. What are the essential components of a definition of faith? Support your thoughts with scripture.
8. Explain what it means in 3:17 that Christ dwells in your heart through faith. How is faith instrumental or the means of something else happening or growing?
9. How does your faith grow stronger? Look at the example of Abraham's faith in Rom. 4:18-21. How did his faith grow stronger? What does that look like? What two things did he consider and become convinced of?
10. What are you going to do, use or remember from this study?